

National Recycling Week

Workplace Activity Guide

National Recycling Week is a great opportunity to get your workplace involved in new or existing recycling programs and other sustainability initiatives. This guide provides you with activity ideas and links to resources.



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"We have been a collection point for over 2 years - this has been advertised through our newsletter, local media and our weekly events emails."

'Cartridges 4 Planet Ark' workplace survey

recycle here!

glass bottles, cardboard, cans, paper and plastic containers

no food scraps

nothing in the bin

ACTIVITY

Promote Your Existing Systems

Considerations

If your workplace already has recycling systems in place, and you've checked that everything is working properly, then actively **promote the systems** to staff, and if relevant, customers. Finding the best way to encourage colleagues to use the correct recycling bin, save water or switch off lights can be a bit daunting. However, there are a few tricks you can use to **make behaviour change easy** such as making signs bright, clear and positive. You could also use the **environmental benefits of business recycling** to make the issue personally relevant by showing the amount of greenhouse gas emissions, water, energy and landfill space saved by recycling in the workplace.

Outcomes

- ♻ Increased recycling rate
- ♻ Decreased recycling contamination
- ♻ Increased environmental benefits

ACTIVITY

Join the 'Cartridges 4 Planet Ark' and MobileMuster Collection Programs

Considerations

Joining the 'Cartridges 4 Planet Ark' and MobileMuster Collection Programs is free and an easy way to promote recycling in your workplace. By tapping into existing programs there are few resource implications for businesses and all the promotional materials are available to use online. National Recycling Week can be used as the launch event to promote these collection programs. Depending upon the structure of your workplace, collection stations could be accessible to staff as well as customers.

For more information or to register visit Cartridges.PlanetArk.org or call 1800 242 473; and visit MobileMuster.com.au or call 1300 730 070.

Outcomes

- ♻️ Demonstrated a commitment to environmental stewardship
- ♻️ Increased staff morale

"I myself signed up our business after proposing the idea to our State (Vic) Manager. I did so because I saw it as an opportunity to do something good for both the environment and our business."

'Cartridges 4 Planet Ark' workplace survey





ACTIVITY

Hold A Clothing Drive

Considerations

One-off or periodic recycling events can be a good way to supplement the permanent, day-to-day recycling systems within your workplace, support a community initiative and have fun at the same time! For instance, clothing drives can be a good way for colleagues to round up their unwanted clothes and donate items to a local charity.

Outcomes

- ♻ Conserved the resources, such as water, that go into making new clothes
- ♻ Supported other social initiatives such as clothing for families in need

“Planet Ark also introduced us to the Smith Family who recently presented at our Sydney Building Management Committee meetings to encourage tenants to run clothing drives in their office space. In fact, we recently installed a clothing bank in 1 Sydney building which has achieved great interest and success already.”

Property Management Company Representative

ACTIVITY

Friday File Fling

Considerations

Huge amounts of good quality office paper are 'stored' in files that will never be read again. [Friday File Flings](#) are a great team engagement activity to hold on the Friday of National Recycling Week or anytime throughout the year. All you need to do is set some time aside and encourage your team, office, or organisation to clear out their files and get good quality office paper back in to circulation. Fridays are great, as it's easier to get staff involved and to combine the Fling with afternoon tea or drinks. Download the [Step-By-Step Guide](#).

Outcomes

- ♻️ De-cluttered office
- ♻️ Team-bonding
- ♻️ Reductions in water use and greenhouse gas emissions - recycling paper saves water and greenhouse gas emissions compared to making paper from raw materials



"It was very successful and I found it got all of us engaged and supporting each other to clear out unnecessary hoarding of paper."

Friday File Fling Survey





ACTIVITY

Big Aussie Swap

Considerations

A [Swap Party](#) is an event where participants bring good quality items they no longer want, and exchange them for other items. A workplace swap party could be a great one-hour or one-week event whereby colleagues can swap old books, DVDs, CDs, clothes, toys, sports equipment and more. The Big Aussie Swap makes acquiring new things a fun and interactive event. You can decide on the theme, and you could even raise money for a charity through participation in the event. The National Recycling Week website has a [step-by-step guide](#) on everything you need to know to host a Swap Party and even provides event [signage](#), [tokens](#) and [rules](#).

Outcomes

- ♻️ Team-bonding
- ♻️ New products acquired by staff for free
- ♻️ Diverted materials from landfill
- ♻️ Conserved resources

"People were genuinely excited about swapping their unused clothes and getting a bargain."

