

Sustainability and single-use plastics in the building industry



Buildex

CAMO
HIDDEN DECK FASTENING SYSTEM

pryda

Ramset

LANE
SECURITY - STYLE - FUNCTION



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Meeting sustainability guidelines is not only good for the environment; it can be good for business too.

OVERVIEW

Sustainability and eco-credentials have continued to gain traction within the building industry, with many high-end commercial buildings now including clauses on sustainability, along with prestige housing projects.

Savvy builders can see the benefits of using sustainable practices, partly because they lead to more prestige work. Ratings such as Green Star have helped to push sustainable practices into mainstream building work. At last count, there were more than 2800 Green Star Certificates issued, covering 48 million sqm of building space.

According to the Australian Building Sustainability Association, many manufacturers are discovering that they gain a distinct market advantage over their competitors by developing and marketing more sustainable products. The same is true for designers, builders and developers.

Sustainable practices within the building hardware industry include supply chain management as well as meeting new government guidelines on packaging.



Packaging Recycling is more than what you think an item is made of

It's also about...



The Australian Recycling Label evaluates all these components and gives you accurate recycling instructions

SINGLE-USE PLASTICS

The campaign to end the use of single use plastics, which is packaging that is immediately discarded after use, has been embraced by most of the state governments in Australia.

While plastic packaging has many benefits for society, the issue with problematic and unnecessary plastic packaging is its unsustainable low recycling rates, high rates of disposal to landfill, and significant impact as litter.

The Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation says that with single-use plastic packaging, the embedded costs of the materials, energy and labour are lost from the economy after one use. Additionally, problematic plastic packaging and single use items contaminate current sorting and reprocessing systems. These negative factors have seen single-use plastic packaging grow from a niche issue to the forefront of conventional business and government regulation, with increasing consumer pressures.

Plastic pollution has particularly caused concern with members of the marine conservation movement. Items such as plastic bags, discarded fishing line and balloon strings are highly lethal to marine animals, who swim through them and become entangled.

According to the Australian Marine Conservation Society, half of all seabirds and turtles have plastic in their stomachs. Single-use items such as plastic cutlery, straws, bottle caps, take-away containers and plastic bags are just some of the many items eaten by marine animals.

The Australian Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment estimates that by 2025 99% of sea birds will have ingested plastic, which often leads to slow and painful deaths. By 2050 it is estimated that the amount of plastic in our oceans will outweigh fish.

Phasing out single-use plastic in packaging will go a long way to reducing the risk of plastics in waterways as well as in landfill.

NATIONAL PACKAGING TARGETS

ITW Proline has made a commitment to meeting Australia's 2025 National Packaging Targets. These ambitious targets are:

- **100% of packaging being reusable, recyclable or compostable by 2025**
- **70% of plastic packaging being recycled or composted by 2025**
- **50% of average recycled content included in packaging by 2025**
- **The phase out of problematic and unnecessary single-use plastic packaging by 2025**

The National Packaging Targets apply to all packaging that is made, used and sold in Australia.

The 2025 Targets require a complete and systemic change to the way Australia creates, collects and recovers product packaging, and are an important step on Australia's journey towards a circular economy for packaging.

These targets mean avoiding packaging waste, improving local recovery of recyclables, and increasing the demand for products that contain recycled materials.

As market leaders in the manufacture and supply of quality building fastenings, fixtures and hardware, ITW Proline has made a commitment to source sustainable packaging and minimise its use of single use plastics.

We have 600+ products with optimised packaging to reduce waste and maximise recyclability, which are presented with the Australasian Recycling Label information found in stores that carry our products. This number will continue to grow until we reach our targets.

THE CURRENT STATE OF PACKAGING

Almost half of Australia's packaging waste is not being recovered for recycling, according to an article on The Conversation by academics at the University of Technology Sydney.

Overall, 56% of packaging was recovered for recycling in 2017-18, according to our study, carried out at the UTS Institute for Sustainable Futures and published by the Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation, a not-for-profit group that aims to reduce the environmental impact of packaging and is leading the effort to implement the National Packaging Targets.

Only 32% of plastic packaging was recovered for recycling, whereas the figure for paper and cardboard was 72%.

ITW Proline is well on the path to increasing the use of recycled materials in our packaging as part of our commitment to meeting the targets.

SUPPLY CHAIN ISSUES

Part of the challenge in managing sustainable building practices is having control of the manufacturing supply chain.

A paper by Aymen Sajjad (School of Management, Massey University, Auckland, New Zealand) examined the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on global supply chain sustainability.

"The findings suggest that the COVID-19 pandemic has been associated with a major shake-up of global supply chain operations and has contributed to varied sustainability outcomes. While the pandemic caused reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution, it has had serious social implications for the livelihoods and wellbeing of workers and their families. The findings further suggested that it is imperative for companies to build resilience in their global supply chain operations to better respond to future shocks and disruptions by adopting strategies such as employee protection schemes, advanced digital technologies, diversification, localization and regionalization and stakeholder collaboration and environmentally sensitive work practices." – Aymen Sajjad

ITW Proline's strategy reflects the industry's move to more sustainable practices. Controlling the supply chain will help to make the building industry more accountable and protects the company from 'greenwashing' tactics, which are designed to boost a company's eco-credentials without changing underlying corporate practices.

ABOUT ITW PROLINE

ITW Proline is Australia's leading supplier of fastener and hardware products to both trade and DIY customers. The market-leading brands under its umbrella – Zenith, Ramset™, Buildex®, Paslode®, Pryda, CAMO™, Lane and Prestige – are among the most recognised and respected in retail hardware outlets. With over 6000 goods on offer, ITW Proline provides its customers with total category solutions, offering a "one stop" location for key ranges. ITW Proline is a division of Illinois Tool Works Inc., a global manufacturer of engineered products and specialty systems operating in 57 countries.



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