



## Who is the North East Waste Forum?

The North East Waste Forum (NEWF) is a voluntary local government group that was formally established in 1996 to specifically address waste management issues on a regional level. The group's membership currently consists of five councils in the North East Region of New South Wales - Ballina Shire, Byron Shire, Clarence Valley, Lismore City and Richmond Valley. The NEWF also has strong ties to the neighbouring councils of Kyogle and Tweed Shire. The NEWF member councils see significant benefits in belonging to the NEWF, working collaboratively and co-operatively to achieve local and regionally based solutions to waste management.

## Hazardous Waste Stores

The Hazardous Waste Stores located at Grafton Regional Landfill (servicing the Clarence Valley community) and the Wyrallah Road Waste Management Facility in Lismore (servicing the Ballina, Byron, Lismore and Richmond Valley communities) continue to provide a safe and environmentally friendly disposal option for the community.

Over 7,000 kgs of hazardous material has been collected from the stores this year. The stores have been promoted in the local newspapers and radio, and detailed information can be found on the NEWF website. Council staff from across the region have participated in training facilitated by the Hunter Councils group and conducted using the Grafton Store as part of the practical session.

## Regional Organics Management Plan

The second stage in the Regional Organics Management Plan aimed to evaluate the existing organics processing within and / or close to the region and determine what future processing may be required in an effort to deal with organic waste on a regional basis. After looking at a small number of organics management and processing scenarios that may emerge in the NEWF area in the future, it was decided that most processes were either beyond the financial capacity of councils or the throughput of materials needed for processing was too high. As a consequence a manual to assist councils to better manage composting processes at landfill sites for organic waste, food waste and biosolids will be developed.

The Organic Waste and Resource Inventory continues to be a valuable resource for the NEWF and councils, allowing decisions to be made based on reliable data in relation to potential waste reduction in the Business Waste Reduction Project and Education Program.

## Regional Waste Education Plan

The Regional Waste Education Plan has been developed to assist the NEWF and Councils in the provision of best practice waste education programs for the whole community. It supports the NEWF Regional Waste Plan, and provides a more detailed planning approach to the Education Actions identified within the Plan.

The document will help local and regional educators to design, deliver and evaluate more effective education programs and projects about waste. Education, training and communication are now recognised as fundamental tools in achieving waste reduction measures throughout NSW and beyond. The plan will assist the NEWF and councils to achieve these waste reduction goals for the region.

In developing a Regional Waste Education Plan the NEWF hopes to provide a strategic approach to NEWF education programs and in particular to:

- provide an agreed strategic direction for NEWF education programs from 2006 – 2008;
- facilitate a co-ordinated approach to waste education programs in NEWF member Council areas;
- identify involvement of Councils in NEWF education programs;
- provide a clear outline of the link between waste education and education for sustainability.

# NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTH EAST WASTE FORUM

NEW WAYS WITH LESS WASTE



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## The Green House

This year The Green House has gone from strength to strength, attending 28 schools and community events over 33 days. A record number of approximately 2,500 people have visited or have been visited by the education unit. In the 18 months that The Green House has been operational it has been used at a wide variety of events and festivals across the region, including schools, National Recycling Week, Local Government Week, markets, agricultural shows, environment & other special interest festivals and a Landfill Open Day event.

The performers – Second Hand Rose and PET - are an integral part of The Green House, vital to its success and the transfer of the educational message through a fun, interactive and informed delivery. In addition, the Site Manager and / or council representative are on hand to answer questions and provide additional information for members of the community.

The Green House resources have been enhanced this year in an effort to create an even better experience at each event. Site Managers now wear The Green House caps and t-shirts; a large display sandwich board is used to advertise the performances; council information brochures and Waste Management Services Summary Information Sheets are provided as needed; Byron Shire Council kindly donated two worm farms to the unit and they have proved to be a very popular attraction; the introduction of the "Waste-Full" and "Waste-Free" lunch boxes as comparisons has been a very useful tool with school groups. It provides a workable concept and challenge for the students and teachers to take back to school/home. Look out for The Green House at an event near you!

## NEWF Communication

You may have noticed the new look of the NEWF logo and communication materials that emerged this year. The NEWF and councils now have a range of materials to use for communication and promotion purposes. The comprehensive website provides much needed information for the community on all aspects of NEWF operations and projects. The website has been incredibly popular, registering in excess of 4,000 hits during the year. It is continually updated and has allowed NEWF to communicate with the community in an easily accessible format that is in line with current information trends.

In addition a brochure, display poster and banner were created to allow the NEWF and councils to promote NEWF activities at events, workshops, meetings, seminars and the like. A series of advertisements used as part of special promotions (such as World Environment Day and National Recycling Week) in local and regional papers, have allowed the NEWF to promote the messages of waste avoidance and resource recovery and direct people to the website for detailed information.

## Reuse Directory

The Reuse Directory provides an easy to use listing of reuse and repair businesses across the north coast. The popularity of the directory has grown both within the community and in its appeal to businesses. Following a mailout, telephone contact and media campaign, the number of businesses listed increased by 20% to over 240. The number of hits (visits to the website), now stands at 6,000 for 2005/2006. This year, the focus was on businesses involved in Construction and Demolition operations, and while the progress in listing these businesses has been slow, the links to the Regional C&D Network facilitated by the NEWF should assist with promoting the directory to this section of the business community.

**For more information on any of these projects please contact:**  
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