

Priority 2*: Increasing our focus on waste avoidance

Avoiding waste generation through reuse, repair and maintaining the value of materials for as long as possible.

The draft waste strategy (the strategy) sets out the goals, targets and priorities for achieving a sustainable, low-waste future powered by a circular economy where our communities, economies and environment can thrive.

A circular economy keeps products and materials circulating in the economy for longer, at their highest value, and brings multiple economic, social and environmental benefits.

The strategy identifies five priorities, all of equal importance, that will inform development of a roadmap which sets out key initiatives and actions to be implemented over the next five years with the aim of achieving the strategy's goals and targets.

Background

To achieve a circular economy means reducing waste and using products and materials for as long as possible. Feedback from stakeholders indicates support for the move towards a circular economy, focusing on avoiding waste generation and increasing reuse and repair. Providing the community with the tools to avoid waste is essential to achieving the goals and targets in the strategy.

Relevant targets

The 2019 strategy set a target of a 10 per cent reduction in waste generation per capita. While this will not be achieved, there has been progress towards reducing municipal solid waste (MSW) generation per capita by 5 per cent by 2025. Avoiding waste is the goal but this is difficult to achieve and measure. Waste generation per capita can fluctuate in the short term and is influenced by consumer behaviour, economic activity and climate-driven events. The state's per capita waste generation is in line with the national average but has only decreased by 2 per cent since 2014–15. Achieving this target is heavily reliant on decreases in generation from the commercial and industrial (C&I) and construction and demolition (C&D) sectors – particularly the latter – as the source of more than half of overall waste.

The strategy builds on the 2019 strategy's objective to generate less waste and proposes the following targets:

- Achieve 20 per cent reduction in waste generation per capita by 2030
 - MSW: 10 per cent reduction in waste generation per capita
 - C&D: 30 per cent reduction in waste generation per capita
 - C&I: 10 per cent reduction in waste generation per capita
- Adopt national circular economy metrics (as they are developed) to measure avoidance and circularity
- Develop avoidance measures and targets for specific materials consistent with national targets.

The following table sets out the **current activities** being implemented and proposes **additional 'draft'** actions that could be implemented to support the achievement of this priority and the relevant waste strategy targets. The actions have been included here to help stimulate discussion and brainstorming around actions to include in the roadmap and which will make meaningful contribution towards achieving the targets.

*The draft revised strategy's priorities are equally important. The priority numbering is for reference only.

Our current activities	Our focus for the next five years		
<p>Leadership, advocacy, policy, programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with the Australian Government and other jurisdictions to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop circular economy targets and initiatives develop and implement product stewardship Charitable Recyclers Rebate program <p>Education and behaviour change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> WasteSorted and GREAT Sorts initiatives <p>Legislation and regulation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> WA Plan for Plastics 	Key initiatives – what we want to achieve	Proposed State Government-led actions	Proposed collaborative actions
	<p>2.1 Increased reuse and repair</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support local reuse and repair centres that facilitate waste avoidance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the Australian Government’s efforts to improve consumer’s ‘right to repair’ options.
	<p>2.2 Support for intelligent product design</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support research and business innovation that reduces waste and increases recycling and reuse. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with other states to support businesses to design for, and use, greater volumes of recycled materials across their supply chains. Work with the Australian Government to develop national packaging regulations.
<p>2.3 Western Australia is empowered to avoid waste</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement waste avoidance education and behaviour change for businesses and the community. Provide information on businesses and organisations that provide products or services to avoid waste. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with local government to harmonise community messaging on waste avoidance. Identify opportunities to work with businesses and industry to develop and support initiatives that avoid waste. 	



Discussion questions

- How well do these draft actions support our priority to increase waste avoidance?
- Are there other actions that will support this priority?