

NATIONAL RECYCLING WEEK

2009

Council Activity Guide

Councils have always played a central role in Planet Ark's National Recycling Week (NRW). Planet Ark works with our sponsors to develop resources and generate media that promote recycling generally and the aims of National Recycling Week specifically.

Councils provide much of the on-the-ground, community-level recycling education and services, making them a fundamental element in the success of NRW.

This Council Activity Guide has been compiled by Planet Ark with information supplied through the NRW08 Council Input Survey and the NRW08 Council Evaluation. It outlines a range of activities that have been successfully implemented by councils throughout the country. Each activity includes:

- ♻ Potential waste management, education and community development outcomes;
- ♻ Considerations when planning or running an activity; and,
- ♻ Where relevant, comments from the contributing councils.




Councils are welcome to use whichever components they wish from the guide.




Planet Ark would like to thank the councils that have contributed to the success of National Recycling Week over the years and who have contributed to this guide.



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Activity Big Aussie Swap Party	
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♻️ Diversion of waste from landfill. ♻️ Normalise and promote re-use initiatives. ♻️ Community engagement. ♻️ Kerbside recycling education opportunities. <div style="text-align: right;">    </div>
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♻️ At a Swap Party participants bring unwanted items, hand them to staff in exchange for a token. The items are then displayed for participants to browse. Once the Swap Party opens they can swap their tokens for items brought by other people. ♻️ To be part of the National Recycling Week Big Aussie Swap an event needs to occur during NRW and be open to the public – or a segment of the public such as ‘mums and babies’. ♻️ A Big Aussie Swap can be as big or as small as is locally appropriate or relevant. ♻️ The City of Sydney and Planet Ark have developed a comprehensive ‘How to Host a Swap Party’ guide including sections on: What to swap; Rules; Costs; Partnerships; Dealing with left-overs; and more. ♻️ A wide range of downloadable resources are also available including: Adaptable media releases; Promotional posters; signage; Case Studies and more. ♻️ All of these resources can be found at RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/CouncilSwap
Comments from Survey	<p>“When asked about the main message guests were taking home from the event, many indicated they were taking home reuse tips (29%) and positive messages about recycling (59%). These are significant responses and it seemed as though the reuse message got across to most guests.” Hornsby Council Evaluation.</p>

Activity Friday File Fling	
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♻️ Council staff and/or local business engagement ♻️ Increased material into re-use and recycling streams. ♻️ Paper re-use. <div style="text-align: right;">    </div>
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♻️ Office paper has a relatively low recycling rate because so much of it is stored in files that will never be used again. As well as providing a positive staff engagement activity, the Friday File Fling will encourage re-use and recycling of good quality paper. ♻️ Workplaces and businesses are asked to set some time aside on Friday 13th November (the Friday of NRW) and encourage staff to clean out their files. This can be carried out as an activity within council offices and/or promoted to local businesses. ♻️ Good quality single sided paper can be used a note pads – either by binding or gluing it or putting it into folder. ♻️ Producing a printable cover for these notepads is a good way to demonstrate your workplace’s commitment to sustainability. ♻️ It might be necessary to order extra recycling bins, or set up a collection system for the paper so it can go in existing bins when there is space. ♻️ Make sure sensitive or confidential documents are disposed of correctly and that mandatory retention rules are adhered to. ♻️ Add an afternoon tea or drinks to the event and make it a social event. ♻️ A ‘How to Host’ guide is available at RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/Business

Activity Update Your RecyclingNearYou Pages	
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♻️ Ensure residents have accurate local recycling information. ♻️ Engage and gather feedback from residents.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♻️ Every council in Australia has editorial access to its RecyclingNearYou.com.au web pages. The RecyclingNearYou Hotline (1300 733 712) can provide log-on details as well as assist in editing your pages. ♻️ Check, and if necessary, update the council related information including what's collected, collection times, bin replacement and other events. <p>Poll/Quiz Function</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♻️ Add the Poll/Quiz function to gather information from residents about their beliefs, attitudes and/or behaviours. ♻️ See an example of the Poll/Quiz function on the home page of RecyclingNearYou.com.au. ♻️ Questions can be tailored to local needs. Find examples of questions at RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/Councils

