



Waste Management Strategy

June 2012



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1. Executive summary

The Waste Management Strategy outlines the strategic direction for the Northern Grampians Shire Council (NGSC) waste management program for the next five years. The Strategy outlines nine key service areas within the waste program.

The strategic objectives will be achieved through the implementation of a Waste Reduction Action Plan (WRAP).

The waste management program costs in excess of \$1.8 million dollars per annum. There are opportunities to improve service standards within the waste program that meet social, environmental and financial objectives.

Council through the delivery of waste programs can assist their community to reduce waste to landfill, increase resource recovery and improve access to waste management infrastructure.

As Mayor of the Northern Grampians Shire Council I commend the development of the Waste Management Strategy and encourage all members of the community to work with Council to successfully implement the strategic objectives.

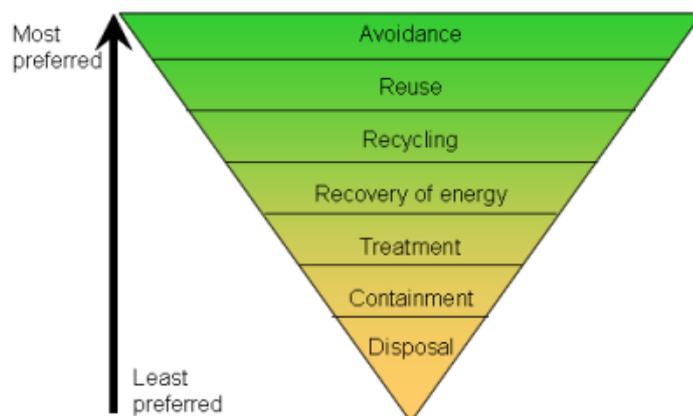


Cr. Dorothy Patton
Mayor
Northern Grampians Shire Council

2. Introduction

Waste is the by-product of most human activities. It is defined under the Environment Protection Act 1970 as any matter, whether solid, liquid, gaseous or radioactive, which is discharged, emitted or deposited in the environment in such volume, constituency or manner as to cause an alteration of the environment. Sustainable management of waste presents many environmental, economic and social benefits and challenges. The volume of waste produced by our society is increasing due to factors such as population and economic growth, technology, cost of products compared to repair of products, consumer demand for packaging and consumer expectations. Historically unwanted items were classed as waste and sent to landfill, however over the past ten years with emerging knowledge and technology waste is viewed as a resource that can be recovered or reused for other purposes.

The waste hierarchy depicts the order of preference for the way in which waste should be managed. It is one of eleven principles in the Environment Protection Act aiming to achieve environmental protection and when applied also results in economic benefits for individuals.



There has been considerable investment in recent years in systems and education to assist with recycling. Whilst this reduces waste to landfill the costs to provide the services can be substantially higher than landfill. Access to markets, transportation and sorting facilities are limiting factors with recycling and reuse of products.

3. Strategic Context

3.1 Council Plan

The Council Plan provides strategic direction over a four year period (2009 – 2013), incorporating four goals that align with Council's vision to create a better lifestyle and environment. The second goal is for a sustainable natural and built environment that meets current and future needs. Incorporating the minimization of waste through integrated management has been identified as an outcome and is to be achieved through the following actions;

2.2.1 Pursue regional solutions to waste reduction in partnership with State and Local Governments

2.2.2 Provide effective waste and recycling collection and disposal services and facilities

2.2.3 Promote the minimization of waste and litter through avoidance, education, reuse and recycling.

3.2 Council's Sustainable Living Strategy

Northern Grampians Shire Council's Sustainable Living Strategy (2011) demonstrates a commitment to a more sustainable, productive and healthy community through the implementation of sustainability measures in the areas of water, waste, energy and community education.

Council aims to minimise waste to landfill and maximise resource recovery through demonstrating efficient waste management practices in systems, services and behaviour and collaborative community education initiatives.

