



Media Release
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Recycling processing to restart - with some changes

Selwyn residents are encouraged to be extra vigilant with their kerbside recycling separation, as the sorting of recyclables restarts under Alert Level 3 conditions.

Council's kerbside recycling processing partner EcoCentral Ltd had to temporarily pause operations under the Level 4 lockdown conditions because of the high risk of COVID-19 contamination for staff sorting the recycling, and the closure of overseas recycling facilities.

Council Solid Waste Manager Andrew Boyd says recycling processing will return under Alert Level 3, but with some changes to the grades of plastic accepted.

"Because of changes in markets and upcoming changes in international regulations, we can now only accept plastic grades 1, 2 and 5. We are no longer able to accept mixed plastics 3, 4, 6 and 7 in kerbside recycling. Fortunately these make up only a tiny fraction of our kerbside recycling stream. So, effective immediately, we are asking residents to put plastics 3, 4, 6 and 7 into the rubbish. These are typically small yogurt containers, sushi and biscuit trays."

Grade 1 plastics are typically soft drink, water and juice bottles. Grade 2 plastics are mostly milk bottles, and sometimes household cleaners. Grade 5 plastics are often used for margarine, spreads like honey and jam, and large yogurt containers. These grades of plastic have the best onshore recycling prospects within New Zealand.

"We can't stress enough the importance of people continuing to sort their recycling correctly to make sure there is no contamination in the bins when recycling processing restarts", Mr Boyd says.

"With the collection service being fortnightly, there is a delay between when you put recycling in your bin and when it reaches the plant, so what we do now will affect the sorting plant when it reopens."

There are a number of practical actions people can take to help make recycling successful, he says.

These include:

- Checking the plastic grades on containers before they go in the bin
- Rinsing or cleaning plastic before it goes in the bin
- Make sure there are no plastic bags or soft plastic wrappers in the your recycling
- Look at the products you buy. Try to buy products in 1, 2 and 5 plastics and contact companies and ask them to consider alternative packaging.
- Consider a no circulars/no junk mail sticker on your letterbox. Junk mail makes up 50% of the mixed paper that comes through kerbside recycling.

- Keep an eye on Council communications around recycling and we will advise you as soon as possible on any changes to recycling as we have done through the lockdown period.

ENDS

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