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# Sensible recycling solutions

Keeping a lid on household waste is under pressure, writes Catherine Nikas-Boulos

**C**OVID-19 has affected our lives in so many ways, but Eco Organiser Tanya Lewis says the environment has also felt the pressure.

Lockdown restrictions have seen us spending more time at home where we've become more reliant on home delivery services like online grocery shopping and food delivery. The consumption of packaging has risen as a result.

"We don't really have a say in how these products are sent to us, making it difficult to avoid product packaging," she says.

Which is why it is so important for us to recycle our packaging accurately. Tanya says not all waste can be treated equally and making the mistake of placing the wrong item in a waste bin can contaminate the entire load.

"While many of us might be feeling guilty about our waste, there are simple actions we can take to recycle right," she says.

To that end, The Australasian Recycling Label was launched to provide easy-to-understand recycling information on disposable food containers to explain if they can go directly to kerbside recycling or not. Some items are tagged Do Not Recycle and should go to the rubbish bin, while soft plastics labelled Store Drop Off can be recycled at Woolworths or Coles supermarkets.

"It removes confusion, saves you time and reduces waste going to landfill," Tanya says.

The kitchen tends to be the



Eco organiser Tanya Lewis

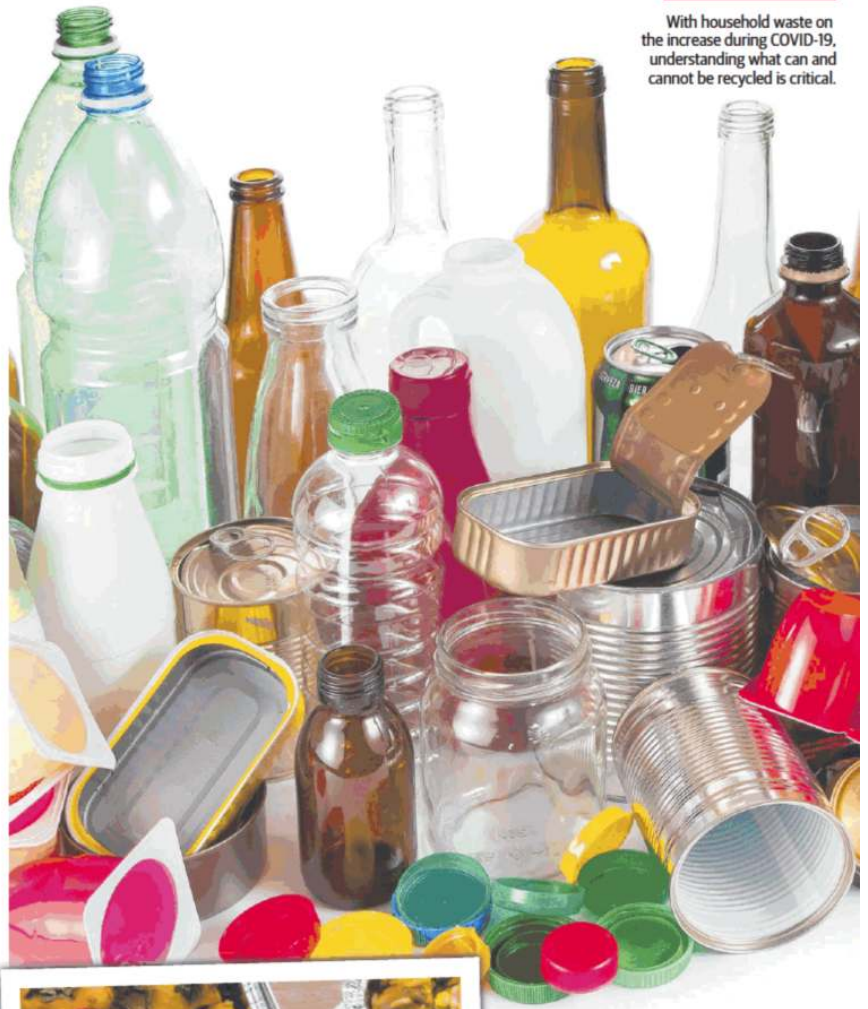
place where most household waste is generated — typically packaging and organic waste.

Tanya says the changing of seasons is a good opportunity to improve our habits so they are more sustainable. This includes spring cleaning your pantry to identify items that you already have so you can finish these first before buying anything new. Plus, always shop with a list to avoid unnecessary purchases and never forget your reusable bags.

"I store mine close to my front door so that I am reminded to take them with me when I go shopping," she says.

Decluttering can be a satisfying process, and in Tanya's book, *Ethically Declutter your Home in 30 Days*, she talks about the 10R's: Rethink, Responsible, Refuse, Repurpose, Reorganise, Repair, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Reward.

More: [ar1.org.au](http://ar1.org.au); [ecoorganiser.com.au](http://ecoorganiser.com.au); [planetark.org](http://planetark.org)



## TREND

With household waste on the increase during COVID-19, understanding what can and cannot be recycled is critical.



## SMALL STEPS

- Household waste has risen by 20 per cent during COVID-19 according to the Australian Council of Recycling. While reusable coffee cups have been set aside in favour of takeaway options, opting out of a lid and 'going topless' will have an impact.
- Some plastics can go in your recycling bin but others can't. If you can scrunch it into a ball, take it to one of the RedCycle bins outside the supermarket.
- Be a keyboard warrior and petition manufacturers and retailers to do better to keep plastics out of the system.

"THERE ARE SIMPLE ACTIONS WE CAN TAKE TO RECYCLE RIGHT"