



Hurstville
City Council



Hurstville, Kogarah and Rockdale Councils' Recycle 'IT' Collection and Awareness Project

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Why Focus on e-waste?


- Community “affluenza” is driving the frequent replacement and upgrade of electrical goods
- Goods do not last as long as they used to – profits for business
- Decreased consumer prices and cheap overseas production labour
- Planet Ark’s “Recycling Near You” website shows that e-waste is the item enquired about the most
- All 3 tiers of Government have recognised and listed e-waste as a “waste of high concern” to set up an EPR scheme for
- Huge community need was identified through calls, emails and letters to Council – impossible to ignore the pressure

Alarming Facts

- 99% of Australian households have one or more televisions
- 66% of Australian households have one or more computers
- 140,000 tonnes of e-waste is produced annually, 96% of which is still sent to landfill at their end of life
- The average computer monitor contains 2.5kg of lead as well as mercury, beryllium, cadmium, barium and a host of other substances
- The anaerobic breakdown process in landfills mean that the risk of 'toxic time bombs' is becoming more immanent, risking large environmental damage to water, soil and air.


The Story of e-waste

- In 2006, the LGSA issued a request of all Councils not to run e-waste collection events
- The Minister's Expert Reference Group (ERG) is trying to devise strategies for increasing pressure on producers to take responsibility
- None of the states, however, can agree on a national scheme
- The Hon Peter Garrett AM MP announced in November that a national waste policy would be developed that would place more emphasis on recycling rather than a tax at purchase to cover end of life recycling of e-waste

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- To retain processing within Australia, industry is focussed on mandatory e-waste recycling legislation like the majority of the developed world currently have
 - St George Councils ran a trial event in November 2007 in order to generate data to support the introduction of a national EPR Scheme
 - Results were used to lobby the NSW and Federal Governments to make e-waste recycling a main priority
 - Since the collection, residents have maintained strong support for future collections
 - Council's clean up processor is now recovering e-waste materials for recycling

Project Timeline

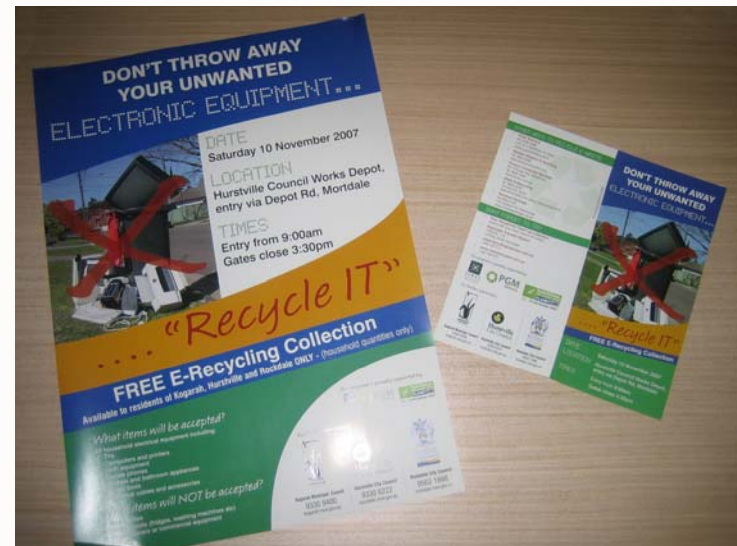
- October 2006 - Hurstville (lead Council) and Kogarah Council applied for a SSROC Recycling and Resource Recovery Grant
- November 2006 - awarded the grant of \$20,000
- November 2006 to March 2007 – research into collection methods and the issues of e-waste
- April 2007 – chose processor (PGM Refiners)
- May 2007 – commence advertising campaign for collection, Rockdale Council invited to participate in project

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- November 2007 – in promoting Planet Ark’s ‘National Recycling Week’ Councils used the collection event as a feature
 - December 2007 – collate results and analyse, report to Council
 - January to April 2008 – write information ‘Guide’, design, print and distribute
 - March 2008 – lobby NSW and Federal Governments using the results as support for a national e-waste recycling scheme

Advertising Methods


- Brochure deliveries to letterboxes and handed out at festivals
- Posters in libraries, community centres etc
- Promotion in conjunction with 'National Recycling Week' events
- Hurstville Westfield stall for 2 days before event
- Information kit sent to local retailers to display in windows

- 6 banners erected in prominent high volume traffic thoroughfares across the St George Region
- Variable Message Signs (VMS) displayed at the collection location for 2 weeks
- Newspaper articles
- Council websites and newsletters



