

The Draft Waste Strategy for Western Australians aims to reduce waste creation and improve waste management in this state

Waste Not FOR WA



COMMUNITY ENCOURAGED TO RECYCLE OLD BATTERIES

Fremantle residents Shani Graham and Tim Darby are leading the way in encouraging their local community not to throw out "everyday" dry cell batteries, but to recycle them instead.

Old household batteries (dry-cell) can now be dropped off at any one of more than 150 new battery recycling bins around Perth – a new initiative recently announced by the Environment Minister Donna Faragher.

Shani and Tim welcomed the dry-cell battery recycling initiative, the first of its kind in Australia, to give everyone in Perth the ability to recycle common household batteries at a range of convenient locations.

"We are already talking to our neighbours about handing over their dry-cell batteries, including lithium (used in cameras, computers, calculators) and carbon-zinc batteries used in most households," Shani said.

"Concerns with dry-cell batteries are corrosivity, reactivity, and heavy metals, including mercury, silver, cadmium, and zinc – all of which is harmful to our environment."

The Waste Authority has estimated that more than 18 million household batteries are thrown away in Western Australia each year.

By separating your batteries from ordinary household rubbish, these valuable resources can be recycled into a range of new products, such as street lights and car parts, rather than go to waste.

Many people probably don't know what to do with their dead dry-cell batteries and don't realise they are harmful to the environment if they end up in landfill. The new battery recycling bins are designed with a slot in the top to allow batteries to be easily and safely deposited.

The types of batteries accepted include:

- AA and AAA cells (single use and rechargeable batteries)
- C and D sized batteries
- Button batteries (e.g. from watches)
- 9V batteries

- 6V batteries (e.g. lantern/torch batteries)

The Waste Authority administers a fund created by a levy on all waste that goes to metropolitan landfill sites. The Authority has allocated more than \$80,000 from the fund to the Southern Metropolitan Regional Council in conjunction with the Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council for a scheme designed to implement a metropolitan-wide dry-cell battery collection and recycling program.

The initiative is being rolled out by all five metropolitan regional councils – Southern, Eastern, Western, Mandarie and Rivers Regional Councils across the metropolitan area.

FUTURE REGIONAL AND STATEWIDE PLANNING

A crucial underpinning of modern waste management is the infrastructure needed for its collection, handling, processing and disposal. Waste infrastructure is expensive and significant planning is required for future regional and statewide waste.

While waste infrastructure is essential, it is understandable that most of us would prefer not to have waste infrastructure located close to where we live.

PERTH

Overall, Perth has adequate waste infrastructure for its needs towards 2020. However there are challenges ahead particularly in some geographic areas over the next 10 years unless there is planning designed to boost the rate of recycling.

In recent years, several alternative waste treatment facilities have been established in Perth to pre-treat municipal solid waste and recover materials prior to disposal to landfill. These facilities have contributed to improved recycling, improved diversion from landfill and improved management of greenhouse gases.

As with all waste management facilities there is a potential issue of interaction between the facilities and neighbours which requires careful planning and careful management.

Regional WA

Almost every small town in rural Western Australia has its own landfill, mostly operated by the local council. Many of these are unlined, so that leachate can leak into the environment.

Methane, a powerful greenhouse gas that arises from decaying organic wastes, is not collected and so

vents into the atmosphere. In smaller settlements, landfills are often unattended, leading to an increased risk of fires and dumping of inappropriate materials.

In mining settlements general waste is sometimes managed in conjunction with spoil. In some remote aboriginal settlements there is no organised waste management at all.

A 2005 study examined recycling infrastructure in regional WA and found that over half of the 110 local governments in regional WA recover traditional recyclable materials, mostly via drop-off recycling facilities.

Kerbside recycling is well established in the south-west of the state where higher population densities and proximity to markets in Perth improve commercial viability.

Sorting infrastructure in regional WA is sparse. There are materials recovery facilities in Albany, Bunbury and Mandurah and small-scale sorting at Broome, Esperance, Newman and Wickiepin, with rural sorting often relying on volunteer manual labour. Low-cost baling machines are often used for compacting aluminium, paper, cardboard and plastics in order to improve transport efficiencies.

Visit www.zerowastewa.com.au to find out more about future planning in your area.



From resource recovery, to recycling programs and waste infrastructure, the recently released Draft Waste Strategy covers the scope of waste management issues for continuous improvement, benchmarked against best practice.

THE DRAFT WASTE STRATEGY FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA

The recently released Draft Waste Strategy for Western Australia has been prepared by the Waste Authority of Western Australia to plot a path forward for the management of waste over the next decade.

The quantity of waste generated in WA is steadily growing and expected to continue to do so. As our population grows and our standard of living increases, we consume more materials and produce more waste.

The strategy aims to create an environment which encourages waste avoidance, resource recovery and responsible disposal of waste. After feedback is received from industry, local government and community, the strategy will be finalised and implemented.

Led by local government in the metropolitan area we have done well at diverting a lot of organic waste away from landfill, but our performance with problem materials like glass is not good, and we could do better at recycling with the large

amount of construction and demolition waste.

The Draft Waste Strategy plans for continuous improvement of waste services, waste avoidance and resource recovery, benchmarked against best practice. It sets state-wide targets for waste reduction, resource recovery and the diversion of waste from landfill disposal.