Activity Community Stalls (Shopping Centres, Councils Buildings, Fairs/Events and/or Schools)	
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♻️ Education about contamination. ♻️ Myth busting re what happens to recycling. ♻️ Community engagement.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♻️ A Stall needs an activity or draw card to encourage people to approach and engage with it. ♻️ Examples of activities that have been effective include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> △ Give-aways like mini bins, fridge magnets, pamphlets etc, △ Short recycling quiz, △ Guessing competition (how many crushed cans in a bale etc), △ Display of Items made from recycled materials, △ Mascots or balloons to attract kids to the stall, △ Display common questions that residents may have (in an open question format) to encourage them to ask staff the answer, △ Use of key (open) questions that you can use to engage residents in discussion, eg 'What do you do with your used printer cartridges?,' 'How much less energy do you think is needed to make an aluminium can from recycled material?,' <div data-bbox="954 1144 1380 1686" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>One of the quiz questions available from RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/Councils</p>
Comments from Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♻️ "Staffed shopping centre displays and handouts receive the most interest. Residents are already there and can afford to spend a few seconds asking 'that' question they needed to ask but wouldn't otherwise."



Activity		Material Recovery Facility or Transfer Station Tour
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♻ Education about contamination. ♻ Myth busting ie - what happens to recycling once it's picked up. ♻ Community engagement. 	
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♻ Work with the recycling contractor to see whether running a number of tours throughout the day or week is possible. ♻ Begin promoting the tour several weeks before hand. ♻ Be clear about dress code and safety regulations. ♻ Award the tour as a prize to a school/community group that has achieved some success in waste reduction, recycling rate increase or other achievement. 	
Comments from Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♻ "Experience has shown these to be extremely effective in getting the benefits of recycling across to residents and developing their understanding of the recycling process" <p>In terms of 'usefulness' MRF tours were rated equal first (with composting / worm farming workshops) by survey respondents.</p>	

Activity		Composting / Worm Farming Workshops
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♻ Broaden the definition of recycling from just paper and co-mingled material. ♻ Increase diversion from landfill. ♻ Reduce organic waste. 	
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♻ Special promotion should focus on identifying the workshop as a NRW event, including in adaptable media release. ♻ Running existing workshops will have few or no resource implications. ♻ Free or subsidised worm farms or compost bins could be distributed as part of the workshop or throughout the week. <p>See RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/Councils for access to the NRW logo.</p>	
Comments from Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♻ "Worm farming workshop always gets the most attention." ♻ "A worm farm and compost bin subsidy worked well. An increase in advertising of this subsidy through Garden Week 2008 and through our resident newsletter has seen the uptake of this diversion go through the roof." <p>In terms of 'usefulness' MRF tours were rated equal first (with composting / worm farming workshops) by survey respondents.</p>	



Visit RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/Councils

for a range of downloadable logos, activities and resources and for information about National Recycling Week. For further information feel free to call Planet Ark on 02 8484 7200 or e-mail Recycling@PlanetArk.org

Activity	Promoting ‘Cartridges 4 Planet Ark’, MobileMuster and other existing E-Waste Programs	
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♻ Increase recycling rates for e-waste. ♻ Increase profile for existing programs. ♻ Link councils to existing programs. 	
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♻ By tapping into existing programs there are few resource implications for council. ♻ Collection points can be established in council properties (libraries, service centres) or council can promote existing collection points (eg, Australia Post). ♻ Council can work with local schools and/or businesses to establish them as collection points. ♻ NRW can be used as the launch event in an ongoing collection program. ♻ Other materials that can be collected may include Compact Fluorescent Light-globes, batteries, corks, eyeglasses, motor oil and so on. ♻ For more info or to register: visit PlanetArk.com/cartridges or call 1800 24 24 73; or MobileMuster.com.au or call 1300 730 070 <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 10px;">   </div>	
Comments from Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♻ “Council has a good ongoing response to the e-waste, cartridge and MobileMuster recycling.” ♻ “Tapping into these programs is an easy and effective way to reduce waste without needing to invest many resources.” 	

