

Single-use plastic ban comes into effect

3 years ago



The UK ban on single-use plastic is now law, although the BBC has questioned how many companies are aware of its existence.

With the new law impacting on all areas of England, including FM and hospitality businesses, the BBC has indicated that more publicity is needed.

It published a news report last Friday stating businesses had told it they were not aware that single-use plastic cutlery, plates and polystyrene trays would come into effect on Sunday.

The ban does not extend to plastic containers and trays used in takeaways or for pre-packaged food in shops, said the BBC, due to an exemption to the new rules.

Retailers can also continue using plastic plates, bowls and trays for pre-packaged food such as pre-filled salad bowls and ready meals.

The government said these items were classed as “packaging” and would be tackled under separate rules. These are meant to shift the costs of dealing with packaging waste away from local authorities and onto packaging producers.

Plastic pollution takes hundreds of years to break down, harms waterways and is a source of greenhouse gases.

From Sunday, 1 October, shops, takeaways, food vendors and other hospitality businesses will no longer be able to sell single-use plastic cutlery, balloon sticks, polystyrene cups or food containers.

It follows a similar ban in 2022 on single-use straws, stirrers and cotton buds containing plastic.

According to the BBC environmental campaigners have said the new rules do not go far enough, and called the government's approach "piecemeal".

The government said it was the "next big step" in its "journey to eliminate all avoidable plastic waste by 2042".