



Current News

Recycle your takeaway coffee cups

Wed 31 May 2017

Research by the Australian Packaging Covenant Australian Organisation (APCO), in collaboration with key industry players, has found takeaway coffee cups can be recycled.

An Issues Paper, the outcome of a working group on this type of disposable packaging, found contrary to belief, take away coffee cups can go into paper recycling and their lids can be recycled along with plastics.

APCO Chief Executive Officer, Trish Hyde, said with an estimated 1.2 billion coffee cups used in Australia each year, it was necessary to tackle this complex and often confusing issue of which bin to put these cups in.

"The community is currently receiving many mixed messages about whether their coffee cup can be recycled or not," Ms Hyde said.

"Because the actual cup is made from paperboard with a plastic lining, typically polyethylene, there was concern that this mixed material presents issues for recycling facilities.

"Our members include material recovery and recycling facilities. Through the working group, we resolved that coffee cups can be recycled. However, we also know that there is more work to do to ensure that recyclers receive fair value in recycling this material," Ms Hyde said.

Around 96% of this type of paperboard found its way into landfill in 2013/14. This included items such as take away coffee cups, noodle containers and milk cartons. Of these types of packaging, about 8% are currently recycled.

"We have done some substantial groundwork," Ms Hyde said. "Now that we have opened up this discussion, our next steps will be to work with industry to look at ways to increase the recycling of coffee cups and this will include more research and investigation as well as recommendations to also look at community education." Ms Hyde said.

"In the lead up to World Environment Day on 5 June, this research is a timely and a significant step forward for packaging sustainability in Australia.

"Consumers have a choice. They can bring their own cup to the café or recycle their coffee cups. It's about supporting industry, across the entire supply chain from coffee shop owners to brand owners to recycling facilities to create sustainable packaging solutions."

Phase two of the working group's research, focused on ensuring sustainable end markets and working with recyclers, commences in coming weeks.

Read the full issues paper [here](#).

[< Back](#)

SIGN UP TO OUR E-NEWSLETTER

BECOME A SIGNATORY

