



Newsletter Enquires To:
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July 2007

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, Richmond Valley & Tweed Shire. The NEWF also has strong ties to the neighbouring councils of Kyogle & Lismore City. 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.

Reuse Directory

Once again this year the reuse directory has proved to be popular with the north coast community, with over 2,400 unique visits to the site across the year. The site provides contact details & links to over 225 reuse, repair, and rental businesses from Tweed to Grafton, allowing shoppers to easily locate businesses to service their shopping needs, saving time, money & the environment.

Construction & Demolition

The aim of looking further into Construction & Demolition (C&D) Waste was to develop a strategic regional framework within which detailed planning, data collection and policy review could occur, with the overall goal to drive improved C&D waste minimisation and resource recovery activities in the Region. A range of site visits were undertaken, stakeholder discussions and workshops were held (with both councils and industry representatives), and a report prepared with a number of recommendations for councils to consider and implement over the coming years.

Waste Wise Events

The Waste Wise Events Project has gone from strength to strength since its inception in October 2006. Our Project Co-ordinator, Natasha Morton, has raised the profile of waste wise events management considerably over the past 8 months. Councils nominated an original 8 events at the start of the project, with one event cancelled leaving 7 events, covering a range of community festivals, markets, sporting, cultural and well known local events to participate. The project is aiming for capacity building through participation & is developing knowledge & skills, raising awareness & inspiring behaviour change within the event organisers & the community. An 'Events Liaison' team is providing ongoing guidance, advice & support.

In addition to the resource recovery figures event organisers have reported a heightened awareness of waste related issues, & positive feedback from their event participants & in the media about the initiative to go waste wise.

To date 4 of the events have been through the extensive process of waste assessments or audits; development and implementation of waste management plans; post event evaluation and recommendations for the future. Since this is the first time the majority of these events have introduced waste wise management into their organisation the results have been most encouraging.

Event	Recycling Recovery	Organics Recovery
Billy Cart Derby	25% total waste produced	N/A
	TOTAL = 118 kg	
Bangalow Markets	20% total waste produced	48% total waste produced
	38 kg / month = 456 kg / year	90 kg / month = 1080 kg / year
All Girls Surf Showdown	40% of total waste produced	N/A
	TOTAL = 24 kg	
PRIMEX	TOTAL = 763 kg	N/A

The NEWF has partnered with the Packaging Stewardship Forum to purchase equipment for use at events across the region including waste & recycling bins (complete with red & yellow coloured lids), stickers & banners. This partnership has allowed the NEWF to further assist event organisers & councils to reduce event waste by providing a range of equipment & signage that is easily recognisable & consistent across the region. Through this partnership event participants have been encouraged to 'Do the Right Thing' with their waste & recycling.



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Business Waste Reduction Project

The Business Waste Reduction Project has now entered its second stage, building on the successful work completed in the first year. Case studies and reports have been completed for a number of businesses – retirement villages; RSM Club; tourist accommodation; shopping centre and correctional services. We will continue to add to the list of case studies as we work with businesses and organisations to introduce waste management systems. 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 self-help toolkit is also available online at the NEWF site at www.northeastwasteforum.org.au, and includes case studies and templates for working through the six stages towards effective waste management.

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 with many positive results. Waste collection has been reduced, recycling increased, sustainable purchasing put in place and improved signage and information resources established. Information has been transferred and support has been given to a number of other tourism operators in the Shire. Other businesses committed to improving our environment now include Wollongbar TAFE in the Ballina Shire, St Mary's High School at Casino in Richmond Valley and the Eco-Point Angourie Resort at Yamba. All new businesses are currently developing or implementing Waste Reduction Action Plans (WRAPs). The waste reduction initiatives of these businesses 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 businesses to participate in more sustainable operations.

So far this year we have formed relationships with the Byron Sustainable Ventures Network, the Northern Rivers Business Advisory Service and the Ballina Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Forming networks and relationships will continue to be a major component of sharing our learnings and reaching out to businesses that need help in this area.

Landfill Open Day

The NEWF co-ordinated two successful Landfill Open Days again this year, at the Grafton Regional Landfill and Grafton Transfer Station (Clarence Valley Council) & Nammoona Landfill (Richmond Valley Council) with the focus on school participation. Over 200 students & teachers attended from Casino West, Rappville, Ellangowan, Manifold Public & South Grafton Public Schools, taking the opportunity to experience resource recovery and waste management in their local area.

Each event included a range of educational activities including:

- ✓ A walking tour of the site (including gatehouse, domestic recycling, green waste, building waste & scrap metal waste areas & a demonstration of the waste trucks & other equipment);
- ✓ A bus tour to the tip face to see the compactor in action, the old cells, irrigation pipes & leachate pond;
- ✓ A performance of the Green House mobile waste education unit with a focus on waste free lunches & how to divert food/organic waste from landfill;
- ✓ Displays on 'Smart Shopping' & worm farm;
- ✓ Students were asked to make a pledge to reduce waste & live more sustainably & their photograph & pledge put into the Green House Pledge Book.

This project has steadily grown in popularity with schools recognising the visit as a valuable part of their curriculum studies on waste and resource use.

The Green House

The Green House was once again out & about at a wide variety of events & festivals across the region, including school education days, markets, agricultural shows, environment & other special interest festivals & a Landfill Open Day event. 29 events in total responded to our invitation to attend their organisation or event.

As a result of the evaluation process in June 2006, a number of additions have been made to the unit to increase the educational value, to cover a wider range of waste related issues & to allow demonstrations to be incorporated into the program.

- ✓ Composting demonstration materials & posters;
- ✓ Bokashi bin;
- ✓ Cross sectional compost model;
- ✓ Compost bin;
- ✓ Smart Shopping Display; and
- ✓ Teacher's resource packs.

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