

**Newcastle Greens Policy on
Waste
Reduce, Re-use, Recycle**



Landfill wastes valuable resources (many of which are non-renewable) and generates a range of pollutants, including carbon emissions. Newcastle Greens believe that local councils, businesses and institutions, households and individuals all have a significant role to play in reducing waste.

The production of waste has many local and global, economic and environmental, impacts including:

- financial cost associated with administration, transport and handling of waste;
- using land for landfill;
- production of greenhouse gases such as methane from decomposing material;
- pollution of land and waterways with unidentified chemicals dumped in landfill;
- use of energy associated with production of new products instead of reusing;
- excessive water usage; and,
- litter and illegal dumping.

We believe that the best way to reduce waste, and counteract these negative impacts, is through avoiding its generation in the first place. Recycling, while well-supported by Newcastle Council, and most local businesses and institutions, households and individuals, still has economic and environmental costs. Wherever possible, avoiding the production of waste is preferable to recycling.

Reducing waste will benefit the community by saving money spent on waste management, creating a cleaner city, reducing energy use, and reducing harmful greenhouse gas emissions. Newcastle Greens support a 'zero-waste' objective, and believe that the ultimate responsibility for waste should be with those who generate it.

The Newcastle Greens will work to:

Ensure Newcastle City Council conducts regular waste audits in order to develop and maintain an integrated waste management strategy that follows world's best practice, including a review and update of the city's waste management strategy to achieve challenging but achievable waste reduction targets.

Develop a policy to require appropriate waste audit and minimisation programs for all new commercial and industrial developments.

Establish a formal system of Council support and incentives for local businesses, institutions and community groups, which actively seek to reduce or eliminate waste associated with their products and services. Public recognition and reward should be given for businesses, institutions, and community groups which:

- Reduce or eliminate packaging used at the point of sale.
- Refuse to give customers single-use petroleum-based bags.
- Accept point-of-sale return of packaging used in a transaction.
- Use 100% bio-degradable, recycled or re-usable materials.
- Take active measures to increase recycling of recyclable materials (including food), and decrease waste going to landfill.
- Reduce the use of 'junk' mail for advertising their goods and services.

- Have or introduce waste reduction as an operational function of their business.

Ensure that Council establishes formal commercial agreements with organisers of community events such that licencing costs include:

- The provision of recycling and other waste collection bins;
- The transportation of waste from the site; and,
- The ethical disposal and treatment of that waste.

Support the introduction of a state-wide container deposit scheme and associated legislation.

Reduce the use of PET water bottles within the Local Government Area by:

- Having Council install strategically-placed water bottle filling stations within City Hall and throughout the city.
- Having Council actively encourage businesses and other institutions to follow suit.

Actively encourage households to engage in home composting as a means to reduce the production of methane from anaerobic breakdown of food and garden waste.

Increase the ease of responsibly disposing of waste which is not currently taken in fortnightly Newcastle City Council kerbside collections by:

- Increasing the regularity and accessibility of the Newcastle City Council's drop-off days for household and commercial quantities of e-waste, hazardous and other goods.
- Establishing a free permanent drop-off facility for households with e-waste, hazardous and other goods.
- Ensuring that any waste collected at these points is sent only to certified disposal and recycling facilities, and that Council is on board with appropriate industry bodies and the Federal Government through the National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme to facilitate permanent drop-off points whereby industry takes responsibility for the collection and recycling of waste televisions, computers, printers and computer products.

Create business opportunities associated with the recycling of e-waste, including examination of incentive schemes driven by Council for establishment of such business opportunities.

Ensure a more active and effective role for Newcastle City Council in community waste education to promote waste reduction such that it is:

- Made a priority for Newcastle City Council.
- Far-reaching and effective in that it results in the reduction of waste.
- Regularly evaluated.

Ensure that the financial burden of waste management and minimisation does not fall inequitably on those with less capacity to pay.