The strategy identifies eight actions for waste including the development of a waste strategy for the municipality (Table 1). The Advisory Group for Sustainable Living identified three of the eight waste actions (4.1, 4.2 and 4.4) as priorities for implementation in 2011-2012.

Table 1: Northern Grampians Shire Council's Sustainable Living Strategy waste action table.

Issue	No.	Action	Target	Priority
Strategic management of waste	4.1	Develop a Northern Grampians Shire Waste Strategy incorporating all areas of Council responsibility.	Waste strategy adopted by 2012.	H
	4.2	Complete a contaminated land register and action plan for known contaminated sites.	Contaminated land register in place by 2012.	H
Community waste reduction, reuse and recycling	4.3	Implement actions identified in the Grampians Regional Waste Management Plan 2007 – 2012 below; - Increase the Region's diversion rate from landfill from 19.1% in 2006-2007 to 36% by 2014, - Ensure all the Region's waste and resource recovery facilities are progressing to best practice standards.	36% by 2014. Best practice standards in progress.	H
	4.4	Develop new provisions for NGSC event permits to require organisers to supply recycling stations at major public events.	Recycling stations present at all major public events.	H
	4.5	Investigate viable models to process and utilise green waste and in turn establish a trial	Trial in place by 2014.	M
	4.6	Provide leadership and enable community initiatives to; reduce cigarette butt litter and minimise plastic bags and water bottles.	Campaigns supported and monitoring system in place to track success.	L
St Arnaud waste facility	4.7	Develop and implement a <i>St Arnaud Waste Facility Improvement Action Plan</i> .	Plan in place by 2013 and actions underway.	H
Reduced corporate waste	4.8	Update the NGSC 2007 Waste Reduction Action Plan to minimise corporate waste	Plan in place by 2014 and actions underway.	M

3.3 Grampians Regional Waste Management Group (GRWMG)

Regional Waste Management Groups (RWMGs) are established under the Environment Protection Act 1970 and are accountable to the Minister. They carry the primary responsibility for planning for the management of municipal solid waste (MSW). Regional planning for municipal waste occurs through a five year Regional Waste Management Plan, which set out objectives, targets and actions for the municipality. Northern Grampians Shire Council is a member Council of Grampians Regional Waste Management Group, along with Ararat Rural City Council, Horsham Rural City Council and Yarriambiack Shire Council.

The following objectives were identified as priority areas in the 2007-2012 Grampians Regional Waste Management Plan

- Establish baseline data for all waste streams in 2007-2008 and track progress annually.
- Ensure all putrescible and problematic waste is directed to the three designated regional landfills and reduce the total volume of waste going to landfill (from the region's kerbside collections and transfer stations) from 377kg per capita in 2006 to 300kg per capita by 2012.
- Decrease volume of waste from kerbside collections to landfill from 558kg per household in 2006 to 450kg per household in 2012.
- Increase the region's diversion rate from landfill to 36% by 2014, based on kerbside waste and recycling data (tonnage).
- Ensure all the region's waste and resource recovery facilities are progressing to best practice standards.
- Reduce the incidence of litter in the region by 25% from 2007 levels by 2012.

- Increase community understanding of sustainable use of resources to positively influence change in attitudes and behaviour.

3.4 Victorian Regulatory Framework

The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) is established under the Environment Protection Act 1970. The EPA provides statutory framework, regulation and enforcement for environmental protection.

They are responsible for the development and implementation of statutory framework for solid wastes such as municipal, commercial, industrial and prescribed wastes. The framework encourages resource efficiency, sustainable waste management and the prevention of pollution in Victoria. The mechanisms used to achieve these objectives include environmental laws, Environment Protection Act incorporating litter, statutory tools (including financial assurances) and partnerships with businesses, government, individuals and groups.

3.5 Victorian State Government Policy

The Victorian Government launched the Towards Zero Waste (TZW) Strategy in 2005 as an integrated approach to waste management, involving all sectors of the community. The Strategy's objectives for the ten year period are to reduce waste, increase resource recovery and reuse and reduce damage to the environment caused by waste.

