

**Newcastle Greens Policy on**  
**A Zero-Waste City**  
**Clean living with a circular economy**



The Newcastle Greens will work to transform our waste management system to create a circular economy that promotes the reduction of resource use, and then reuses and recycles materials instead of sending them to landfill.

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 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
- litter and illegal dumping

The Newcastle Greens are committed to reducing the amount of waste our society produces, while radically improving waste management systems in order to create a circular economy.

The circular economy concept is built on the progressive implementation of the waste hierarchy (avoidance and minimisation, re-use, recycling, recovery and disposal). We recognise that the goal of a circular economy is a zero-waste society, and this is the long-term aspiration of our waste policy platform.

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.

**The Newcastle Greens will work with Council and the community to reduce and eventually eliminate waste by:**

***Redirecting 100% of the revenue raised by the Waste and Environment Levy into fixing our growing waste crisis.*** This funding will support improving the quality of waste management services, including waste reduction, avoidance and re-use programs, and environmental programs to encourage the development of innovative waste management technology, and rebuilding our recycling capacity.

***Banning waste-to-energy schemes.*** Waste-to-energy involves incinerating waste to produce heat and electricity. It is unsustainable, polluting and weakens community support for recycling. We oppose the inclusion of waste-to-energy in the waste hierarchy that underpins the circular economy.

***Establishing a moratorium on new landfill sites.*** A moratorium on new landfill sites will drive innovation in waste minimisation and material recovery and will reduce the environmental impacts of landfill on land, water and greenhouse gas emissions.

***Establishing a city-wide organic waste collection, including both kitchen and garden waste.*** This will divert more than one third of the waste stream of Newcastle from landfill, reducing the waste levy paid by Newcastle ratepayers, while creating a valuable compost product for landscape management.

**Eliminating all single-use plastics from Council activities, events and enterprises**, including events conducted on Council land.

**Ensuring Newcastle City Council conducts regular waste audits** to continually monitor the city's waste stream to assist identification of best practice waste avoidance and resource recovery systems.

**Requiring waste audit and minimisation programs** for all new commercial and industrial developments.

**Establishing a formal system of Council support and incentives for local businesses, institutions and community groups** that 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 that:

- Reduce or eliminate packaging used at the point of sale, including plastic bags
- Accept point-of-sale return of packaging used in a transaction
- Use 100% biodegradable, 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

**Ensuring 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
- the ethical disposal and treatment of that waste

**Reducing the use of PET water bottles within the city by:**

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

**Encouraging households to engage in home composting** to reduce the production of methane from anaerobic breakdown of food and garden waste.

**Ensuring that any waste collected by Newcastle Council 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 other electronic products.

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

**Ensuring 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

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

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For more information about Newcastle Greens policies visit [www.newcastlegreens.org.au/policies](http://www.newcastlegreens.org.au/policies) or contact our Councillors.