

## BAG BAN DRIVES UP BIN LINER SALES

By Rebecca Brice, ABC  
Updated March 27, 2013, 10:29 am



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South Australia's ban on plastic bags in supermarkets has led to a five-fold increase in the number of plastic bin liners purchased, a report presented to state parliament has revealed.

In 2009, the state became the first in Australia to ban plastic bags in supermarkets.

The measure was expected to reduce the 400 million bags a year which end up in dumps by threatening non-compliant retailers with fines.

The University of South Australia report shows the ban is achieving its goal, with about twice as many shoppers taking reusable bags to supermarket checkouts.

Data from Keep Australia Beautiful shows South Australia has had the biggest decrease in single-use plastic bags in the waste stream, by 45 per cent since 2009.

But the report to parliament has also revealed 80 per cent of consumers now buy bin bags, up from 15 per cent before the ban came into effect.

One of the researchers, Professor Anne Sharp, says despite the finding, the amount of plastic going into landfill is still below what it would have been.

"A lot of people like to line their bins still, about nine in 10 we think line their bins and when bags are not given free from the supermarket people now buy bin liners," she said.

"They don't tend to use as many bin liners as they would receive plastic bags from the supermarket so they're not sending the same number to landfill, they're not throwing plastic bags out."

Professor Sharp says the Government could consider introducing new measures to reduce the reliance on the bin liners.

"It's just like with the original plastic bag ban. We knew we could take our own bags but we just kind of forgot because it was a bit of a low priority and we had that slight nudge, people reminded us, we had the campaign," she said.

"We changed our behaviour and it became second nature, it became a new habit.

"It's the same in the case of bin liners. We just need to break existing bad habits.

"There are other ways to manage our household waste that have a much better effect on the environment."