



Waste management

Caravan Parks generate more waste than any other segment of the accommodation and hospitality industry in the Goulburn Valley and North East Victoria.

What is in your waste stream?

Detailed waste audits were conducted during the course of the project which revealed that on average 60% of waste generated is recyclable material.

If you look at your waste you will notice that much of the material that is going to landfill can in fact be recycled. Successful removal of recyclables from the waste collected can make a significant impact on the amount of waste taken to landfill and reduce your waste disposal fees.

Initial assessment

Look at your waste disposal situation:

Where is the waste coming from, what are you disposing of, what does it cost you in terms of time and money, what choices are there?

Your Regional Waste Management Group and Council can help you with advice and information.

Waste minimisation strategies

In order to manage any waste, it is often best to start at the source. It involves encouraging people to separate their waste by provision of separate containers for different materials. In addition to providing recycling bins around the park, crates and bags are an effective option for individual sites.

Implementation of new waste minimisation strategies can also result in savings on petrol, wear on vehicles, time, and other materials.



Waste Stations aid in separating rubbish, reducing contamination levels, saving time and reducing costs.

Work towards

A good education program will help to get people to separate garbage and utilise your system properly.

- Giving visitors information on point of arrival.
- Signage – clear and colourful.
- Talk to your guest informing them of the recycling practices in the park.
- Place signage in toilets.

What to do if things are not working

Look at where the *bad* recycling is still coming from, residents, visitors – campers, caravan or cabins.

- If residents, then you may have to evaluate why the recyclables are not being separated out. Perhaps change the way the recyclables are collected.
- Do you need to provide them with a bin?
- Look at increasing education and let them know of the benefits to them and the park.
- If visitors, then you may have to look for an easier system, i.e. provide bins or improve the education message.
- Signs may need to be more prominent.
- Ask your visitors for feedback.
- Contact your Regional Waste Management Group for free help and advice.

Cost effective recycling options

- Kerbside recycling systems tend to be the most efficient way of collecting a range of recyclable materials, although these systems are not often available to commercial operators. Ask your local council if they offer or can make kerbside recycling systems available to commercial operators.
- Operators who implement a recycling system and are able to use kerb side collection services provided by local municipalities, can reduce their waste bill by over a thousand dollars a year.
- Recyclable material is approximately 50% cheaper to dispose of than general waste. Waste audits have revealed that approx. 60% of waste is recyclable; therefore it is possible to reduce your waste bill by 25%.
- As recycling services are available through-out North East Victoria and the Goulburn Valley. Don't continue to pay exorbitant waste disposal costs. Shop around for a recycling and waste service that best meets your needs.



What can be recycled?

Before you start recycling, check with your local council or waste contractor for details about what recyclables are collected in your area as there is variation from council to council. To find out what your council recycles, see the link in the *Useful Information Section*.

It is extremely important to only put out the recyclable materials collected by your council/ waste contractor. While placing wrong materials or putting food waste in the recycling container may seem harmless, it can contaminate the whole load. If there is too much contamination, the load will not be accepted by companies buying the recycled materials, which may result in the whole load being sent to landfill.

Why bother to recycle?

Great cost saving can be achieved. It makes great businesses sense to look at the cost savings which implementing a recycling program in your park can achieve for your park.

“We introduced a recycling system in the park 6 months ago. With minimal effort we have reduced our waste bill by 10%. We expect to reduce our waste costs further when we develop information for our visitors” - Ray

“Implementing a recycling system with (240 ltr) wheelie bins has reduced our work load and 95% of people are familiar with the wheelie bin system.” - Steve

Communication is an important tool in any business. Your visitors are your business. Ask them for their ideas. After all, their behaviour is critical to the success of your waste minimisation plan.

Effective recycling system

An effective recycling system is one that is easy to use and does not result in waste ending up in recycling bins and vice versa. If recyclables end up in general waste, your business will not get the full benefits of recycling. Bulky materials such as cardboard and film plastics can quickly fill up general waste bins, and waste bins are generally more expensive to have collected than recycling bins or bales.

Key components of an effective recycling system

- Clearly label both the recycling and waste bins. Consider using colour coding and/or pictures to indicate each bin's purpose. Sustainability Victoria's image library (see *Useful Information Section*) has downloadable signs suitable for the workplace.
- Always place general waste bins next to recycling bins to overcome the problem of people throwing waste in the recycling bin because there is no general waste bin handy.
- Involve staff and employees in the design and implementation of the recycling system.
- Periodically reinforce with staff, employees, contractors and cleaners the purpose of bins and what can be recycled.
- Regularly monitor the recycling system. Keep monthly records of quantities of waste and recyclables collected, as well as levels of contamination. It is recommended that park operators request recycle processing dockets from the collection contractor in order to monitor recyclables diverted to landfill and cross check invoices.

Campers – an option to meet the camper's needs would be to have mobile, movable garbage bins to create a *waste station* – (pair rubbish bins with recycling bins). These could be placed out when needed and brought in when camping grounds are not being used.

AAA Tourism - Removing barriers

AAA Tourism is currently reviewing their STAR rating criteria on the number and placement of bins in caravan and tourist parks.



Signage



Caravan park operators participating in the project were asked what would help them manage their waste more efficiently.

Education

Education of park users is critical if any degree of success is to be achieved. It is also mistakenly thought to be one of the most difficult aspects of the implementation of any waste management program. Clear, concise information supported by interesting and simple graphics works best. Instructions on how to use the system should be clearly set out with little or no room for confusion.

Park managers and owners will know the best way to get the message to their park users. The different ways used depends upon the different parks. Below is a summary of how you can educate park users. More than one method can be used and most complement existing ways of communication.

- Brochures
- Park Rules
- Check in form/information
- Verbal
- Park newsletters
- Signs
- Posters
- Fridge magnets
- Web site

Waste Wise Program

What is the Waste Wise Program?

The Waste Wise Program is a state-wide initiative of Sustainability Victoria, facilitated on a local level by NevRwaste and Resource GV. The program offers Certification to businesses that make a commitment to reducing their waste production. Currently over 200 businesses have committed to participating in the Waste Wise program.

Benefits of being Waste Wise

Waste Wise is entirely voluntary, and there are no costs involved in participation, benefits include:

- The opportunity to reduce waste disposal costs and save money through reduction in use of consumables e.g.: paper.
- Improve corporate image and the ability to promote your business as 'clean and green'
- Meeting customers expectations
- Improve staff morale
- Reduce litter and associated costs
- Reduce waste to landfill, which will reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- Access to guidance, resources and ongoing support

Useful Information

Sustainability Victoria

www.sustainability.vic.gov.au

What can be recycled in your area?

<http://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/www/html/2053-council-waste-and-recycling-services.asp?intSiteID=4>

Waste Management Signage

<http://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/www/html/1709-away-from-home-waste-signage.asp>

North East Victoria Regional Waste Management Group – NevRwaste

www.nevrwaste.vic.gov.au

Goulburn Valley Regional Waste Management Group - Brad Montgomery

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NSW – Caravan park waste management case study

http://www.northeastwasteforum.org.au/NEWF/CMS/uploads/BWRP/First%20Sun%20Case%20Study_July%202007.pdf