

Waste Wise Events Project – Case Study Teven-Tintenbar Country Fair 2008

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 events across the NEWF region. A variety of events were chosen with participant numbers ranging from 2,000 to 25,000 people. Events covered include agricultural, sporting, family, food & music festivals.

Teven-Tintenbar Country Fair

The Teven-Tintenbar Public School amalgamated in 1988 on Fredricks Hill in Ballina Shire. There are over 150 students at the school and each year a Country Fair is held as a fund raiser. This year the fair organisers approached the North East Waste Forum to make it a waste wise event for the first time. The Fair usually attracts up to 2000 people with its produce, food, cooking, plant and book stalls. There are also games and activities held for the children and a band provides entertainment.



The Challenge

The amount of waste generated at community/public events can be significant (about 1 litre/person/day), creating an unpleasant mess and substantial clean up costs for event organisers & councils. The north coast is host to approximately 300 events and 23 regular monthly markets each year. These events attract locals and visitors from outside of the region. Dealing with waste disposal and recycling at events can be problematic and special care needs to be taken to make waste & recycling systems simple yet effective.

Waste Wise Management Plan

A Waste Wise Management Plan (WWMP) incorporates recycling and waste avoidance objectives into each stage of event planning, sets achievable targets and assigns roles and responsibilities. The decision to make the Fair a waste wise event was taken very close to the event and some stall holders were unable to alter existing arrangements. Targets set for recovery of resources included;

- Recycle bins: aluminum cans; plastic bottles; glass and paper coffee cups
- Cardboard collected for recycling
- Organics collected for poultry

Packaging

- Stalls encouraged to use biodegradable packaging for serving food and recyclable drink containers

Promotion of the recycling systems:

- PA announcements about how to use the recycling systems
- Signage on bins and caps for recycling
- Council's Waste Wise Event banner displayed

Equipment:

- 7 x 240L yellow lidded recycling bins supplied by Ballina Council.
- 4 small bins for organics recovery
- Trailer for pick up and return of bins and cardboard

Bin Plan and Management

- Bin stations comprising one recycling bin and one waste bin located at intervals around the site
- Organics bins given to stallholders and 2 larger labeled bins positioned with recycling and waste bins

NORTH EAST WASTE FORUM

NEW WAYS WITH LESS WASTE



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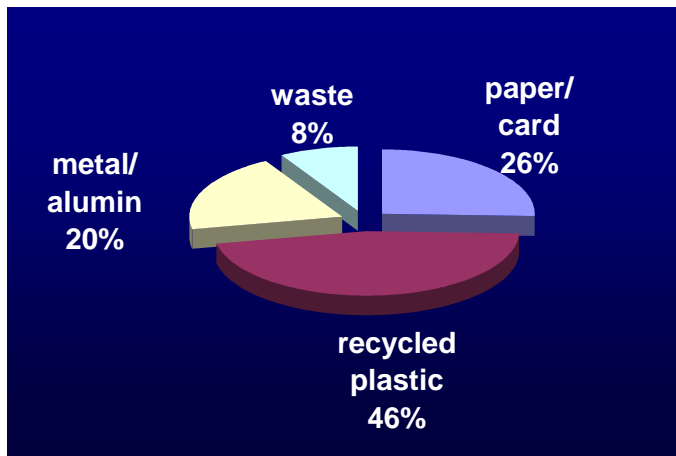
Results

All bins were assessed at the end of the event. More than 1700 litres of waste was produced, with 665 litres of co-mingled recyclables, 35 litres of organic waste and 2.5 cubic metres of cardboard recovered.

Recycling Bins

Based on volume, approximately one third of the total waste generated at the event was recovered through the event's recycling bins. Figure 1 below, presents a breakdown of the 309 litres audited, into the different waste streams.

Figure 1 Recycling bin components



Not considering the bulk cardboard collection, the major component of the recycling bins was recyclable plastic, such as 2 litre milk containers (46%). This was followed by cardboard/paper at 26%. This stream was mainly disposable coffee cups and liquid paper board milkshake containers. 20% of the waste stream was aluminium cans.

The contamination rate in the recycle bins was 8%. Most of the contamination was plastic film, chip packets and packaging. A large quantity of straws were also present in the recycling.

35 litres of organic waste was recovered to be used as poultry food and this comprised mostly of bread, fruit peelings and coffee grounds.

Outcomes

Introducing a Waste Wise Plan for the Teven-Tintenbar Country Fair resulted in a greater than 30% reduction of waste to landfill through the capture of recyclable materials.

Other outcomes included:

- Event organizers are now familiar with the Waste Wise Events process and are likely to implement it in future.
- Stallholders who participated in the event increased their understanding of the potential to collect recycling and organics, enhancing their likelihood to do so at other events
- The number of bins were adequate for the event and this helped to reduce litter.
- Reasonably low contamination in the recycling bin indicates that most participants clearly understood the recycling message
- Stall holders, event organizers and the Ballina Council were all supportive of conducting a Waste Wise Event
- High levels of contamination in the organics bins could indicate a lack of familiarity with composting and poor bin placement

The Future

The Country Fair was a successful day and the organizers diverted over 3 cubic metres of recycling from landfill. Recommendations for future events include:

- Provide information on disposable packaging and minimizing waste to stallholders in adequate time before the event to secure a commitment to reduce or change their packaging
- Use volunteers to remind and assist people to use the correct recycling and organic bins
- Promote the waste wise event message through the school and newsletters in the preceding weeks

Contacts

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