

Waste Wise Events Project – Case Study Tweed Jockey Club 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, waste going to landfill 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.

Tweed Jockey Club

The Tweed Jockey Club at Murwillumbah holds up to 6 race meets per year attracting between 1000-6000 people per race.



To identify what was in the waste stream at meetings a waste audit was conducted on the 10th March 2008. Forty percent of the waste produced at the event was audited and the results indicated that glass accounted for 43% (38kg) of the waste, cardboard for 13% (12kg), food waste 19% (17kg), aluminium 6% (6kg) and recyclable plastic 4% (4kg). This event was considered to be small and a medium sized event in June was selected to be the first Waste Wise Event. The following plan, results and outcomes are a result of that race meeting.

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. 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 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. Targets set for this event included:

Packaging:

- Collection of cardboard packaging in Bulk cardboard skip
- Introduce drink containers made from PET plastic which can be recycled
- Ban the use of polystyrene for serving food/drinks

Promotion of the recycling systems:

- Letter to Stallholder letter/guidelines outlining packaging requirements and recycling facilities available
- Pre event media releases in local papers.
- PA announcements about how to use the recycling systems
- Promotion of recycling in the event program
- Signage on bins designed specifically for event bins and additional signage for skips
- Council's Waste Wise Event banner displayed

Recovery Targets:

- Recycle bins: aluminium cans; paper cups, plastic drink bottles and milk containers; glass and steel cans
- Cardboard and paper bins provided

Equipment:

- 25 x 240L yellow lidded recycling bins
- 25 x 240L red lidded waste bins
- 1 x 240L recycling bin for paper race scribes
- 1 x bail or skip for cardboard from stallholders
- 1 x 2m3 skip for emptying waste bins

Bin Plan and Management

- Bins were positioned at 15m intervals in bin stations including one waste and one recycling bin.
- Bins emptied at end of event

NORTH EAST WASTE FORUM

NEW WAYS WITH LESS WASTE



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Results

The Audits

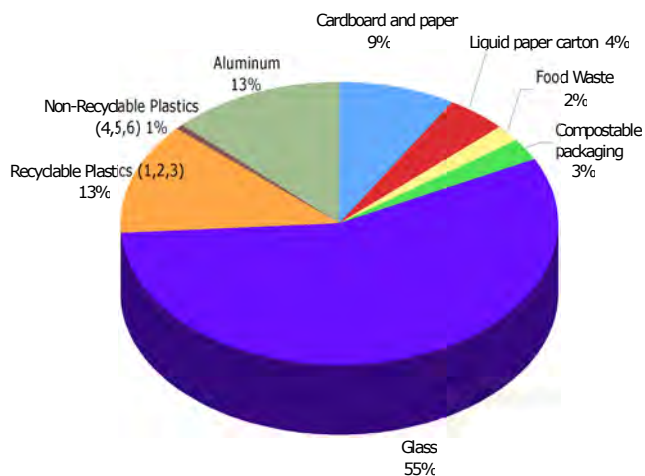
The initial audit conducted at a March race meeting identified that 96% of the waste produced at the event could be recovered through recycling and composting. This established a target to aim for at future meets. Composting was not attempted at the June meet but recycling bins captured 40% of the waste stream and diverted it from landfill.

Contamination rates averaged 5% which is a good outcome considering that signage provided on event bins by Solo was minimal and recycling bins had no restricted access to the lids. However, a large volume of recyclables were lost into the waste stream (66%), which is an area to work on improving next meet.

Recycling Bins

The 40% recovery was represented by glass (55%), plastics (13%), aluminium (13%) and cardboard (9%). The biggest areas for improvement would include: clearer signage for bins, conversion of all plastic drinking and wine cups to PETE plastic and the introduction of a separate collection of recyclable materials behind the bar and in the canteens.

Composition of Recycling Bins



Waste Bins

The waste bins collected a high percentage of recyclable materials (66%). These materials included glass (28%), cardboard and paper (17%), aluminium (12%) and liquid paper (chip cups and coffee cups) (8%). Diverting more of these materials into the recycling bins should be a priority of future events. This can be achieved through: improved signage of bins, specific PA announcements that educate the punters on what goes in what bin and educating staff in bars and canteens about the recycling systems

Outcomes

Of the total event waste, 40% was diverted to recycling via the introduction of recycling bins. Contamination rates averaged 5% which is a good outcome considering that signage provided on event bins was minimal and recycling bins had no restricted access to the lids.

Other outcomes included:

- The ice-cream van and the coffee stall complied with the guidelines by using recyclable packaging;
- Polystyrene was not used for serving food. This was a great improvement from the last audit;
- The PA was used effectively to promote the recycling systems at hourly intervals;
- The Waste Wise Event banner was used on the day;
- Adequate numbers of bins were used which helped to reduce litter experienced at past events;
- NEWF removed the contamination in the recycling bins (although this was not necessary for collection as contamination level was low
- The demonstration to event organisers and the public that good diversion rates are achievable by implementing simple changes

The event organisers and council were pleased with their achievement. The process of conducting an initial audit to establish baseline information and developing a WWMP allowed for adequate planning and resulted in improved waste reduction outcomes.

The Future

Tweed Shire Council is committed to improving waste management practices at events. Race meetings produce a large component of recycling that can be easily diverted from landfill.

Recommendations for future events include:

- Place additional signage on bins to help reduce contamination;
- Conversion of all plastic drinking and wine cups to PETE plastic;
- Introduction of a separate collection system for recyclable materials behind the bar and canteens.

Contacts

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Tweed Jockey Club

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