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Business Waste Reduction Project News

The Business Waste Reduction Project has now entered its second stage. Case studies and reports have been completed for businesses in the areas of aged care, hospitality and correctional services. Industry groups and individual businesses in these areas have now received case study information to help them establish their own waste reduction action plans and strategies. The toolkit for self-help is also available online at the NEWF site at www.northeastwasteforum.org.au

Several new businesses have become involved in the initiative this year. The First Sun Caravan Park in the Byron Shire is well underway to addressing its waste management issues. Other businesses committed to improving our environment now include Wollongbar TAFE in the Ballina Shire and St Mary's High School at Casino in the Richmond Valley. The new year has also brought a change in project staff. Jeanie McKillop has replaced Samala Hogg as the project coordinator. Contact details are available below.

The waste reduction strategies implemented by each new business will act as an effective blue print for improving waste management among similar businesses in the project area.

This transfer of knowledge is an integral component of the project and provides an opportunity for all local business to participate in more sustainable operations.



First Sun

It was great to see The First Sun Caravan Park in Byron Bay implement new waste reduction strategies so promptly after its waste audit in November.

Graeme and Judy Tregonning, the parks managers, have been able to reduce the waste the park sends to landfill using simple yet effective actions.

Staff training and increasing the capacity for visitors to recycle has met with an excellent response. Bins have been strategically placed and are rotated when full.

The project is currently focused on improving signage throughout the park to help Graeme and Judy further contribute to waste reduction on the north coast.

Signage that is simple and uses graphics is important in the tourism industry for people from different countries or regions where recycling regimes may be different.

(See below for some examples)



AIMS and ASSISTANCE

The main aim of the BWRP is to assess the efficiency of waste management practices, characterise waste streams & come up with waste management systems that would reduce the volume of waste going to landfill through waste avoidance, reuse and recycling. It also aims to save these businesses money in the process.

If your business needs assistance in reducing its waste or for any further information regarding the Business Waste Reduction Project please don't hesitate to contact Jeanie McKillop at business@northeastwasteforum.org.au or visit the website at www.northeastwasteforum.org.au

Business & Environment Networks

Byron Sustainable Ventures Network is a network of local business owners and professionals who are as passionate about their environment and community as they are about their businesses.

About 50 businesses are involved in some way or other and most activities happen over a monthly dinner gathering. It is a place for people challenged with the dual challenges of being successful, and being responsible, to share their ideas, problems, and solutions with others of a similar mind. Current projects include collaborating with North Coast Climate Action Group on a project for local businesses to tackle climate change.

Their website is

www.naturalinnovation.org/byronsvn

or contact them on

mitra@mitra.biz and 0414-648-722.

ORGANIC WASTE in your BUSINESSES

Regionally many businesses generate substantial quantities of organic waste, particularly in the hospitality industry. This produces particular problems in our landfills as organic decomposition releases methane and produces leachate that impact on the environment.

Initiatives taken by local businesses to address this issue include;

- installing worm farms
- using compost or Bokashi bins
- arranging collection of organic waste
- mulching

All these options produce byproduct that can be used to enrich grounds and gardens.

For more information on this check you're your local council, <http://recyclingnearyou.com.au/> or the Department of Conservation web site http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/education/spd_edu_easywormfarm.htm

STAGE ONE COMPLETE

In recognition of their efforts to reduce waste businesses who have successfully participated in the Business Waste Reduction Project have now been formally recognised.

Byron Central Apartments; Maranoa Retirement Villages (of Alstonville and Lismore); Grafton Correctional Centre and Lismore Shopping Square are all to be congratulated for their outstanding efforts and for making a difference in their local community.



Representatives of Stage 1 businesses are presented with Waste Smart Certificates

To reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill in the region these businesses adopted strategies such as

- Raising awareness of staff through improved signage
- Installing worm farms or composting systems to deal with organic waste
- Reducing paper consumption by printing double sided
- Encouraging recycling and putting better systems in place

The BWRP provides the assistance, support and training businesses need to succeed at reducing their waste. The project is been expanded to include other businesses and a 'do it yourself guide' is available for all businesses on the website –

www.northeastwasteforum.org.au.