The statewide target is to reduce the amount of waste generated in Victoria by 1.5 million tonnes by 2014 (compared to 2002/3). Another statewide target is 25% reduction in littering by 2014 (from 2003 levels). The municipal sector has been set a non-mandatory target to recover 65 percent of solid waste (by weight) for reuse and recycling by 2014. The NGSC is currently recovering 27% (commingled recyclables) of the waste collected through the kerbside service. Additionally 39% of the waste stream, excluding green and timber waste is being recovered through the transfer station services.

The State Government through the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) are reviewing Waste Policy for the state. The Policy to be adopted in 2012/13 will provide the framework for strategic, legislative, institutional and investment for waste management in Victoria.

3.6 Waste Reduction Initiatives

Federal

The Federal Government implements waste reduction and recovery initiatives to achieve waste reduction on a national scale, to which Council may be required to participate in. Product stewardship is an example of recent legislation in which the Federal Government has set targets to increase recycling rates of end of life televisions, computers and computer products to 80% by 2012-22. The first annual recycling target is 30 per cent in 2012-13. The community has an expectation to receive a service, because they hear of the initiative and other Councils providing a service. This becomes difficult for regional

Councils who may not have a suitable processor or facility in their region, therefore Council must choose whether or not to provide the service or pay to transport the waste materials to the closest take back facility.

State

The State Government also implements waste reduction and recovery initiatives that Council may or may not be required to participate in, such as Detox Your Home. Detox Your Home provides both permanent and mobile sites that households can dispose of their unwanted chemicals responsibly. This initiative is funded by the State Government and Council receives access to the service on a rotational basis. As with federal initiatives, Council is often party to State Government programs, however there can be long durations between Council receiving a service, therefore residents are dissatisfied and resources are lost because they are unhappy to wait for the service. The funding nature of many of these programs also means that programs may only be run on a trial or short term basis, resulting in the community relying on the Council to continue to provide a similar service once the program ends.

Other

Private organisations and community groups often organise waste programs such as cartridge recycling, mobile phone recycling and Blinky Bulb (fluro recycling). These programs are available within the community either through Council, GRWVG or private enterprise, however some people may not be aware of their availability. GRWVG has been able to transport the materials to take back centres on behalf of member Councils, however this provides no long term security and leaves Councils vulnerable to potential transport costs.

4 Waste Management Service Standards

4.1. Kerbside Collection Services

Current Service Standards

Council's waste management responsibilities are set out in the Local Government Act 1989. Local government's primary waste management responsibility is planning for and delivering solid waste management services within each municipality. Council provides a weekly kerbside waste and fortnightly recycling service to the townships of Stawell, St Arnaud, Navarre, Halls Gap and Great Western. Glenorchy and Marnoo receive a kerbside waste service only. Rural properties on route to townships are provided with a kerbside waste service where available.

Council's waste collection services 5,874 tenements and recycling services 5,383 tenements. In 2010/2011, 3,104 tonnes of waste was deposited to landfill from the kerbside service and 1,156 tonnes was recovered through the kerbside recycling service. This equates to 528kg of waste sent to landfill per household (from the kerbside waste collection). Our municipality currently diverts 27% of waste from the kerbside collection.

Strategic objectives

- Reduce waste to landfill and maximise resource recovery (TZW principle)
- Implement service provisions to achieve targets in the GRWVG Regional Waste Management Plan
- Provide equitable, cost effective and best practice waste and recycling collection services to residential properties
- Implement service standards that achieve environmental sustainability and public health objectives

4.2 Transfer Station Services

Current Service Standards

Council provides six transfer stations across the municipality. These vary in the opening hours and items that can be accepted at each site (Table 2). Transfer stations enable the community to drop off materials they no longer want, especially materials that are too big for their kerbside bin such as mattresses, electronic items, tyres and metal. It also provides a service for residents that do not have access to a kerbside service. The amount of materials that were recycled and waste that was landfilled from transfer stations in 2010/2011 is shown in table 3. 314kg of waste was sent to landfill per capita (from kerbside and transfer stations) in 2010/11. There are additional items recovered at the Stawell transfer station through the reuse shop. The volume and cost effectiveness of this service is not known as it is currently managed under a contract.

