

## KERBSIDE RECYCLING

Kerbside recycling is the collection of recyclable items from your home. Many councils across Australia provide kerbside recycling facilities, however the way the recyclables are collected varies greatly. Collection types can include wheelie bins, crates, separate bins and divided (split) wheelie bins. Specially designed trucks collect the recyclables and in the case of the split bins, the collection trucks are also divided to collect both streams of waste in separate compartments.

Kerbside recycling aims to encourage and make recycling easier for the community. Overall, kerbside recycling in Australia provides environmental, economic and social benefits, with over 800 000 tonnes of kerbside collected recyclables reprocessed each year (Nolan ITU). However, these benefits vary between councils, and to a great extent between regional and metropolitan areas. Factors including the distance to reprocessing plants, types of materials collected, the size and type of the collection container, cost to the community and the frequency of collections all impact on the decision to provide a kerbside service and the type of service provided.

Environmental benefits of recycling include:

- avoiding materials being sent to landfill,

- reducing the amount of virgin materials needed to produce new items,
- and reduced water and air emissions associated with resource extraction and transport.

The simple nature of kerbside recycling encourages a greater number of people to recycle, particularly those that are elderly, do not have appropriate transport or who don't want to take much time out from their lifestyles.

Economic considerations of kerbside recycling include:

- avoiding landfill disposal and garbage collection charges,
- collection and transport costs,
- separating contaminants from recyclables,
- processing costs,
- and the recycled product market.

Kerbside recycling is popular in Australia. As we become better at recycling, by recycling more and reducing contamination, the environmental, social and economic benefits of kerbside recycling will continue to flow.

Reference: Nolan ITU, available online at [www.environment.gov.au/settlements/waste](http://www.environment.gov.au/settlements/waste)

### WHAT CAN I DO?

- Ensure you are recycling the correct materials by checking out [www.recyclingnearyou.com](http://www.recyclingnearyou.com) or by asking at your local council.
- Prepare items for recycling by rinsing, squashing and removing contaminants (for example plastic bags). This makes recycling much more environmentally sound and cost effective and helps when sorted at the transfer station
- If your local area does not offer kerbside recycling, ask your local council what service it does offer.

### MORE INFORMATION

- [www.environment.gov.au/settlements/publications/waste/covenant/kerbside/index.html](http://www.environment.gov.au/settlements/publications/waste/covenant/kerbside/index.html) - a 2001 assessment of the costs and benefits of kerbside recycling in Australia
- [www.sdearthtimes.com/et1296/et1296s2.html](http://www.sdearthtimes.com/et1296/et1296s2.html) - comparisons regarding kerbside recycling in California
- [www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/www/html/439-kerbside-recycling-is-worth-the-effort.asp](http://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/www/html/439-kerbside-recycling-is-worth-the-effort.asp) - Comprehensive information on kerbside recycling.
- [www.zerowastewa.com.au](http://www.zerowastewa.com.au) - The WA government recycling website.