Fleur Patterson, Karrinyup WA

Big Aussie Swap



ACTIVITY

Host a Waste Free Lunch

Considerations

Single-use plastic and polystyrene such as take-away lunch containers, cutlery, plates and disposable drink containers are all big contributors to waste in the workplace and are often tricky or not possible to recycle.

Hosting a Waste Free Lunch in the workplace has many benefits to the environment, the budget and to waste reduction. Encouraging re-usable container use in the workplace can help create behaviour change. Providing the right environment with a fridge, microwave and a space to eat lunch in the office will encourage staff to bring in lunch from home or bring in re-usable containers and cutlery if they buy lunch.

Tips for a Waste Free Lunch as a fun staff engagement activity:

- ♻️ Challenge staff to bring in lunch from home everyday for the whole of recycling week and donate the money they saved buying lunch to charity or maybe give a re-usable coffee cup as a prize to all staff who complete the challenge.
- ♻️ Host a 'pot luck' lunch where each team member brings a dish from home and everyone enjoys a communal lunch. Remember to have some containers for leftovers!
- ♻️ If you have a local park or outdoor space, arrange a staff picnic with re-usable containers and each person contributing by bringing food or drink.
- ♻️ Make 'Waste Free Wednesday' a regular event in the office, send reminders and maybe get staff to share their favourite lunch combinations that they bring from home.

Outcomes

- ♻️ Reduced waste to landfill
- ♻️ Decreased recycling contamination
- ♻️ Reduction in single-use plastic
- ♻️ Increased use of re-usable cups and containers

ACTIVITY

Buy Recycled

Considerations

Unless you're buying recycled, you're only doing half the job. It's all about closing the recycling loop. The more products you buy made from recycled materials the greater the environmental benefits and efficient use of natural resources. Australian made recycled products have even greater environmental benefits.

Some Australians have outdated views on the quality of recycled office paper but when more than 130 people were asked to choose between a sheet of 100% recycled Planet Ark Paper and a sheet of virgin paper, almost seven in ten were unsure or not confident to make a choice.

Choosing Australian made recycled office paper supports green jobs, keeps waste out of local landfills and reduces carbon emissions. Find out more about [Planet Ark Paper](#).

You could also buy [Naturale 100% recycled toilet tissue](#) or pens and rulers made from printer cartridges collected through 'Cartridges 4 Planet Ark' by [Close the Loop](#).

Outcomes

- ♻ Improved environmental sustainability
- ♻ Improved corporate social responsibility
- ♻ Increased positive promotional opportunities



"Through BusinessRecycling, I've also learned that there's a lot more that can be recycled than I first thought and I'll definitely use the website for future needs."

Receptionist, Infinity Constructions



ACTIVITY

Do A Review

Considerations

A good place to start to green your workplace is to [do a review](#) of your current waste and recycling systems. Doing a waste audit is a great starting point for addressing the waste sent from your workplace to landfill. There are professional organisations that can do full and comprehensive audits of all the material coming in and going out of your building(s). Additionally, audits can look at energy and water use. However, more modest audits can also be effective. This could be as easy as selecting a couple of garbage bins and observing the amount of recyclables in them.

Outcomes

- ♻️ Baseline measurements for future successes
- ♻️ Clear picture of current waste materials and quantities

ACTIVITY

Set Up New Recycling Systems

Considerations

There are many materials that you can recycle in the workplace. Some will save you money, some will be cost neutral and some might come at a cost, but all of them will help reduce your workplace's impact on the environment and make your business more sustainable. You can recycle much more than just office paper – why not look into [setting up new recycling systems](#) for glass and plastic bottles, aluminium and steel cans, cardboard, newspapers and magazines, e-waste, printer cartridges, mobile phones, batteries, compact and normal fluorescent light globes, food scraps and/or garden cuttings.

National Recycling Week is a great opportunity to explore all the materials that your organisation could recycle. It's as simple as searching on Australia's most comprehensive online database of recycling collection and support services for the workplace. The [BusinessRecycling website](#) makes it easier to recycle at work with a comprehensive list of recyclers, a [checklist](#) to help choose the right recycler, [free signage](#), [case studies](#) and more. Download the FREE [toolkit](#) today!

Outcomes

- ♻ Improved environmental sustainability
- ♻ Improved corporate social responsibility
- ♻ Reduced business waste going to landfill
- ♻ Increased positive promotional opportunities



"Recycling promotes the sustainable use of resources, keeps waste out of landfills and reduces greenhouse gas emissions. By recycling, each PepsiCo team member individually makes a difference to our environment and helps to deliver PepsiCo Performance With Purpose".

**PepsiCo ANZ
Environment Manager,
Janine Cannell**