

A world without vinyl?

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Versatile, durable and incredibly adaptable, we believe that vinyl does not only positively contribute to your every-day life but also to South Africa's economic climate. By understanding its functionality, recycling opportunities, secondary market application and the negative impact of banning it as a substrate, we aim to not only promote user confidence but also secure its responsible future.

Getting the facts straight

With an expected life span of more than 30 years, vinyl is mostly used in the building and agricultural sectors. Only 5% of locally converted vinyl goes into flexible and rigid packaging items such as bottles, thermoformed punnets, clamshells, blister packs and clingfilm.

These items have very specific and necessary application values and are in demand due to high recycling value, as proven by the consistent year-on-year growth in recycling statistics reported by [Producer Responsibility Organisations](#) (PROs).



Although vinyl products are readily recycled in South Africa, there has never been a formal collection and recycling programme for post-consumer vinyl packaging waste, since the volume in this market was too small to justify the costs of collection and transport. Considering a different method of collection, Polyco has approached major retailers with a request to establish collection receptacles at their outlets, specifically for post-consumer rigid vinyl packaging since retailers have an important part to play in recycling under South Africa's new recycling legislation. Such industry collaboration between converter, PRO and retail encourages consumers to recycle their vinyl packaging items and [become part of the solution](#).

Binning vs. banning

As much as banning vinyl is not the answer, binning it is not the end of its life either! In fact, recycling it is the start of a range of other valuable products, used by yourself in everyday life. **[Banning any substrate will only partially address short term difficulties](#)** but attending to the root cause of the challenge will create long term sustainable benefits for all, including the environment. Mpact therefore drives [‘design for recyclability’](#) principles, for all plastic packaging grades, amongst brand owners to optimise the recycling rates.



Be part of the solution

In being part of the solution, you as the end user, have a [responsibility to contribute to recycling](#). Separating your packaging items at home and at your workplace is of importance. You can simply place it in a bag with your other recyclables. By understanding what can and cannot be recycled, consumers can make purchase decisions that supports recycling. Be sure to **seek information from [credible sources](#)** rather than responding to social media scares. To drive awareness and **break the legacy of misinformation**, a wealth of info is available from [The South African Vinyl Association](#) (Sava), the industry body that focusses specifically on vinyl.

‘Yes’ to flexible vinyl film

There is a vast range of benefits for flexible vinyl film, across the value chain. The **use of vinyl is driven** by the South

African consumers' buying behaviours, their living conditions, and the challenges that exist within our unique climate and supply chain efficiencies.

Even without access to fridges or suitable storage, fresh produce is still required to be preserved for longer periods of time. Thanks to vinyl's low permeability to water, vapour and oxygen, vinyl clingfilm often prevents food spoilage within the home, allowing for safe consumption. Through the use of [vinyl clingfilm](#), challenges related to supply chain structures such as time delays, food protection, inhibiting bacterial development and hygienic handling are also overcome, meaning that products such as cucumbers, broccoli and courgettes can reach the end user uncontaminated and in a consumable state.

As a **cost-saving and sustainable solution**, vinyl allows for minimised packaging use as it is highly stretchable. Its ability to be used on automatic machinery optimises productivity and shortens packing time. It also presents the food in a visually aesthetic manner and by being simplistic in its design, it helps reduce food waste by improving shelf life and eliminating appealing 'buy-me' food packaging designs. Instead, it presents the food item in its realistic form.

It has been proven that vinyl clingfilm outperforms its alternatives in every category: product shelf life, packaging appearance, machineability, machine maintenance, mechanical properties, and cost.

Quality ensured

[Mpact Versapak](#) is a leading manufacturer of plastic packaging and vinyl clingfilm. We produce a wide range of branded and unbranded packaging for both local and international markets. All our packaging is manufactured to stringent health and safety standards. Under our [BRC accreditations](#), we are committed and regulated to use accredited raw materials that are safe for direct food contact.

We have also proudly earned our [Vinyl Dot product label](#), the Sava label that acts as a sign of excellence and **assurance that our vinyl products are lead-free** and only use additives that support the circular economy and have been approved for high human contact applications.



FAQ

What is vinyl, actually?

Previously known as PVC, or polyvinyl chloride, vinyl is a natural resource-based solution primarily made up of rock salt (57%) and hydrocarbons from oil (43%), making it far less oil dependent and with a lower carbon footprint compared to other major thermoplastic alternatives.

How would I know if the vinyl clingfilm that I have purchased is safe for food application?

The Mpact Versapak vinyl clingfilm is safe to use for food application. To order our anti-fog, perforated vinyl clingfilm in various widths and lengths, [click here](#).

As a member of Sava, Mpact Versapak agrees to the use of correct and approved labelling codes together with 'Intended Use' information. Under this membership, our products and documents are audited at every level in the supply chain, by an independent Sava representative. As a signatory of the Declaration of Compliance, we confirm that all raw materials and substances used in the manufacture of our vinyl cling film have been food approved and we comply with Good Manufacturing Practices

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Why is vinyl recycling important?

Vinyl has an average lifespan of 30 years. Therefore, for vinyl products outside of the packaging category, a 'time lag' exists between consumption and recycling, or its presence in the waste stream. Some vinyl products that are being recycled now were likely produced in the 60s when vinyl production reached a peak. Therefore, creating an effective recycling programme is required for the consistent stream of incoming vinyl products, historically produced. Vinyl packaging can be recycled within the same stream.

Building on the inherent sustainability characteristics of vinyl, recycling is also key to minimise waste and energy use, and increase the recycle percentage in new products, outside of packaging applications. The EPR regulations act as an enabler to drive collection and recycling in terms of meeting the required recycling targets for packaging.

Can vinyl be recycled?

Yes, and it is being recycled in certain sectors. In fact, vinyl has the longest history of recycling of all plastics and can be recycled several times, depending on the secondary application. For more information, visit the [Polyco](#) and [Sava](#) websites.

Where can I recycle my vinyl?

You can place your vinyl products in your recycling bag, with all your other recyclables. Retailers also have an important part to play in supporting South Africa's new recycling legislation. Several major retailers have been approached by Polyco to establish collection receptacles at their outlets, to encourage consumers to recycle their rigid vinyl packaging.

What secondary products are vinyl recycled into?

In general, very few plastic items, outside of the packaging category, are used on their own and usually forms part of a larger, more valuable product. A vinyl window frame, for example, has little value on its own but added to a building, it contributes considerably. Vinyl's secondary applications are vast and ranges from footwear to banners, furniture, cables, electric and automotive components, hoses, fascia boards, gutters, plumbing pipes, flooring insulation and more.

How can I identify vinyl?

Vinyl is identified by the number three plastic symbol. The marking on the packaging helps recyclers to identify what recycling processes the product requires.



To enquire about our vinyl film, [click here](#).

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Mpact Plastics is a leading producer of rigid plastic packaging and cling film in southern Africa. We operate out of nine production centres across the country, providing packaging from plants with relevant certifications. We service the food, beverage, personal care, home care, pharmaceutical, agricultural and retail markets. In upholding company values, and as a supporter of the circular economy, we positively contribute to industry associations, enabling various communities to participate in recycling solutions.

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Mpact is the largest paper and plastics packaging and recycling business in Southern Africa. Our integrated business model is uniquely focused on closing the loop in plastic and paper packaging through recycling and beneficiation of recyclables.

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