

## Waste Management Update

Norfolk Island Regional Council recently invited participants in the Norfolk Island Waste Challenge to the Waste Management Centre to take a look behind the scenes. Over 70 participants across four separate tours were keen to understand more about the various waste streams handled at the centre, processing of waste and recyclables and what happens with each stream. NIRC Staff wishes to thank the visitors for their interest in Council waste operations and commitment to reduce our waste impact on the island. A special thank you to Rebekah Gupte and Sharyn Quintal for organising the NI Waste Challenge and raising awareness of waste generation and avoidance within the community. Well done yorlye!



A number of excellent questions were raised during the tours, like “what plastics are recyclable and what are not?” and “should we remove the cap from plastic and glass bottles?”. The answers to some of these questions are not straightforward and require an understanding of different plastic types. The image below, kindly put together by Rebekah,

explains the simplest way of telling different plastic types apart. NIRC is able to package and export PET, Vinyl and PE (both high and low density) plastics to the mainland for recycling. There are currently no recycling options for Polypropylene (PP), Polystyrene (PS) and other hard plastics, which are to be disposed of as General Waste. This includes soft plastics, such as plastic wrapping and bags. Most plastic bottles and containers can be differentiated using the numbered symbol, shown in the left column below. A number of other recycling tips were provided by our Team Leader – Waste and Environment, PJ Wilson, during the challenge. NIRC will improve its information on segregation as a result of this feedback. In the meantime, refer to the information on the Melaleuca on Norfolk Facebook page. Thanks again Rebekah!

Symbol	Description	
 PETE	Clear tough plastic such as soft drink, juice and water bottles. ✓	
 HDPE	Common white or coloured plastic such as milk containers and shampoo bottles. ✓	
 V	Hard rigid clear plastic such as cordial bottle. ✓	
 LDPE	Soft flexible plastic e.g. squeezable bottles such as sauce bottles. ✓	
 PP	Hard but flexible plastic such as microwave ware, takeaway containers, some yoghurt/ice cream/jam containers, hinged lunch boxes. ✗	
 PS	Rigid, brittle plastic such as small tubs and margarine/butter containers. ✗	
 OTHER	All other plastics, including acrylic and nylon. Examples include some sports drink bottles, sunglasses, large water cooler bottles. ✗	

Also, as a result of feedback during the tours, our WMC staff have provided separate containers for aluminium wine bottle caps and plastic bottle lids. These are located directly beneath the glass and plastic chutes at the centre. We encourage our customers to help in segregating these wastes, reducing our impacts on the local environment and generating a resource for recycling. Plastic bottle lids will be packaged with other lids from businesses across the island and sent to the mainland to be turned into artificial limbs for children. Check out Lids4Kids for more info.



Based on strong interest in the Waste Management Centre tours during the NI Waste Challenge, NIRC is now looking at the opportunity for future tours to raise awareness and engagement on waste avoidance, segregation and the importance of organic waste. We are working with NI Connect and Banyan Park on tours for young people and will seek engagement with Norfolk Island Central School on future tours for students. Keep an eye out for tour opportunities when they are offered.



NIRC is currently working with experts on opportunities to recycle and reuse plastics on island, further reducing the need to export waste types. We will keep the community informed of these plans once they start to take place.

A reminder to community members to collect your waste disposal tickets from Customer Care after payment of your Community Waste Management Charge. Residences will receive sixty \$2 tickets and tourist accommodation premises will receive six \$5 tickets per bed. While disposal fees have increased on the previous years' prices, ticket denominations were kept the same so these can be used in conjunction with existing tickets purchased from local retailers.

Plans continue to close Headstone to the public in the coming months. An area at the rear of the Waste Management Centre is being prepared to receive builder's and demolition waste. This means that all wastes will be received at the WMC and Headstone will no longer be open to the public. The community will be advised in advance of this change in operation.

Council thanks the community for their ongoing commitment to managing waste and looks forward to working closely with residents and business in reducing our waste impacts over the coming months.

Phil Reid

**MANAGER PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT**

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