Table 2: Northern Grampians Shire Council's transfer stations opening hours and items accepted.

Transfer station name	Opening hours	Materials accepted
Stawell	Tues, Thurs, Sat & Sun 12-5pm (Daylight savings 1-6pm) Fri 12-3pm Total – 23 hrs/wk	General waste, compacted waste, commingled recyclables, green waste, concrete, electronic items, mattress, clean soil, scrap metal, motor oil, car batteries, tyres, gas bottles, DrumMuster
St Arnaud	Tues, Fri, Sat & Sun 12-5pm Total – 20 hrs/wk	General waste, compacted waste, commingled recyclables, green waste, concrete, electronic items, mattress, clean soil, scrap metal, motor oil, car batteries, tyres, gas bottles, DrumMuster
Halls Gap	Wed & Sun 12-5pm (Christmas to Easter: Fri 12-5pm) Total – 10 hrs/wk standard and 15 hrs/wk from Christmas to Easter	General waste, compacted waste, commingled recyclables, green waste, scrap metal, mattress
Great Western	Sun 1-4pm Total – 3 hrs/wk	Green waste
Marnoo	Only open: 3 rd Friday of month & 1 st Sunday of month 12-5pm Total – 10 hrs/month	Hard waste, commingled recyclables, scrap metal, clean soil, DrumMuster
Glenorchy	Sun 1-4pm Total – 3 hrs/wk	Green waste, commingled recyclables, scrap metal

Table 3: 2010/2011 waste received and processed at Northern Grampians Shire Council transfer stations

Waste type	Processing method	Tonnes
Waste	Landfill	728
Commingled recycling	Recycled	108
Steel	Recycled	342
Green waste	Shredded	972
Timber	Shredded	91
Car batteries	Recycled	2
Drums (DrumMuster)	Recycled	8

Council aims to provide waste facilities that meet the needs of community, while maintaining cost efficiency and management to best practice standards. Ensuring all the region's waste and resource recovery facilities are progressing to best practice standards is also highlighted as a target in GRWVG's Regional Waste Management Plan (2007-2012).

Currently Council has a number of sites that are highly subsidised, where operation/management and processing costs are in excess of 10 times the income of the site (Table 4). These sites are being utilised by a small proportion of the community and overlap with same or similar services provided within a 25km radius. Furthermore these sites are not running to best practice standards that ensure staff, public and environmental health and safety are being achieved.

Table 4: Great Western, Glenorchy and Marnoo transfer station customers, income and site costs within the specified timeframe

Transfer Station Site	Timeframe	Number of customers per month	Income	Site costs
Great Western	Aug 2011-March 2012	1-4	\$75	\$7200
Glenorchy	July 2011- March 2012	Total of 8 customers	\$80	\$6000
Marnoo	July 2011- March 2012	1-4	\$425	\$6000

Strategic objectives

- Manage Council’s transfer stations to best practice standards, while meeting service requirements and cost effective service delivery, within Council’s resource capacity.
- Ensure assets are maintained over the life of the service.
- Implement cost effective and environmentally responsible processing of waste materials
- Maintain adaptability to adjust to changing programs and initiatives of the waste and recycling industry.
- Work within a regional context for the provision of transfer stations.

4.3 Open and closed landfill sites

Current Service Standards

Unlicensed landfills are landfills servicing less than 5000 people. If the site triggers this threshold, the owner of the landfill is required to apply for Works Approval and licensing through the Environment Protection Authority (EPA). The EPA requires unlicensed landfills to be managed to Best Practice Environmental Management (BPEM) guidelines. These guidelines are also applicable to licensed landfills. Council has two unlicensed landfills operating within the municipality and a number of closed unlicensed landfill sites (Table 5). Council maintains the liability and risks associated with open and closed landfills operated by Council.

