







PACKAGING INFORMATION: PURCHASING & DISPOSAL

<p>PLASTICS</p> 	<p>Term Definition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally refers to a group of fossil-fuel derived synthetic polymers. <p>Littered Impacts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can remain in the environment for hundreds of years. Breaks up into smaller pieces that do not 'go away' (E.g. One plastic bottle can break up into 10,000 pieces of micro plastics). <p>Disposal Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dispose of all soft plastics in waste bin (or a specialised soft plastics recycling service). Hard plastics can generally be recycled if clean. Often recycled plastics are 'down cycled' into lower value products, with high energy input. Less than 9% of plastics are recycled in Australia. <p>Recommendation: Avoid - May be suitable to use in applications where littering is unlikely</p>	<p>STYROFOAM (PS)</p> 	<p>Term Definition: Closed-cell Expanded Polystyrene Foam made from fossil fuel derived synthetic polymers.</p> <p>Littered Impacts: Lightweight and highly mobile in the environment. Floating ability increases likelihood of ingestion by marine life.</p> <p>Disposal Considerations: Non-recyclable and no known specialist services operating in Cairns.</p> <p>Recommendation: Avoid</p>
<p>DEGRADABLE & OXY-DEGRADABLE PLASTIC</p> 	<p>Term Definition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally refers to a group of fossil-fuel derived synthetic polymers. Degradable & Oxy-Degradable involves speeding up plastic fragmentation in presence of oxygen and sunlight. <p>Littered Impacts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Often lightweight and highly mobile in the environment. Impacts the environment sooner than normal, stable plastic items would. Breaks up into smaller pieces, even to the point that it is not readily seen. <p>Disposal Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dispose of all soft plastics in waste bin (or a specialised soft plastics recycling service). Often recycled plastics are 'down cycled' into lower value products, with high energy input. Less than 9% of plastics are recycled in Australia. <p>Recommendation: Avoid</p>	<p>BIODEGRADABLE BIO-PLASTICS (PLA)</p> 	<p>Term Definition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Derived from plant materials, not petroleum products. Capable of being naturally degradable into a biogas. <p>Certification: Commercial Composting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May or may not be certified to Australian Standards. If certified: it is capable of being biodegraded at elevated temperatures in soil, under specific conditions and time scales, usually only possible at commercial composters. <p>Littered Impacts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highly mobile when littered - lasts several years in a marine environment. Breaks up into smaller pieces. <p>Disposal Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dispose of in waste bin (Commercial composting occurs in Cairns Regional Council). Cannot be recycled in Australia (Hard, clear biodegradable products are often confused with synthetic plastics and if put in the recycling bin, contaminates the recycling of those plastics.) Often products are a mix of paper and lined with PLA which is preferable to PET plastic lining. <p>Recommendation: Avoid where possible, use where necessary</p>
<p>LANDFILL BIODEGRADABLE PLASTIC</p> 	<p>Term Definition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A plastic containing an additive which could attract microbes in a biologically active landfill. <p>Littered Impacts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presents a risk to the environment like any other plastic. <p>Disposal Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Claims are not certified or tested in a live landfill Requires a biologically active landfill, those in the Far North Queensland region are not. Can be recycled in general recycling. <p>Recommendation: Avoid - No proven benefit to the environment for the premium price</p>	<p>HOME COMPOSTABLE</p> 	<p>Term Definition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Derived from plant materials, often like wood, bamboo or sugarcane. May or may not be sustainably sourced May be a mix and lined with wax or a small amount of PLA <p>Certification: Home Composting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May be certified to Australian Standard (AS 5810—2010) for home composting. <p>Littered Impacts: Environmental impact and persistence in the environment is generally vastly less compared to bio-plastics and plastics.</p> <p>Disposal Considerations: Dispose of in waste bin (commercial composting occurs in Cairns Regional Council) or home compost</p> <p>Recommendation: Preferred</p>

Sourcing Alternative Products

Council encourages reusable products wherever possible, however when sourcing takeaway items it is best to seek certified commercial or home compostable items for processing into compost by Council's Advanced Resource Recovery Facility. These alternatives are available from the following local suppliers:

- Reward
- ChefLink
- Star Packaging
- Winc (formerly Staples)
- Campbells
- Bidfood
- Enviromart
- Max Stocks
- PFD
- Reef Straw