



**Enquires To:**

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**Sharp Safe Program**

The Sharp Safe Program is an initiative funded by the Northern Rivers Area Health Service (NRAHS). It aims to provide the community with options for disposal of their sharps in an environmentally sensitive and safe way.

Currently across the Northern Rivers region there are limited options for the collection of sharps waste with many of the sharps issued ending up in landfills via domestic waste collections. The NRAHS has consulted with a range of stakeholders (including the NEWF and member councils) about the program in order to develop practical and efficient strategies for disposal of community sharps.

A number of councils in the region are in the process of introducing a Pharmacy Collection Scheme where sharps users can present their used

materials to a participating pharmacy for proper and safe disposal, removing the need to add them to the domestic waste stream via domestic waste collections.

Lucy Williams, the consultant working on the program, attended the October NEWF meeting to give councils an update on the progress of the program. Key outcomes of the work to date include: a training manual covering issues relating to the use and disposal of sharps in the community; communication materials (information sheets, stickers and cards).

It is hoped that the Sharp Safe Program will be officially launched towards the end of 2003 with an extensive media campaign, aimed at raising awareness of sharps related issues and highlighting the new, safer sharps collection and disposal options.

**NEW WAYS WITH LESS WASTE**

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### **Interim Chairperson for the NEWF**

At the October NEWF meeting Councillor John Felsch (Ballina Shire Council) agreed to take over the Chairperson's position as a temporary measure whilst Councillor Joy Matthews takes a leave of absence. We thank Cr Felsch for his offer of assistance.

### **Resource NSW now part of the DEC**

On September 24 the Minister for the Environment announced that a number of separate agencies are being consolidated to create the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC). The DEC will incorporate staff from Resource NSW, the EPA, National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Royal Botanic Gardens. RNSW staff and programs will be a part of the Sustainability Programs Division. This division will also incorporate a number of programs from the EPA such as cleaner industry and cleaner production, waste policy and community education programs.

### **Reuse Directory online**

The NEWF Reuse Directory is online and ready to use at

**[www.reusedirectory.com](http://www.reusedirectory.com)**

The site lists a wide range of reuse and repair businesses across the north coast, as well as providing some information about reducing waste through reuse.

Feedback so far from businesses listed on the directory is positive. Promotion in the local media will now begin to help the community access the site. Businesses will also be assisted with in-house promotion through development of a poster for display.

Check out the site and grab yourself a bargain!

### **Thank you Heather**

The October NEWF meeting was the last attended by the NEWF Co-ordinator, Heather Cook. NEWF members passed on many good wishes and thanked Heather for her outstanding contribution to the NEWF over the past 3 years. Interim Chair, Cr John Felsch, formally thanked Heather for her efforts and wished her well in her new position.

Bernadette will be acting co-ordinator for the meantime, so please direct all enquiries to her.

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