Table 5: Northern Grampians Shire Council open and closed landfills

Landfill name	Open/closed	Closure date	Landfill materials accepted
Marnoo	Open		Hardwaste
St Arnaud	Open		Household loose and compacted waste
Glenorchy	Closed	2000	Household waste
Great Western	Closed	2001	Household waste
Halls Gap (Devils Garden)	Closed	2001	Household waste
Stawell (Lavett Road)	Closed	1999	Household waste
Stawell (Hears/Hill Street)	Closed		Greenwaste burial and scrap metal store
St Arnaud (Millett Street)	Closed		Household waste

There is also the Pomonal Road licensed landfill operating in Northern Grampians Shire, which is privately owned and operated. The Pomonal Road Landfill currently accepts the Shire's municipal waste from the kerbside waste collection and waste collected at Council's transfer stations.

Strategic objectives

- Manage Council's landfills (St Arnaud and Marnoo) and legacy sites to best practice standards.
- Ensure St Arnaud & Marnoo landfills are cost effective in the delivery of services.
- Maintain adaptability to adjust to changing programs and initiatives of the waste and recycling industry.
- Rehabilitate closed sites and minimise future liabilities
- Maintain cost effective access to licensed landfill site(s)

4.4 Public place waste management

Current Service Standards

Council provides public litter bins in township locations such as main streets, parks, reserves, picnic and barbeque areas. To date Council has installed predominately waste litter bins, with a few public recycling bins installed in Stawell to trial public place recycling.

Most community and recreational facilities utilise Council's kerbside services within townships and on route. Events held within the Shire can access Council's kerbside collection contractors at their own cost. Council encourages events to be waste wise and to include recycling through the Sustainable Living Strategy. The Grampians Regional Waste Management Group offers a 'recycling trailer' to community groups and event organisers for use at events. It contains a number of recycling bins with signage and bin caps to encourage recycling at the event.

There is also no consistency in the provision of waste and recycling services to community groups, recreational clubs/facilities and charities. Some of these groups utilise Council sites and buildings through formal or informal agreements which may not have waste management responsibilities specified.

Dumping of unwanted waste and litter occurs across the municipality with incidences of dumping commonly occurring in bush, road reserves and outside transfer stations. Local Laws officers' conduct investigation and enforcement of dumping. Council is working in conjunction with Grampians Regional Waste Management Group (GRWMG) to reduce the incidence of litter and illegally dumped rubbish. GRWMG has a target to reduce the incidence of litter in the region by 25% from 2007 levels by 2012, however the baseline data for the region is not well established.

Strategic objectives

- Providing a public litter bin service that meets service needs, while being cost effective, decreasing litter and encouraging accountability for waste.
- Improved resource efficiency and maximising of resource recovery in public places.
- Equitable provision and charging of waste services for community groups, recreational facilities and events.
- Decreased incidences of dumped waste and littering through enforcement and education activities.
- Increased community understanding of the costs associated with waste management.

4.5 Resource and waste efficiency within Business

Current Service Standards

Businesses within the Shire have access to Council's kerbside waste and recycling services where available. The service is however designed to meet the needs of residential tenements and is therefore not tailored to business needs. Businesses can increase the number of bins for their business premise; however the collection schedule cannot be changed. Many businesses choose to utilise a commercial contractor for their waste management rather than accessing the Council service. Council has a Commercial Exemption from Garbage and Recycling Charges Policy which offers an exemption from Council's waste and recycling charges when businesses engage a commercial contractor. Eligibility criteria are outlined in the Policy and an application must be made to Council annually, through the relevant application form.

Strategic objectives

- Work collaboratively with GRWMG and the Economic Development unit to assist businesses with waste reduction.
- To ensure that business have access to cost effective waste services that meet their business waste needs.

