



Media Release

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Recycling changes for Cockburn householders

The City of Cockburn has welcomed the State Government's new Own Your Impact campaign, which supports local government in educating households about how to reduce and recycle the waste they create.

It comes at a time when global market conditions have forced Perth's three recycling facility operators to change the items householders can put in yellow-lid recycling bins, including in the City of Cockburn.

Cockburn's recycler, Suez, has joined Cleanaway and the South Metropolitan Regional Council in banning soft plastics, polystyrene, aerosol cans and meat trays from recycling bins it receives from the City for processing.

Cockburn Waste Manager Lyall Davieson said the updated recyclables list was released after June when the City's 2018/19 Resource Recovery Calendar had already been printed and distributed.

"This means some of the information in the calendar about recycling is now outdated, but we are keen to keep local households abreast of the evolving global recycling changes and how they affect us all," Mr Davieson said.

"Perth's recycling operators are dealing with the fallout from the Chinese National Sword policy which in January banned imports of plastic and paper waste with contamination levels greater than 0.5%.

"Since then, due to abundant supplies of recyclables going to South East Asian markets, Thailand banned plastic imports on 24 June effective immediately. On 24 July, Malaysia banned plastic waste for three months and on 2 August, Indonesia halted all plastic imports.

"We know our residents want to make a difference by continuing to put the right things in the right bins. This will increase recycling rates in these challenging times, because it will prevent contaminated recyclables being rejected by potential buyers, and then being sent to landfill."

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Suez State General Manager Craig Barker said the company's Bibra Lake Materials Recycling Facility could no longer accept soft plastics, polystyrene and meat trays as they contaminated clean commodity streams like plastic bottles, newspaper and cardboard.

"This is as a direct result of a fundamental shift in global commodity markets initiated by China's National Sword policy and subsequent oversupply into other overseas markets," Mr Barker said.

"Aerosols are better disposed of through council's Household Hazardous Waste drop-off scheme due to the risk of explosion and fire caused by flammable residue in the cans, which are a real danger for our employees at Bibra Lake," Mr Barker said.

"Meat trays also cannot go into the recycling bin as there is a lot of confusion around what materials they are made from, and so they are treated as a contaminant. They need to go in the general waste bin to protect markets for our clean commodity streams."

Mr Davieson said the aim was to help householders understand that the global recycling market was undergoing massive change and the most important way to address it, was to stay on top of what could be recycled, to reduce contamination rates.

"Suez tells us that up to 20 per cent of recycling it receives is contaminated, compared to historic levels of eight per cent. We must try to reduce this because contaminated bales of recyclables are sent to landfill, which is something we all want to prevent."

Soft, scrunchable plastics like plastic wrap, food packaging, plastic bags, cellophane and bubble wrap should be taken to REDcycle collection bins at local supermarkets, for manufacture into benches, bollards and playground equipment. For a list of drop-off points visit <http://www.redcycle.net.au/what-to-redcycle/>

Polystyrene can be dropped off at Henderson Waste Recovery Park (HWRP) free of charge (if no other waste disposal is involved) where it is compacted for bulk transportation and recycling.

Aerosol cans can be dropped off at the Spearwood Administration Centre at Coleville Crescent, or at HWRP for free (if no other waste disposal is involved).



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Meat trays, due to contamination and the varying materials used to make them (plastic and/or polystyrene), should be placed in your general waste bin. Better still, consider shopping at butchers that don't package their meat in plastic or take your own reusable container.

Own Your Impact has outlined items that can and can't be placed in recycling bins. Visit the website at <https://ownyourimpact.com.au/top-tips/Recycle-better> to learn more.

Stay up to date with how to recycle waste in the City of Cockburn at <https://www.cockburn.wa.gov.au/Waste-and-Environment/Rubbish-Waste-and-Recycling>

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