



Media Release

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Australia's recycling rate has increased from 7% to 60% since 1996

Just one of the reasons to celebrate 25 years of National Recycling Week

Planet Ark is asking Australians to join them in celebrating 25 years of [National Recycling Week](#) by getting involved in new recycling and reuse activities.

Since the campaign was founded in 1996, the recycling rate in Australia has gone from 7% and just 1.5 million total tonnes recycled to over 60% and 43 million tonnes of materials recycled. Australians have gone from recycling just 80kg of material each per year, to now about 1,700kg per person.

This year National Recycling Week is evolving by bringing reuse into focus through initiatives such as the Save Our Furniture competition, which aims to inspire people to get creative and upcycle old and used furniture into new unique pieces rather than sending it to landfill. Repairing, repurposing and reusing items are higher in the waste hierarchy as they have the potential to produce greater environmental benefits than recycling, with all being important to National Recycling Week and the Australian circular economy.

“During November of 1996 Celine Dion had the number one single in Australia, Mel Gibson was starring in the number one film and Australian kerbside recycling was in its infancy; a lot has changed since then culturally and in recycling,” Planet Ark co-CEO, Rebecca Gilling, said.

“Our research shows Australians overwhelmingly agree that recycling is the right thing to do and is good for the environment and we hope to see these attitudes translate into positive action.”

New research from Planet Ark this year found Australians are becoming more educated about items that cause recycling contamination issues, including soft plastics, bagged recyclables and clothing. Nearly 1.5 million more Australians know to keep soft plastics out of the recycling bin in 2021 compared to 2019, while just under a million more Australians know bagged recyclables and clothing do not get recycled through kerbside services.

National Recycling Week (8-14 November) provides an important platform for individuals, workplaces, schools and councils to improve their recycling knowledge, develop better recycling habits and build trust in recycling. Founded in 1996 by Planet Ark, the campaign provides recycling-themed events, guides, educational activities and numerous other resources that aim to empower Australians take recycling into their own hands at home, work and school.



8 - 14 November 2021

National Recycling Week is made possible by Major Sponsor **Gumtree Australia**, Associate Sponsor **Coca-Cola Australia** and Supporting Sponsors **MobileMuster**, **Tetra Pak**, the **Australasian Recycling Label** and **Cartridges 4 Planet Ark**.

From the Schools Recycle Right Challenge and workplace recycling trivia to furniture upcycling, council waste events and much more, there is something in National Recycling Week for all Australians. To learn more or join countless other Australians getting involved in National Recycling Week, visit nationalrecyclingweek.com.au.

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National Recycling Week Resources:

- [Resource Hub](#)
- [Recycling Guide](#)
- [Council Activity Guide](#)
- [Events Guide](#)
- [Save Our Furniture Competition](#)
- [Schools Recycle Right Challenge](#)
- [Recycling Trivia Pack](#)
- [National Recycling Week Events Guide](#)
- [Recycling 101 Webinar](#)

For further information, interviews or images please contact:

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About Planet Ark

Planet Ark Environmental Foundation is an Australian not-for-profit organisation with a vision of a world where people live in balance with nature. Established in 1992, it is one of Australia's leading environmental behaviour change organisations with a focus on working collaboratively and positively. Planet Ark promotes and creates simple, positive environmental actions – for everyone.

About National Recycling Week

Planet Ark's National Recycling Week, founded in 1996, highlights the environmental benefits of reuse and recycling programs, while making participation enjoyable and easy through community events and programs. The dates for National Recycling Week in 2021 are **Monday 8 to Sunday 14 November 2021**.