4.6 Resource and waste efficiency within Council

Current Service Standards

Council provides a range of services and therefore produces various types of waste in its day to day operations. Council employees work in both office and field environments, including the offices and depots in Stawell and St Arnaud, parks and works operations, information centres, community health, children services and leisure facilities. Council is responsible for the management of waste generated at each of these sites. Office buildings have waste and recycling facilities available for commingled recycling and larger scale recycling occurs in the parks and works area of materials such as concrete, scrap metal, tyres, oil and green waste. Council was awarded Bronze Waste Wise certification from 2007 to 2009.

Strategic objectives

- Avoid the generation of waste in Council activities.
- Reduce Council's waste to landfill and improve resource recovery.
- Investigate procurement opportunities which involve purchasing items that meet waste hierarchy goals.
- Improved accountability for disposing of waste within departments.
- Employees to take responsibility for the waste they generate.

4.7 Community education and engagement

Current Service Standards

Council currently relies heavily on its recycling contractors and the Grampians Regional Waste Management Group for the delivery of community waste education. Council works in partnership with both the recycling collection contractor and processor to undertake education in the form of recycling bin inspections, media campaigns and presentation of information through community groups and schools.

Grampians Regional Waste Management Group has worked on a number of community education projects to increase community understanding of sustainable resource use and more specifically diversion of waste from landfill. Initiatives undertaken by the Group include Young Environmental Leaders Program, Race to Recycle, Western Highway Roadside Litter Campaign and Get It Sorted campaign.

Strategic objectives

- Educate and engage the community on the waste hierarchy, with emphasis on the principles of avoid, reduce and reuse before recycling.
- Improved awareness and understanding of waste services provided in the region.
- Work collaboratively with GRWVG for community education and awareness on waste reduction initiatives and programs.
- Support the community to implement waste reduction initiatives (where viable)
- To increase communities accountability for the waste that they generate.

4.8 Working with GRWMG

Current Service Standards

Council works in partnership through the Grampians Regional Waste Management Group and member Councils to achieve regional reduction in waste to landfill, resource efficiency, best practice waste management, effective service delivery and cost efficient processing of waste streams. Ratepayers may access services provided by neighbouring Shires such as transfer stations and kerbside services, where practical.

Strategic objectives

- Work in conjunction with GRWMG to achieve regional targets.
- Utilise the Group's knowledge, experience and resources to support Council's waste management program.
- Work in partnership with GRWMG to implement regional, state and federal initiatives to deliver projects that have regional benefits.
- Work towards consistent pricing structures across the GRWMG area.

4.9 Council waste management pricing policy

Current Service Standards

Council has adopted fees and charges for the kerbside waste and recycling services and the depositing of materials at transfer stations and landfills. These fees and charges are reviewed annually as part of the Council budget process. Whilst the costs to deliver the waste program are being captured through these fees and charges, there is currently no mechanism to determine how the fees and charges are calculated with respect to user pays, cost recovery, cost subsidisation and who should be contributing to these costs.

Strategic objectives

- Equitable distribution of waste management program costs across all ratepayers.
- Support for charitable organisations, schools, community groups and recreational facilities in responsible management of waste.
- To establish funding strategies for future waste projects and liabilities based on social, economic and environmental factors.

5. Waste Reduction Action Plan

The Waste Reduction Action Plan (WRAP) is a separate document with detailed information on the actions to be implemented over a five year period to achieve the strategic objectives set out in the Waste Management Strategy. The WRAP will be linked to Council's annual budget process.

6. Monitoring and Review

The Waste Reduction Action Plan should be monitored and reviewed against the performance indicators on an annual basis and progress reported to Council. Where opportunities are available, feedback will be provided to specific interest groups and the general community. It will provide an opportunity to highlight the Shire's achievements to date and provide the ability to adjust programs accordingly.

The Waste Management Strategy will be reviewed every five years to ensure that the Council maintains a strategic plan for waste management.