

Priority 3*: Better management of priority materials

Improving management and recycling of high-impact materials and priority waste streams.

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

The strategy identifies organic waste from the municipal solid waste (MSW) and commercial and industrial (C&I) waste streams, plastics and e-waste as priority materials to be better managed. This reflects their impact on the environment and human health, the opportunities available to better manage them, and the potential value and resources that could be accessed through their better management.

- **Organic waste from the MSW and C&I waste streams:** Organic material makes up a significant portion of the waste generated in WA. Consisting of food organics, garden organics, wood and timber, it accounts for around 18 per cent of the waste generated in WA or 28 per cent if paper, cardboard and other organics are included. Opportunity exists to increase recycling and contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Plastics:** Although plastics do not make up a significant proportion of WA's waste by weight (currently about 5 per cent), their enduring environmental impact, their prevalence in the litter stream and as contaminants in other waste streams needs improved management.
- **E-waste and batteries:** Like plastics, e-waste does not make up a significant proportion of WA's waste by weight (currently about 1 per cent of total generation). However, e-waste is one of the fastest growing waste streams in the world. While e-waste and batteries contain high value, rare minerals with the potential for recovery, they also pose significant human and environmental impacts if disposed of inappropriately.

Relevant targets

The 2019 strategy set a target of increasing the recycling rate to 70 per cent by 2025 as well as specific targets for MSW, construction and demolition (C&D) and C&I waste. While WA's recycling rate is up from 42 per cent in 2014–15 to 62 per cent in 2021–22, the 70 per cent target will not be met. The target of increasing the C&D recycling rate to 77 per cent by 2025 has been met; however, the target for increasing the C&I recycling rate to 75 per cent by 2025 will not.

The strategy builds on the 2019 strategy's objective to recover more value and resources from waste and proposes the following recycling targets:

- Reduce disposal of organic waste to landfill by 50 per cent
- Increase the recycling rate to 75 per cent by 2030
 - MSW: Increase the recycling rate to 70 per cent in Perth and Peel, 60 per cent in major regional centres
 - C&D: Increase recycling rate to 80 per cent
 - C&I: Increase recycling rate to 80 per cent
- Continue the delivery of FOGO and FO collection and recycling to households and businesses in Perth, Peel and major regional centres
- Recover energy only from residual waste
- Ensure no more than 15 per cent waste generated in Perth and Peel is landfilled.

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 that 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	Actions and ideas to build on in the waste strategy roadmap		
<p>Legislation and regulation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of the e-waste to landfill ban Containers for Change Implementation of the WA Plan for Plastics <p>Collection and processing infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding for infrastructure including the Recycling Modernisation Fund, WasteSorted Infrastructure Grants and Food Waste for Healthy Soils program Providing funding, guidance and communication tools to local governments via the Better Bins Plus: Go FOGO program E-waste Infrastructure Grants providing \$10.1 million towards increasing capacity and capability for collection and processing of e-waste in Western Australia <p>Education and behaviour change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of the FOGO rollout plan Statewide WasteSorted initiatives including WasteSorted Toolkit, GREAT Sorts campaign, WasteSorted Community Education grants, WasteSorted Schools 	Key initiatives – what we want to achieve	Proposed State Government-led actions	Proposed collaborative actions
	<p>3.1 Improving outcomes in the C&I sector</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct audits to improve data on C&I waste composition, including State Government waste. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop better practice guidance and case studies for using recycled materials in commercial and industrial settings.
	<p>3.2 Increasing recovery of organic waste and reducing associated emissions from the MSW and C&I sectors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate the rollout of FOGO/FO collections for State Government agencies and assets. Develop pilot program/case studies on C&I organics collection and recycling. Provide support for and recognition of businesses that reduce food waste. Build on <i>State waste infrastructure plan</i> (DWER 2024) findings and investigate options for increasing paper and cardboard collection and recycling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate the potential modification of existing organics recycling facilities to accept FO in line with <i>State waste infrastructure plan</i>. Identify opportunities for and barriers to reducing food waste in the C&I sector.
	<p>3.3 Avoiding generation and increasing recycling of plastics</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the avoidance of plastic waste and reduce consumption of problematic plastics. Investigate options to promote the reduction in problematic and unnecessary plastics and use of soft plastics, including partnering with Australian Government reform on plastics design standards, collection and processing issues. Investigate options for increased plastics recycling infrastructure in Western Australia. Phase out the use of single-use plastic bags in KABC programs and other State Government programs where possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with industry partners, the Australian Government and other jurisdictions to promote a reduction in soft plastics and other problematic and unnecessary plastics, and address plastics design standards, collection and processing issues.
<p>3.4 Improving recycling of e-waste and new energy systems (including PV, batteries from houses, scooters, cars and mobility scooters)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement communications initiatives for managing e-waste. Provide funding for infrastructure projects that increase capacity and capability to collect and manage e-waste. Further develop a statewide digital platform to support community in understanding how and where to recycle e-waste and other items for specialist recycling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the Australian Government, other jurisdictions, and the Future Battery Industries Cooperative Research Centre to facilitate the recycling of batteries, electrical and electronic products and PV systems (including product stewardship approaches). 	



Discussion questions

- How well do these draft actions support our priority to better manage priority materials?
- Are there other actions that will support this priority?