

Recycling

There are a number of factors the City has taken into consideration regarding the implementation of a kerbside recycling program.



Foreign Market Restrictions

Currently, recycling facilities in WA only sort, bale and ship the material overseas for further processing, relying heavily on Asian markets to take these materials.

In 2018, China placed restrictions on foreign waste and is now only accepting material with a contamination level of no more than 0.5%. This is a virtual ban for processing household waste such as plastics - as its deemed unachievable with traditional kerbside recycling.

Many Councils in eastern Australia have already stopped their recycling collection due to the new restriction as it is deemed unachievable with current kerbside recycling. Their recycled waste is being sent to landfill.

Although the City's current plastics drop off blue bin program is working due to the low levels of contamination, the City is having issues with finding a market to take the material.

In July 2019, the Federal Government announced that it would be placing a future ban on export of waste plastic, paper, glass and tyres. These bans are expected to come into place in the coming months. This will have a significant impact on the current recycling market and it is unclear where these materials will eventually end up without any remanufacturing sites within in WA.

Environmental Factors

Stockpiling and storing of plastics, cardboard, tyres and other materials whilst waiting for new markets

or remanufacturing industries to be developed and established in WA or Australia is not a viable solution as it causes contamination and creates a fire hazard.

The recent fires at the Cleanaway Guildford site has impacted recycling with Kalgoorlie–Boulder having to cease their kerbside recycling due to the Cleanaway facility being unable to take the material. City cardboard and plastics also went to this site, which meant we had to find alternative options at a higher cost.

It has been reported that just 9% of Australian plastic has actually been recycled.

Cost and Cost Recovery

In June 2019, a waste audit was undertaken which evaluated the indicative costs associated with kerbside recycling in Greater Geraldton. The cost to set up kerbside recycling in Geraldton would be:

- Approximately \$3.6 million to initially set up the program
- Ongoing operational costs of approximately \$1 million/year (approximately \$150 per tonne to processing recycling)

Given the Federal Government is placing a ban on export of waste plastic, paper, glass and tyres and recycling facilities in WA sell the material overseas, the ability to recover costs associated with kerbside recycling is rapidly shrinking.

Other Options to Reduce Waste

1. FOGO Waste: Studies showing that Food Organic and Garden Organics (FOGO) makes up for 40% of our waste stream. Therefore the City has started the FOGO Waste kerbside collection trial. FOGO material can be processed locally for a local market without relying on any international fluctuating markets.
2. Bottle Deposit Scheme: On 1 October 2020 the State will be implementing a Container for Change scheme where all eligible glass, plastic and aluminium bottles can be taken to a refund point for a 10cent refund. There will be at least one refund point in Geraldton by June 2020

with the schemes aim for two refund points to be implemented by the end of the schemes first year. It's predicated that this program will significantly reduce the amount of plastics entering the waste stream and general litter.

There are several options to recycle almost anything locally. It is vital that our whole community embrace recycling and take steps toward recycling in their home.

There is a full list of what you can recycle and where <https://www.cgg.wa.gov.au/build/infrastructure/waste-and-recycling/recycling-in-geraldton.aspx>



New blue bin sticker



FOGO bin

