

An Act to Reduce Plastic Pollution

(HB 1085 Rep. Sharlett Mena)

Plastics are an environmental problem. There are significant greenhouse gas emissions associated with every step of the plastics production process. Animals ingest microplastics and get entangled in larger pieces, and plastic foam and other plastic trash is on every shoreline. In many cases, less-polluting and more sustainable alternatives are available.

This bill will make tangible improvements in reducing unnecessary plastic waste and plastic pollution by:



Requiring refill stations in new construction to help transition to reusable water bottles

As of July 1, 2024, new buildings where drinking fountains are required must also have bottle filling stations.

Providing more bottle filling stations will encourage more people to use reusable water bottles instead of single-use plastic ones. It will also support public health by encouraging hydration and providing more free sources of clean, potable water.



Phasing out mini personal care packaging to help eliminate unnecessary, hard to recycle plastic waste

Lodging establishments would no longer provide personal health or beauty products like shampoo, soap, and lotion in small plastic containers or wrappers. Instead, they'd use bulk dispensers or non-plastic packages (such as cardboard sleeves for soap bars, cotton swabs, and shower caps). Similar laws have already been passed in California and New York as well as local cities like Bellingham and Bainbridge Island.

The change would apply to large hotels with more than 50 rooms beginning in 2024 and smaller hotels, Airbnb's, and other lodging establishments in 2025. Single-use items may still be made available on request to accommodate persons with mobility or other accessibility challenges.



Banning foam filled docks and floats to reduce a major source of plastic pollution in lakes and marine waters

Ban the sale, distribution, or installation in or into Washington state of overwater structures containing plastic foam, as well as associated blocks or floats containing such foam, as of June 1, 2024.

Many docks use floats that are made of or filled with plastic foam. When damaged, they leak bits of plastic foam that contain toxic chemicals, harm wildlife, pollute marine and shoreline environments, and are impossible to clean up. Foam-free docking—filled simply with air—is a readily available alternative that can be used in the same applications, at a similar cost. A punctured float can be repaired or replaced without damage to the environment.