Activity	Kids’ Colouring Competition and Activities	
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♻ Education about what can and can’t be recycled and contamination. ♻ Community engagement. 	
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♻ Kids have a powerful influence over the recycling habits of a household. Educating them early is likely to have an impact on the entire household. ♻ All or winning entries can be displayed at council facilities or schools. ♻ Colouring pages and activity sheets can be downloaded from RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/Councils 	
Comments from Survey	<p>For NWR07 Dubbo City Council hosted a competition that received over 800 entries. See the case study below for further details.</p>	

Activity Second Hand Saturday / Community Garage Sales	
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♻️ Reduce landfill tonnage. ♻️ Community engagement.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♻️ Second Hand Saturdays are community wide garage sale events. Councils allocate a specific day for a certain region/suburb then ask residents interested in running a garage sale to register their address. Council then promotes the event with address listings, through the local press, on their website and through printed resources. The ultimate aim is to reduce dumping and landfill costs. A hard waste clean up usually follows the event to remove any unwanted material. ♻️ Further information on running a Second Hand Saturday can be found easily through an internet search. Sydney's Burwood Council page has some good information. ♻️ Kiama Council in NSW works with a local community group (like the Surf Life Saving Club) to host Second Hand Saturday at a central location. The chosen community group provides traffic assistance in return for the money raised on the day. Participants – both buyers and sellers - pay a nominal fee for access to the site. Sales happen out of the boot of the sellers' cars. Council estimates that the March 2008 event resulted in a 50-75% reduction in landfill from previous clean ups.

Activity Local Media Releases	
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♻️ Provide information about council activities. ♻️ Recycling education and information.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♻️ Planet Ark produces media releases for use by councils. They are sent via e-mail about a month before NRW. They can also be downloaded from RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/Councils. ♻️ For maximum impact, local information and quotes should be added to these releases. ♻️ Releases can be used to promote new initiatives as well as promoting existing initiatives as part of NRW.
Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♻️ "Press releases seemed to give the greatest exposure based on responses." ♻️ "Media releases increased take up of information and resulted in residents contacting Council for more information."

Activity E-Waste Collection	
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♻️ Increase diversion from landfill.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♻️ Establishing an e-waste collection has the potential to use considerable resources. ♻️ Hurstville, Kogarah and Rockdale Councils in Sydney have written 'A Guide to Investigating and Conducting an Electronic Waste Project in Your Council' which outlines the issues a council should consider before establishing an e-waste collection program. It can be downloaded at http://www.hurstville.nsw.gov.au/_upload/files/E-Waste%20Information%20Guide.pdf



Activity	Other Suggestions
Consider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♻️ Providing residents with life cycle information for a range of key materials. ♻️ Developing back to basics campaigns (maybe in conjunction with waste/recycling contractor). ♻️ Hosting a community town clean up event (like Clean Up Australia) with appropriate materials being separated and sent for recycling. ♻️ Launching a public place recycling trial. ♻️ Using NRW as a launch pad for new initiatives.

Case Study

Hornsby Shire Council Clothing Swap Party



With its proven success in inner Melbourne and Sydney, trialling a clothing exchange in Hornsby Shire during NRW08 seemed like a great idea. By creating an event where clothing items are swapped for tokens and these tokens swapped for another participant's clothes, we aimed to create a place where our guests re-think unnecessary consumerism and reuse and recycle their clothing.

The event was undertaken with the help of Anglicare, and a partnership formed enriching the event as we shared resources. Guests were invited to check-in from 6:30pm - 7:30pm and received tokens for each clothing item accepted. Nibbles and drinks were also offered at this time whilst Council and Anglicare staff were accepting and hanging clothes. The exchange itself

was between 7:30pm – 9:30pm, and when checking out, guests were asked to fill out a brief survey.

Survey results from this trial event indicate that the exchange was a success, with 95% of participants indicating they would attend similar events in the future. We estimate approximately 90 participants attended, the majority bringing the maximum 6 items of clothing to exchange. 96% of participants indicated they enjoyed the event, and when asked why, 12% of survey responses indicated it was because it was a good way to recycle or reuse their clothes.

Hornsby Shire Council have since conducted three more successful clothing swap parties. For the full case study, visit RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/CouncilSwap