The draft strategy was developed by the Waste Authority with the assistance of consultants.

Whilst there has been a significant improvement in the standard of management of landfills in the metropolitan area, in areas of smaller population, many of the

landfill sites need to be revisited to ensure they continue to meet community expectations. These challenges can be addressed, but a coordinated and strategic approach is needed.

The draft strategy provides a forward looking approach for coordinating the efforts of State and Local Government, the waste industry and the community in delivering wise management of waste across the state.



RESOURCE RECOVERY

Resource recovery means finding uses for waste by way of reuse, reprocessing, recycling or energy recovery.

The benefits include conserved resources and landfill space, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, less air pollution and water savings. The challenge is to increase resource recovery despite unstable commodity prices, increasingly complex waste materials and often large distances to reprocessing markets.

At the household level, kerbside recycling has generally been embraced as a community norm. However, more materials can be beneficially recovered. Outside the home, waste generators have not embraced recycling to the same

extent and still send large amounts of recoverable materials to landfill. Increasing resource recovery from commercial, industrial, construction and demolition wastes is a significant challenge. The development of local markets for recovered materials is essential for increasing resource recovery.

Resource recovery targets

- In metropolitan Perth, at least a 70% recovery rate for municipal waste by 2015 (up from approximately 45%).
- In non metropolitan regional centres, with a population greater than 25,000, at least a 45% recovery rate for municipal waste by 2015.

- The contamination rate of kerbside recyclables collections will be reduced from approximately 25% to 10% by 2015.
- The recovery rate for construction and demolition waste will be increased from 14% in 2006/07 to 50% by 2015 and to 70% by 2019.
- The recovery rate for commercial and industrial waste will continuously increase over the lifespan of the strategy. At least one facility for processing commercial and industrial waste will be established by 2015 and a second by 2019.

What do you think of these targets?

Are they sufficient? Do you think they are achievable? What steps do you think need to be taken to achieve them?

MAKING THE MOST OF OLD MATTRESSES

Gone are the days of dumping old mattresses on street verges, with more than 100 mattresses dropped off in Western Australia for recycling each week.

Many people are taking advantage of Western Australia's first mattress recycling programs, supported under the Strategic Waste Initiative Scheme, funded from the landfill levy.

The Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council (EMRC) began recycling old mattresses this year, following a successful three month trial.

For the first time in WA, residents, businesses and local governments now have a sustainable disposal option for mattresses. The EMRC is extending its mattress storage

and processing area at the Hazelmere Recycling Centre, as well as buying new equipment to improve the recovery of mattress components for recycling.

The expansion will allow up to 10,000 mattresses to be recycled each year.

Most parts of a mattress can be recycled. Springs are melted down to make new steel; foam is turned into flooring underlay; and the timber is reused in particleboard, animal bedding and mulch.

Residents are encouraged to take their unwanted mattresses to the EMRC's Red Hill Waste Management Facility. Bulk deliveries of mattresses can be taken direct to the EMRC's Hazelmere Recycling Centre (77 Lakes Road, Hazelmere). Disposal fees apply.

Waste Authority grants greatly assist the EMRC to divert more waste from landfill.



Draft Waste Strategy Values

The aim of the Waste Strategy is to drive a decade of significant improvement in the management of waste in Western Australia.

The principles and objectives established in the Draft Waste Strategy will be applied to the three areas of waste management that the strategy can influence:

This includes: • Waste avoidance • Resource recovery • Disposal

The Waste Strategy has been developed, with the following values in mind:

Sustainability - Seeking an appropriate balance between social, environmental and financial considerations.

Resource efficiency - Increasing the unit output from resources such as water or energy.

Community empowerment - Providing the community with an active role to play in purchasing, using or disposing of a material.

Innovation - Finding better approaches for Western Australia.

Community acceptance - Achieving community support and resource recovery.

Simplicity - Reducing the complexity of approaches to waste avoidance and resource recovery.

HOW TO HAVE YOUR SAY ON THE DRAFT WASTE STRATEGY

The Draft Waste Strategy is now out for public comment and submissions on its contents are being sought.

Once all submissions have been considered, the Waste Authority will update the draft strategy and will refer the modified draft and a summary of all submissions to all submitters and stakeholders who attended the strategy development workshop in January 2009. This is part of the process where stakeholders have a further opportunity to comment and provide requests for changes to the modified draft. The Waste Authority will then submit the

modified draft Waste Strategy to the Minister for Environment for consideration together with a copy of all submissions and requests, and a report on how they were taken into account. The Waste Strategy will be finalised after the Minister's approval is published in the Government Gazette.

Once a Waste Strategy for Western Australia is approved, the focus will shift to implementation. Waste in WA will need to be managed in accordance with the strategy, which will be implemented in partnership between state government, local government, the waste and resource

recovery industry, businesses and the broader community.

The priorities and approaches set out within the strategy will be progressively addressed. The Waste Authority will coordinate the implementation of the Waste Strategy through its business planning process. The Authority will report on progress against the aims and targets of the strategy.



Your Say Waste WA

Send your submission via post for the Draft Waste Strategy to:
Locked Bag 43
Cloisters Square Perth WA 6850
Electronically by emailing it to
HaveYourSay@YourSayWasteWA.com.au