



# WASTE WISE WORDS

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## National Litter Index – Western Australia

Litter has been the perennial problem of schools and the community at large for decades. It is a serious environmental, social and economic issue.

In November a National Litter count was conducted in SA, NSW, VIC, QLD and WA. The litter count looked at various kinds of litter across different area types.

The litter was further analysed by eight different site types. In total 151 sites were selected for each state across a variety of areas conforming to the same guidelines.

The types of sites were: residential, beach, industrial, car park, shopping centre, retail, recreational park and highway. There was also a mix of metropolitan and regional sites chosen.

In total 68 268 litter items were counted, the average per state was 13 657. WA had the lowest count of 12 919. This was the highest average on a per capita basis.

The top 10 litter items *by number* in WA are:

- cigarette butts
- other paper (incl. tissues)
- confectionary wrappers
- all other plastic
- metal bottle tops and ring pulls
- flavoured milk cartons
- other foil
- aluminium cans (soft drink)
- plastic bottles
- cigarette packets.

The top 10 litter items *by volume* in WA are:

- industrial containers eg. Oil
- flavoured milk cartons
- domestic containers
- take away containers and cups
- plastic bottles
- Illegal dumping
- aluminium cans (soft drink)

- aluminium cans (pre-mixed alcohol)
- glass beer bottles
- aluminium cans (beer).

For copies of the National Litter Index check out:

[www.keeptaustraliabeautiful.org.au](http://www.keeptaustraliabeautiful.org.au)



Two geckos in some litter.

## REDUCE WASTE

To many people, waste minimisation just means recycling, but there are other ways to minimise waste that may be even more effective. In minimising waste, remember to first 'reduce', then 'reuse', and finally 'recycle' or 'compost' what is left.

Reducing simply means to use less, so that you have less rubbish to dispose of later on. In a school, this could mean, for example, students and teachers using paper printed on one side for rough work.

You will find ideas in this edition of Waste Wise Words on how to reduce waste in your school.

## Ideas for REDUCING waste in schools:

- Don't use disposable cups, plates, serviettes for any school functions
- Encourage the use of non-disposable items eg refillable rather than single use pens
- Send home one notice per family
- Use chalkboard/whiteboard more often to reduce paper use
- Buy in bulk
- Include cleaning and gardening staff in brainstorming possible areas for reducing.

## CASE STUDY SNIPPETS KINROSS COLLEGE

In 2005, staff and students at Kinross College learned that there was no safe battery disposal program being run by their local council. The Waste Wise teacher, Debbie Mullahey, contacted Mindarie Regional Council and after persistence and support from the school, the council agreed to run a battery disposal program for Tamala Park, the waste disposal and recycling facility located in Mindarie.

There is a collection point at the school for all dry cell batteries, including mobile phone, computer and hearing aid batteries. These are weighed and taken to Tamala Park by Ms Mullahey once a fortnight. Batteries are encased in concrete for safe disposal.

The scheme was launched with a competition amongst all of the learning communities within the school and battery donations were weighed before they were placed in a decorated wheelie bin. The parents supported this project and there were even enquiries about car batteries, which can be dropped off directly at Tamala Park.

Students visited the CEO at Tamala Park to display their battery bin. The students were very positive about representing their school and were amazed at the variety of reusable household items and furniture that was available at the facility. Negotiation is currently underway for a potential partnership with a local battery store, who ship their used batteries to the eastern states, where the batteries are recycled for reuse rather than just safe disposal.



The new bin which was featured in a local news article.

## REMI DA CREATIVE REUSE CENTRE

On the 14<sup>th</sup> of March staff from participating Waste Wise schools took part in one of REmida's introductory workshops. These workshops introduce the history and philosophy of the REmida concept and possibilities that the centre offers in terms of materials and inspiring activities. The workshop participants had an excellent tour of the centre where we all began to imagine new uses for what



A beautiful sculpture made from reuse materials.

would once have been considered waste. We also viewed some truly inspiring sculptures by schoolchildren who had participated in REmida workshops and through this process created awesome artworks!

Memberships to the REmida Centre are purchased on an annual basis and this allows schools, daycare centres, families and others access to the Centre and its materials throughout the year. Fees are on a sliding scale according to the number of pupils at the school. For more information call 9246 0999.

The REmida Creative Reuse Centre, situated in the old Carine TAFE campus is well worth a visit as a source of inspiration for creative Waste Wise projects. If you are a *Participating Waste Wise School* and you are interested in attending an introductory REmida workshop, courtesy of the Waste Wise Schools Program, please contact Vanessa on 6364 6467.

## BIOWISE

SITA Environmental Solutions has been assisting schools to introduce and increase recycling for the past 3 years. This has assisted many WA schools to reduce the amount of waste that they send to landfill.

SITA can also help schools become more ecologically sustainable through using compost from its Biowise plant. Biowise uses organic waste (including green waste collected from some Waste Wise schools) and turns it into premium quality mulch and soil conditioner.



Clean water is one of our most important natural resources and we can all play a part in using water wisely. One of the best and easiest ways to conserve water is to ensure that our gardens are well mulched with a good quality mulch product.

Biowise produces a Quality Assured product and once laid 100-150mm thick it will –

- reduce evaporation from the soil
- provide plants with essential nutrients
- keep plants' root systems cool and assist growth
- reduce weed growth around plants
- reduce water use
- suppress dust
- improve the look of gardens.

