

# Recycling Victoria

## A new economy



**The government has a plan to reduce waste, boost jobs and establish a recycling system Victorians can rely on.**

Following widespread disruption to global recycling markets, governments across Australia and around the world are grappling with how to waste less and recycle more.

It's a big, complicated problem and there's no easy, quick fix.

It's why the Victorian Government is transforming the state's recycling sector.

Most importantly, it will deliver a recycling system that Victorians can rely on.

*Recycling Victoria: A new economy* will invest over \$300 million to transform our recycling sector. It will drive investment in world class infrastructure and technology, make our state's future recycling system more sustainable, create cutting-edge local industries and support thousands of new local jobs—positioning Victoria as a global leader.

In partnership with local councils the Victorian Government will deliver a recycling system the communities can rely on through better household recycling, improved infrastructure and stronger industry regulation.

### **\$129 million recycling reforms package**

We are changing how Victorians recycle so that materials collected from households are high quality and can be used again to make new products.

We've listened to the community, councils and industry and we will introduce standardised waste and recycling services across Victoria.

A new four-bin waste and recycling system will be rolled out in partnership with councils, with each household getting a bin or access to services for:

- combined food and garden organics
- glass recycling
- plastics, paper, cardboard and metals recycling
- household waste.

The new system will be implemented flexibly, informed by local community needs and existing arrangements.

For example, in some regional and rural areas a glass drop-off system may be more practical than introducing a household glass collection service.

Councils will have an important role leading the delivery of the reforms, working closely with

government to customise the service for their communities.

As a key implementation partner, the government will support councils to gradually phase in the new household collection program through our Household Recycling Reforms package.

This investment will deliver a new, reliable system that will help maximise household recycling and create thousands of jobs and investment across Victoria.

This program will include state-wide education and behaviour change programs that will deliver consistent recycling and waste reduction messages across Victoria, helping households transition to these new recycling services.

The government will work collaboratively with councils to deliver a wide range of education strategies and public awareness campaigns to reduce contamination in the recycling system which will substantially lift recovery rates across the state.

The programs will also help households save money by avoiding waste and to reuse, repair and share products.

### Introduce a container deposit scheme

A container deposit scheme (CDS) will be introduced by 2023 to complement Victoria's new recycling system.

The scheme will produce clean streams of plastic, aluminium and glass that can be used to make new valuable products, further increase recycling, reducing litter and creating even more jobs in Victoria.

A CDS will work alongside Victoria's new recycling system to collect beverage containers. It will provide another recycling option, not just for households—but also for businesses that produce large amounts of beverage containers, such as bars and cafés.

The Victorian Government will work in partnership with councils and industry to design a scheme that is in line with community expectations and delivers the best outcomes for Victoria.

### Fit-for-purpose landfill levies

Ours is one of the lowest landfill levies for municipal and industrial waste in the country.

We don't want Victoria to become a dumping ground for waste coming from other states.

Changes to the landfill levy are critical if we are to address this issue and recover more of the four million tonnes of waste Victoria currently sends to landfill.

For this reason, the Victorian Government will progressively increase the landfill levy to bring it into line with other states.

Funds generated by the levy will continue to be reinvested into environmental programs including those outlined in *Recycling Victoria* that transform our waste and recycling industry.

### Regulating waste and recycling

To make sure our recycling system delivers services that are reliable and meet community expectations, the Victorian Government will regulate waste as an essential service and establish a new dedicated waste and recycling Act. This will improve resource recovery through greater transparency and service standards.

The new Act will ensure waste and recycling services are reliable, consistent and meet community expectations.

As part of this Act, the government will also establish a new dedicated waste authority in 2021 to better govern our state-wide waste and recycling system. It will focus on issues of market competition, service reliability and value for money for all Victorians.

Regulating waste as an essential service makes sure all Victorians get the same basic and reliable standard of service – wherever they live. It will also strengthen the accountability of waste service providers and stabilise Victoria's recycling system in the long-term.

This is part of several reforms designed to put an end to unethical operators and waste stockpiling and create a more resilient sector.

## Investment for industry and businesses

Victoria's ambitious resource recovery targets and the national ban on waste exports mean that we must process more recycled materials locally.

We also recognise that the foundation of a circular economy is a strong domestic supply of high-quality recycled materials for Victorian industries.

We are investing **\$49.5 million** in an industry and infrastructure development package to support the waste and recycling industry.