Results of the Collection

- A total of 45 tonnes was collected over one day (including 25 tonnes of metal, 9 tonnes of glass and 7 tonnes of plastic)
- 608 vehicles passed through gates
- 703 televisions and computer monitors were collected
- The average age of goods was 8 years old and not in working order
- Hurstville Council had the most participants (373) – ie. distance to disposal is a huge issue
- The majority of participants were willing to pay a minimum of \$5 for the service in future



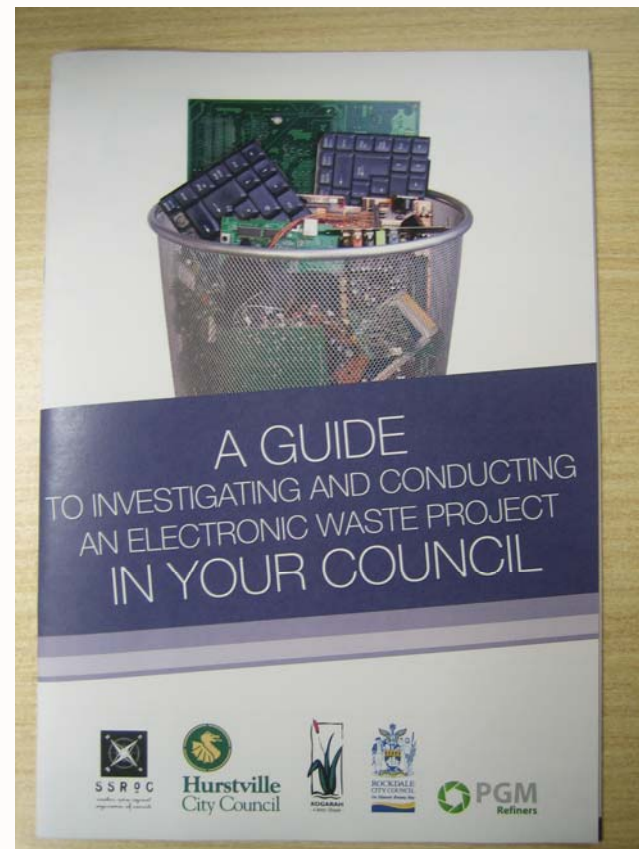
Interestingly - the cost of recycling was approximately **\$900 LESS** than the cost it would have been for landfilling at the tipping rates in November 2007. Given the imminent increase in landfill levies to \$10/tonne from July 2009 this will be an even greater significant outcome especially as recycling charges are also reducing with greater volume.



The Information 'Guide'

- Was authored by Hurstville Council
- Distributed to over 40 Councils, NGOs and Government Departments across NSW and VIC
- The purpose was for it to be used as a tool for investigating and establishing e-waste projects at a local level hence saving a lot of Officer time through the 'research' and 'start up' time
- Has been uploaded to Council websites so the community and other interested parties can understand the issue of e-waste and continue to lobby the Government to set up an EPR Scheme

- Council has received great feedback so far on the Guide from organisations using the information in preparing reports and planning collections
- Nearly 200 downloads from Hurstville Council website alone



Lessons Learnt

- Huge advertising lead time is essential in promoting the collection
- The community saw an inherent 'value' in the material even if it was broken or disused and hence many had stored it waiting for this kind of opportunity for responsible disposal
- Always plan for an overwhelming participation rate so the community is not discouraged from negative previous experiences (ie. long traffic queues)
- Utilise the assistance of local retailers in your promotions and follow up on interest gained from the event
- Thank the community (we handed out recycling certificates signed by the 3 Mayors) for making the effort to do the responsible thing

Post Project

- The LGSA invited Hurstville and Kogarah Councils to jointly host a site for a collection event in October 2008 which was being run and sponsored by Apple and Infoactive
- 7.5 tonnes of material was collected over 2 days from this one site for recycling with Sims E-Recycling with 115 vehicles passing through the gate
- 11 sites were being run over the Sydney Metropolitan area for the weekend
- 210 tonnes of material was collected from all these sites with 4000 vehicles passing through the gates

Future Directions

- The St George Councils will continue to support industry funded collection events as long as Local Government is not held continually responsible for additional operational costs like traffic management and staffing which are quite costly
- Hurstville and Kogarah Councils are commencing work on an e-waste strategy to focus on Council's attitudes to our involvement with collection as well as adopting procedures for managing e-waste internally as an organisation
- We are waiting, waiting, waiting for a national EPR scheme that is convenient for residents to utilise - remember people are LAZY! Incorporating the recycling fee at point of sale does not guarantee that the product will end up being recycled and hence only increases profits for retailers and manufacturers