Through its links with the Education Department, Biowise can supply this product directly to schools at a discounted price. To order, contact Biowise on **9410 0477** or look at [www.biowise.com.au](http://www.biowise.com.au)

### Reducing waste lesson ideas:

- Students predict what will happen if too much waste continues to be produced.
- Explain what the 3R's mean and how reducing is the most preferable
- Students classify household and classroom waste into the following categories reduce, reuse, recycle
- Students discuss benefits and problems with packaging.
- Students investigate ways to reduce waste by shopping carefully.
- Students organise a wastefree day and get parents involved.

## Ruggies Helps Regional Recycling

The Ruggies Recycling program has been operating in Western Australia since 1996. Ruggies is working towards a better future for West Australian children, our community and our environment by decreasing the amount of waste going to landfill. Ruggies Recycling is a special fundraising project that helps the environment and WA's sick children.

Waste disposal at mine sites has long been a problem. Traditionally there have been few alternatives but to dump or bury scrap-metals, plastics and other industrial waste. Ruggies Recycling is a network of organisations, which work together to coordinate the recycling of all kinds of materials. The program coordinator arranges pick ups of recyclable materials from mine sites around the state through various truck routes where the vehicles would otherwise be travelling empty. This makes fantastic use of a resources, (the recyclable materials as well as the transport vehicle), that would otherwise be wasted.

Today, more than 40 mining companies

throughout WA are involved in the program and have raised almost \$650,000 for Princess Margaret Hospital since its inception. In 2003 the program became a joint initiative of the PMH Foundation and the Royal Flying Doctor Service, with the funds raised being split equally between them, allowing the funds to benefit the regional communities where the recyclables originated from.

It may be possible for regional Waste Wise Schools to tap in to this program as a means of getting their recyclables transported to Perth, with the proceeds benefiting the West Australian community. Amaroo Primary School utilises this program and has had bins provided by Worsley Alumina (see photo). Other schools may be able to approach mining companies based in their communities to sponsor their involvement in the program.

To find out more contact Tony Fitz-Gibbon on 9489 1177 or 0428 185 550. [www.ruggiesrecycling.com](http://www.ruggiesrecycling.com)



Ruggies recycling bins at Amaroo Primary.

### Contact Us.

#### Waste Wise Schools

We have new office phone numbers.

Kelsie: 6364 6456  
Vanessa: 6364 6467  
Mena: 6364 6462

Department of Environment reception: 6364 6500

Check out our website:  
[www.wastewise.wa.gov.au](http://www.wastewise.wa.gov.au)



Department of Environment



## TERM 2 WORKSHOPS

### Full Day Workshops

Thursday 1st June  
RRRC Canning Vale  
8:45am—3:00pm  
Free plus \$200 teacher relief

Tuesday 13th June  
Broome Shire Office  
8:45am—3:00pm  
Free plus \$200 teacher relief

### Half Day Workshop

Wednesday 10th May  
Remida Centre, Carine TAFE  
12:30pm-3:00pm  
Free plus \$100 teacher relief

### REmida Workshop

Tuesday 23rd May  
Remida Centre, Carine TAFE  
5:30pm-7:30pm  
Free

### Sustainable Schools Workshops

Friday 2nd June  
*Herdsmen Lake Wildlife Centre*  
Friday 9th June  
*Hills Forest Discovery Centre*

### Term 3

1st August  
*Narrogin region*  
3rd August  
*Perth (possible venue - Cockburn Wetlands Centre)*

## WASTE WISE WELCOMES MENA

We would like to extend a warm welcome to a new member of the Waste Wise Schools team.

Mena Gilchrist has taken on the role of the Waste Wise Schools Mobile Display Coordinator. Mena comes to us from the Department of Agriculture and has just graduated from Murdoch University with an Environmental Science degree.

Mena is available to come out to all Waste Wise schools to conduct waste audits and deliver presentations to eligible schools on a range of topics related to waste.

To contact Mena.  
Phone: 6364 6462  
Mobile : 0400 866 446  
[mena.gilchrist@environment.wa.gov.au](mailto:mena.gilchrist@environment.wa.gov.au)

## RECYCLING OPPORTUNITIES

Did you know that...

***the energy saved from recycling 1 aluminium can would power a TV for 3 hours***

and

***20 aluminium cans can be recycled with the same energy required to produce one new can from raw materials?***

As well as benefiting the environment through conserving precious resources, recycling can be a great fundraiser for your school.

Companies that Waste Wise Schools are using to recycling aluminium cans:

- Metro Can Recyclers  
Phone 9305 9163
- Collins Recycling Willetton  
Phone 94573973.

Both companies provide cages and will come and collect the cans when the cage is full. The current rate for aluminium cans is between 60c - 80c / kilo.

Did you know that..

***Australians throw away more than 18 million printer cartridges every year?***

The Cartridges 4 Planet Ark Program provides a collection box for all inkjets, laser cartridges and toner bottles (any brand) and provides a free collection service.

This service is available to both regional and metropolitan schools.

For more info call 1800 242 473.

## IS YOUR NEWSLETTER WASTE WISE?

We are sure you dislike having piles of paper in your pigeon holes as much as we dislike sending reams of it out! If you currently receive this newsletter in hard copy but have access to email and would rather we sent it electronically please let us know by sending an email to

[wastewise@environment.wa.gov.au](mailto:wastewise@environment.wa.gov.au)