

2026 Waste Levy review outcomes



Queensland's waste levy is a fee on waste sent to landfill. It is designed to reduce waste, encourage recycling and help fund the infrastructure needed to recover more resources and keep valuable materials out of landfill.

As required under legislation, the Queensland Government has completed a review of the waste levy to ensure it continues to support recycling, reduce landfill and deliver a fair outcome for councils and communities across the state.

The review supports the delivery of the new *Less Landfill, More Recycling 2035: Queensland Waste Strategy*, which provides a clear plan to improve recycling, reduce waste and invest in the infrastructure Queensland needs. Importantly, the Queensland Government is investing alongside these changes, working with councils and industry to expand recycling infrastructure, improve access to yellow and green bin services and make it easier for Queenslanders to recycle.



Queensland's recycling and resource recovery industries contribute **\$1.5 billion** to our economy each year and supports **12,000 jobs**.



We are the country's second-worst recyclers. Queenslanders generate 10 million tonnes of waste each year – equivalent to one million garbage trucks.

What is the waste levy?

The waste levy was introduced in 2019 and was designed to encourage people to send less waste to landfill by putting a price on disposal. All States and Territories in Australia have a waste levy.

The levy is only paid if waste is disposed of at a landfill – if materials are recycled, there is no levy charged.

The Queensland Government will continue to deliver targeted investment in infrastructure and programs by working with Councils and industry to drive down costs to the community.

What's changing and why?

The waste levy has been reviewed, with changes and benefits for Queenslanders:

- Changes to levy zones for some councils will better recognise waste management needs of rural and regional Queensland. Toowoomba and Somerset moved from the metropolitan levy zone to the regional levy zone from 1 July 2026. Mount Isa will move to the non-levy zone from 1 July 2027.

- Annual payments to metropolitan and major regional councils have been adjusted in line with the targets in Queensland's new waste strategy. Annual payments will continue to reduce by 10 per cent each year, reaching an end point aligned with the targets in Queensland's new waste strategy – 30 per cent for metropolitan councils and 50 per cent for major regional centre councils.
- Councils have been provided \$488 million over the next four years to help offset levy costs on households.
- The metropolitan levy rates will continue on the same trajectory since 2022, increasing by \$10 a tonne per year, helping ensure the levy works as intended and to encourage infrastructure investment.
- Regional levy rates will continue to increase by government indexation each year.
- Levy discounts for recyclers will be expanded to strengthen recycling incentives and there will be limits put on levy exemptions for use as 'daily cover' at landfills, reducing loopholes.

