



Waste Authority

MEDIA STATEMENT

Building a waste-free future

An on-site system for recycling building waste could divert up to 150 000 tonnes per annum of waste currently destined for landfill according to a report released today by Waste Authority Chairman, Mr Barry Carbon.

With assistance from the Waste Authority's Strategic Waste Initiatives Scheme (SWIS), the 'Smart Builders' program, developed by EarthCare Consulting following extensive industry consultation in 2007, aims to minimise the amount of waste material going to landfill, increase recycling and reuse of building materials and reduce overall waste management costs.

Working with some of Perth's leading home builders, a model that utilises an on-site waste transfer station whereby building waste is segregated at source and then transferred to recycling facilities, was trialed at Multiplex's Vale residential estate in the Swan Valley.

"This has been an innovative project that has seen significant developments not only in resource recovery in a sector that generates considerable waste, but also in collaboration between major industry stakeholders," Mr Carbon said.

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“An important finding revealed by the report is the need for commitment from the top down. With support from developers, managers, suppliers and trades-people, the system has a real chance of success,” he said

It is estimated that there is about 750,000 tonnes of building waste from new home construction that could be diverted from Western Australian landfills each year. This is more than one third of the 2.1 million tonnes of construction and demolition waste from all sources disposed to landfill each year.

The Life Cycle Analysis undertaken as part of the project investigated the environmental impacts of one tonne of residential construction waste revealed bricks have a significantly higher embodied energy content (51%) as well as a higher carbon footprint (76%) than other components of residential building waste.

“This analysis clearly demonstrates the value that could be harvested with better recycling of construction waste” Mr Carbon said

The project has been supported by the Housing Industry Association (HIA), Master Builders Association (MBA) and the Urban Development Institute of Australia.

The report is available on the Authority’s website www.zerowastewa.com.au

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