The package will initially target investment in infrastructure to collect, sort and process priority materials including plastic, paper, cardboard, glass and chemical waste.

The package will also support infrastructure for organic materials, textiles, and tyres. We are also investing in best-practice infrastructure to safely manage waste. We are investing **\$11.5 million** in infrastructure to better manage hazardous waste and **\$10 million in waste to energy** technologies to recover energy from waste that cannot be recycled and would otherwise be sent to landfill.

This funding includes a **\$30.5 million Recycling Markets Acceleration package** that will:

- expand existing innovation programs to encourage researchers and businesses to collaborate to make new products from recycled materials
- develop and promote standards, specifications and guidance materials for using recycled materials in commercial, industrial and construction settings.

This funding will expand our support for research on new uses for recycled materials and commercialise more Victorian innovations.

The Victorian Government will establish a **\$7 million Business Innovation Centre** to support businesses in the transition to a circular economy.

The centre will bring together governments, industry, research organisations and communities to foster business innovation and collaboration across supply chains to reduce waste, increase recycling and reuse, and generate new revenue for businesses.

Victorian businesses play an important role in managing waste and our shift to a circular economy. The government will support the business transition with a **\$10 million business support grants program** to help businesses implement actions that improve resource efficiency, reduce waste to landfill, increase recycling and reduce business costs.

Funding will be available for peak industry bodies and associations and coordinated business groups to deliver sector-wide programs to promote waste avoidance, improved waste management and sustainable supply chain solutions.

This package will deliver long term benefits for the industry, increasing Victoria's capacity to recycle locally and create more jobs.

## Encouraging appropriate waste to energy investment

The Victorian Government supports waste to energy projects where they create clear net benefits and complement efforts to reduce and recycle waste.

Thermal waste to energy technologies that process residual wastes can achieve Victoria's waste to energy goals if we have the right number and scale of facilities. To ensure this is the case, the government will place a cap of one million tonnes each year until 2040 on the amount of residual waste that can be used in thermal waste to energy facilities. The cap will be implemented through new rules which will be given effect by legislation or regulations.

In 2023, the Victorian Government will review the progress of waste to energy to make sure it is helping to meet Victoria's waste reduction and resource recovery targets.

## \$14.6 million to support Victorian communities and councils

Communities and councils can benefit from circular economy initiatives and are well placed to support the transition to a circular economy at a local level.

We will support Victorian communities and councils with a **\$14.6 million** grants program to support implementation of local actions that reduce waste, help households make different

purchasing decisions and save money, reduce litter and illegal dumping, and help Victorians move to a less wasteful lifestyle.

Circular economy initiatives will differ depending on the strengths of local economies. They will include opportunities for local businesses to use materials more efficiently and make more productive use of local waste resources.

### **\$1.8 million to support Victorian charities and the reuse economy**

The Victorian Government will continue to support charities with funding that reduces their waste management costs. We will also work with the sector on a strategy to reduce waste at charities so that over the long term their waste management costs are reduced.

### **Addressing high-risk and hazardous waste**

The Victorian Government takes the issue of illegal waste management and unsafe stockpiles in our community very seriously.

Community safety is our highest priority. In addition to the **\$11.5 million** investment in hazardous waste infrastructure, the government will invest an additional **\$71.4 million** through *Recycling Victoria* to ensure high-risk and hazardous wastes are managed safely. The government will put an end to unethical operations through stronger regulation, policy and planning.

The Victorian Government's high risk and hazardous waste management program will:

- establish a new Waste Crime Prevention Inspectorate within EPA to work across government to address illegal activities and combat waste crime in Victoria
- improve intelligence sharing arrangements across regulatory and emergency management agencies, and build the regulatory capacity and capability of these agencies
- ensure adequate disposal points for asbestos across the state, through an Asbestos Disposal Management Plan
- continue the successful Detox Your Home program, encouraging the safe management and disposal of hazardous waste from households

- consider introducing new levies for waste being stockpiled for long periods.

### **\$9.5 million to modernise Victoria's waste data systems**

Investment in a circular economy must be underpinned by reliable and useful data. To support this the Victorian Government will expand waste data systems to cover the entire Victorian economy.

Access to high-quality data and reporting will enable businesses and industry to make better investment decisions and will help the government track Victoria's progress towards a circular economy.

You can learn more about *Recycling Victoria* at [www.vic.gov.au/recycling](http://www.vic.gov.au/recycling)