

## HOUSEHOLD WASTE

Australians are one of the largest producers of waste per person in the world, sending over 18 million tonnes to landfill each year. Every Australian wastes almost one tonne of resources every year, much of which could be reused or recycled, benefiting the community, business and the environment. Growing populations mean more and more waste is being sent to landfill each year. Household Waste makes up almost half of all the solid waste sent to landfill in Australia.

The average household produces the following breakdown of wastes:

- 56% food scraps and garden waste
- 19% paper and cardboard
- 6% plastics
- 5% glass
- 3% metals
- 11% other

Many of these items are resources that we can reuse, recycle, compost or feed to a worm farm; however, we use them once and then throw them in our garbage bins. This is not good for our wallets or the planet. Garbage is collected by our council (or a waste contractor) and sent to landfill to be buried. It costs each community millions of dollars each year to collect and dispose of our household waste. It also costs us money to fix the damage waste disposal does to our environment.

### WHAT CAN I DO?

The most important thing you can do to reduce your Household Waste is to *'think twice'* Before you buy anything, think about whether you can **avoid** buying it. If the answer is no, then think about whether you or

someone else can **reuse** it, or if you can **recycle** it in your local area. Whenever possible, you should also buy items that are made from recycled materials. To reduce your food and garden waste, build a compost heap and use a worm farm.

### MORE INFORMATION

- [www.epa.nsw.gov.au/earthworks/tips.htm](http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/earthworks/tips.htm) Environmental protection agency tips on reducing waste at home.
- Check out the Shop Smart, Buy Green information booklet at: [www.environment.gov.au/settlements/industry/corporate/eecp/publications/pubs/consumersguide.pdf](http://www.environment.gov.au/settlements/industry/corporate/eecp/publications/pubs/consumersguide.pdf)
- [www.environment.nsw.gov.au/publications/html/downtoearth/composting.htm](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/publications/html/downtoearth/composting.htm) - All you need to know about composting.
- [www.recycledorganics.com](http://www.recycledorganics.com) - the Recycled Organics Unit website for information about organic resources