

## Waste Wise Events Project – Case Study Fair Go Skatefest 2007

### Background

The North East Waste Forum (NEWF) is a collective of local councils that have come together to share resources to help avoid and reduce waste going to landfill in the Northern NSW region. The NEWF collective not only provides support for participating local Councils in managing waste, but also provides support and advice to various commercial sectors on how best to implement sustainable practices that reduce waste generation, wastes landfilled, and promote the recovery of recyclable resources.

An initiative of NEWF, The Waste Wise Events (WWE) Project, began in October 2006 and focused on reducing waste to landfill by implementing Waste Wise Management Plans (WWMP's) for seven events across the NEWF region. A variety of events were chosen with participant numbers ranging from 2,000 to 25,000 people. Events covered agricultural, sporting, family, food & music festivals.

### Fair Go Skatefest



The Fair Go Skateboard Festival is an annual youth event held in October in Missingham Skate Park in Ballina. The one day event attracts over 1,000 skateboarders and spectators to check out the high quality skateboarding action, music, giveaways, market stalls and skate products. The event is organised by Ballina District Community Services Association (BDCSA), who engage an experienced team of competition specialists, independent judges and volunteers. Attempts had been made in previous years to recycle at the event; however, high contamination had resulted in materials going to landfill. NEWF assisted BDCSA to plan a Waste Wise Event in 2007.

### The Challenge

The amount of waste generated at community/public events can be significant (about 1 litre/person/day), creating an unpleasant mess and large clean up costs for event organisers & councils. The north coast is host to approximately 300 events and 23 regular monthly markets each year. With many events attracting visitor numbers from the thousands to the tens of thousands the disposal of waste constitutes a major problem for councils. Many events in the region present unique challenges by attracting many visitors from outside the region. Communicating about waste & recycling systems must be simple and easy.

### Waste Wise Management Plan

A WWMP incorporates recycling and waste avoidance objectives into each stage of event planning, sets achievable targets and assigns roles and responsibilities. Targets set for this event included:

#### Packaging:

- All stalls to use biodegradable packaging.

#### Promotion of the recycling systems:

- 200 Competitor T-shirts printed on back with: "REUSE RECYCLE REVERT".
- Letter to Stallholders & guidelines outlining packaging requirements and recycling facilities available.
- NEWF Greenhouse Performance Trailer and performers set up during event.
- Pre event media releases in local papers.
- PA announcements every hour.
- Advertisement in event program.
- Signage on bins designed specifically for event bins.
- Council's Waste Wise Event banner was displayed.

#### Recovery Targets:

- Recycle bins: aluminium cans; plastic bottles; glass and (liquid) paper cups.
- Cardboard skip provided for stallholders.

#### Equipment:

- 9 x 240L yellow lidded recycling bins with fitted rosette lids & locks supplied by Ballina Shire Council.
- 9 x 240L red lidded waste bins supplied by Ballina Council.
- One 2m<sup>3</sup> skip to empty recycling into.
- 1 x 1.5m<sup>3</sup> skip to empty general waste into.
- 1 x 1.5m<sup>3</sup> skip for cardboard.

#### Bin Plan:

- Bin stations comprising one recycling bin and one waste bin located around the site. More densely near food stalls and seating.
- Volunteer waste manager to check bins at lunch and empty if required.

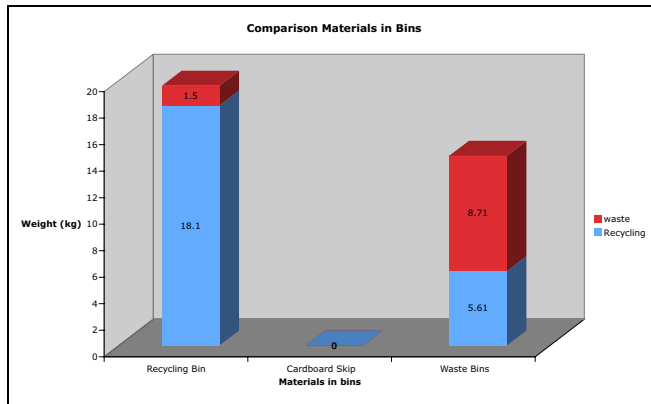


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### Results

The Fair Go Skatefest produced a small amount of waste (33.5kg) over the one day event. The breakdown of the volumes can be seen below. Overall, the participants used the bins well and the recycling recovery (70% of total waste) was very successful.



#### Recycling Bins

The event diverted 23.7kg of materials for recycling, which represented 70% of the total waste generated at the event.

Glass accounted for the majority 50%, recyclable plastic 16% and aluminium 15%. The average contamination was 5% which is well below the acceptable level (under 10%) to be received for processing and recycling.

The major contaminants were compostable packaging (3%) and non recyclable plastics (3%). Polystyrene cups were an obvious contaminant in the recycling bins. One stallholder separated a small amount (3.5kg) of cardboard, but overall there was no need for a separate cardboard skip.

#### Waste Bins

The waste bins contained a reasonable (40%) amount of recycling. During the audit we identified significant volumes of polystyrene cups and clam shells and plastic folks. Stallholders were requested to avoid these packaging items in the stallholder guidelines.

### The Future

The Fair Go Skatefest organisers are keen to implement recycling at future events.

Recommendations for next year's event include:

- Reduce polystyrene packaging used by stallholders;
- Reduce littering;
- Reduce recycling in waste bins.

The NEWF acknowledges the support of the Packaging Stewardship Forum who assisted with purchasing bins and stickers and advice on implementation of the project.

### Outcomes

The Fair Go Skatefest proved to be a very successful Waste Wise Event by reducing waste to landfill by 70%. Other outcomes included:

- Bin stickers and rosette lid recycling bins proved to assist with recycling recovery and reducing contamination (<5%).
- Littering was an obvious issue for event organisers. Litter was effectively recovered by promoting the free give away of a t-shirt for a bag of rubbish. At the end of the event, the park was left with some litter which was picked up by volunteers.
- The use of polystyrene and plastic packaging resulted in non-biodegradable waste to landfill.
- The announcements over the PA were consistent and a great reminder for people to use the right bin.
- The cardboard skip was not utilised and therefore not necessary at future events.
- Assigning volunteers to take on the role of waste monitors worked effectively, volunteers were given a printed role description answering common questions about recycling.
- The Greenhouse Waste Education Trailer proved to be successful with younger children and parents. Over 80 people engaged with the performers to learn about recycling and waste reduction.

The BDSCA were pleased with their achievements and grateful for the assistance from North East Waste Forum which helped to improve their recycling compared to previous years.

### Costs

The BDSCA paid \$230 for the waste and recycling services. This was an increase of \$30 from previous years. The increase in charges was due to an increase in waste service costs and not a direct result of offering recycling. BDSCA could save on the cardboard skip charges next year. However, the event organisers were satisfied with the waste costs.

### Contacts

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