

Minimising waste at work

Commercial premises in the Bega Valley Shire have made a remarkable effort to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill, through utilising Councils commercial waste and recycling service.

Currently businesses in the Bega Valley Shire divert approximately 57% of their waste from landfill, however the NSW State Government has set waste reduction targets for the commercial sector of 63%.



To assist businesses in achieving this target, this fact sheet has been put together with some handy hints to help the Bega Valley Shire community minimise waste at work.

Purchasing

Some things to consider when purchasing goods include:

- Is the product over-packaged?
- Is the packaging recyclable?
- Can the item be maintained, repaired or restored as it gets older?
- Is there another brand with less packaging?
- Will I use all of this before the expiry date?
- Do I really need this?

Some other ideas to keep in mind....



- Check to see if there is a less wasteful alternative
- See if your supplier has a crate exchange system, these will be more sturdy and reduce the amount of cardboard boxes that need to be recycled.
- Choose products with recycled content e.g. paper towel, napkins, office paper, toilet paper etc.

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Paperless Office

Whilst a 100% paperless office is difficult to achieve, there are ways you can reduce the amount of stationary and paper purchased/used, this will not only reduce purchasing costs, but also minimise the amount of materials being disposed of.

- Send an email to a colleague for a phone message, rather than using post it notes
- When reviewing documents, 'track changes' on the computer, instead of printing the document and writing the changes
- Use double sided printing for documents, this is a quick and easy way to halve the amount of paper required
- Single sided printouts and printer errors can be cut and stapled to make scribble pads
- Place a small recycling box under each persons desk, or next to the waste bin, so that people are not tempted to place their recycling in the general waste.

Disposal Options

Many businesses are looking for new and innovative ways of reducing running costs, waste disposal being a component of this. Here are some ideas to consider for reducing waste to landfill and reducing your costs.

- Separate your waste, instead of putting everything into a large skip bin, would a small waste bin and a large cardboard collection work better.
- Composting and worm farms are great for managing food scraps like coffee grinds and salads, there may be a commercial composting or worm farm near you that will take large amounts of material and turn it into a useful product, or why not process small amounts at work or home.
- Place recycling bins in convenient locations so that staff will place recyclables in these bins instead of just placing them in the general waste.
- Share bulk collections with other businesses in your complex.
- Shop around for services, in addition to Councils commercial waste and recycling collections, and check to see what other waste collection contractors are providing, many can tailor services to your needs.

For more information about Waste and Recycling Services in the Bega Valley Shire check out Council's website www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au or call the Waste Hotline 1300 369 842.

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