

Know Your Waste

PLASTICS

Plastic is made from petrochemicals, derived from fossil fuels like oil and natural gas. Some plastics can take up to 500 years to break down, releasing over 2,400 harmful chemicals that pollute our land, water, and soil. Plastic also accumulates in our bodies over time and can:

- Disrupt hormones
- Reduce fertility
- Damage the nervous system

Half of all plastics manufactured have been produced in the last 20 years. To solve this global issue, we must advocate for national policies that ban single-use plastics.





Simple Ways To Reduce Your Plastic Waste

Avoid Single-use Plastics: Opt for products not wrapped in plastic - glass is a great alternative.

Shop Smart: Opt for stores or markets that allow you to bring your own bags and offer unpackaged goods.

Choose Reusable Bags: Keep your reusable bags in a consistent spot, like your car or bag - ready for when you need them.

Repurpose and Reuse: Find creative ways to reuse plastic containers around your home whenever possible.

Ditch Cling Wrap: Switch to wax cloths instead of cling wrap, which can leech harmful chemicals.






















Recycle Correctly: Educate yourself on proper recycling guidelines to ensure you dispose of plastics correctly and keep them out of landfills.



How Waste Pickers Help

Waste Pickers play a vital role in recycling by collecting PET plastic (numbered 1), and diverting it from landfill. Their efforts help conserve resources, reduce pollution, and support a more sustainable waste system.

The table below is based on research conducted with Waste Pickers in Glenwood. Waste Pickers typically won't collect plastic categories 2, 4, and 5 unless it's in larger quantities. Collecting small amounts of these plastics isn't cost-effective, as the time and transport costs outweigh the payment they receive from buy-back centres. You can set these plastics aside until you've gathered enough to make collection worthwhile.

Symbol	Name	Examples	Recyclable	Collected by Waste Pickers
	Polyethylene Terephthalate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soda bottles Water bottles Food jars such as peanut butter & mayonnaise jars 	 Very Commonly Recycled	 YES
	High-Density Polyethylene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bottle caps Milk & fruit juice bottles Shampoo & detergent bottles Plastic drums, bins & crates 	 Very Commonly Recycled	 SOMETIMES (in bulk amounts)
	Polyvinyl Chloride	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear jars & bottles for toiletries & medication Cling wrap Bank & store cards PVC pipes for plumbing 	 Not Recycled	 NO
	Low-Density Polyethylene; Linear Low-Density Polyethylene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bread, fruit & vegetable bags Zip lock bags Plastic shopping bags Bubble wrap 	 Very Commonly Recycled	 SOMETIMES (in bulk amounts)
	Polypropylene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yoghurt, margarine, ice-cream containers & similar food tubs Tupperware containers Straws 	 Commonly Recycled	 SOMETIMES (in bulk amounts)
	Polystyrene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fruit & meat trays Takeaway containers & cups Appliance packaging 	 Not Recycled	 NO
	Polycarbonate (PC), Acrylonitrile Butadiene Styrene (ABS), Polyamide (Nylon), Polyurethane (PU), Bio-Based plastics & other miscellaneous plastics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multi-layer plastics e.g. sauce sachets & chip packets Baby bottles Bio-plastics 	 Not Recycled	 NO