



# NATIONAL RECYCLING WEEK

## COUNCIL ACTIVITY GUIDE

Councils across the country form a fundamental part of Planet Ark's National Recycling Week (NRW) as they are the major providers of community-level recycling education and services.

The Council Activity Guide is one of a number of resources developed by Planet Ark and their sponsors to promote the aims of NRW, recycling in general and generate media coverage. The guide suggests activities to help councils get involved in NRW. Each activity includes:

- ♻️ Positive outcomes of a particular activity for councils
- ♻️ Considerations and ideas for running an activity
- ♻️ Where relevant, comments from councils who have run an activity previously

Councils are welcome to use whichever components they wish from the guide.

Planet Ark would like to thank the councils that have contributed to the success of National Recycling Week over the years and that have contributed to this guide.



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## ACTIVITY

# UPDATE YOUR RECYCLINGNEARYOU PAGES

## OUTCOMES

- ♻️ Ensure residents have accurate local recycling information.
- ♻️ Engage and gather feedback from residents.

## CONSIDERATIONS

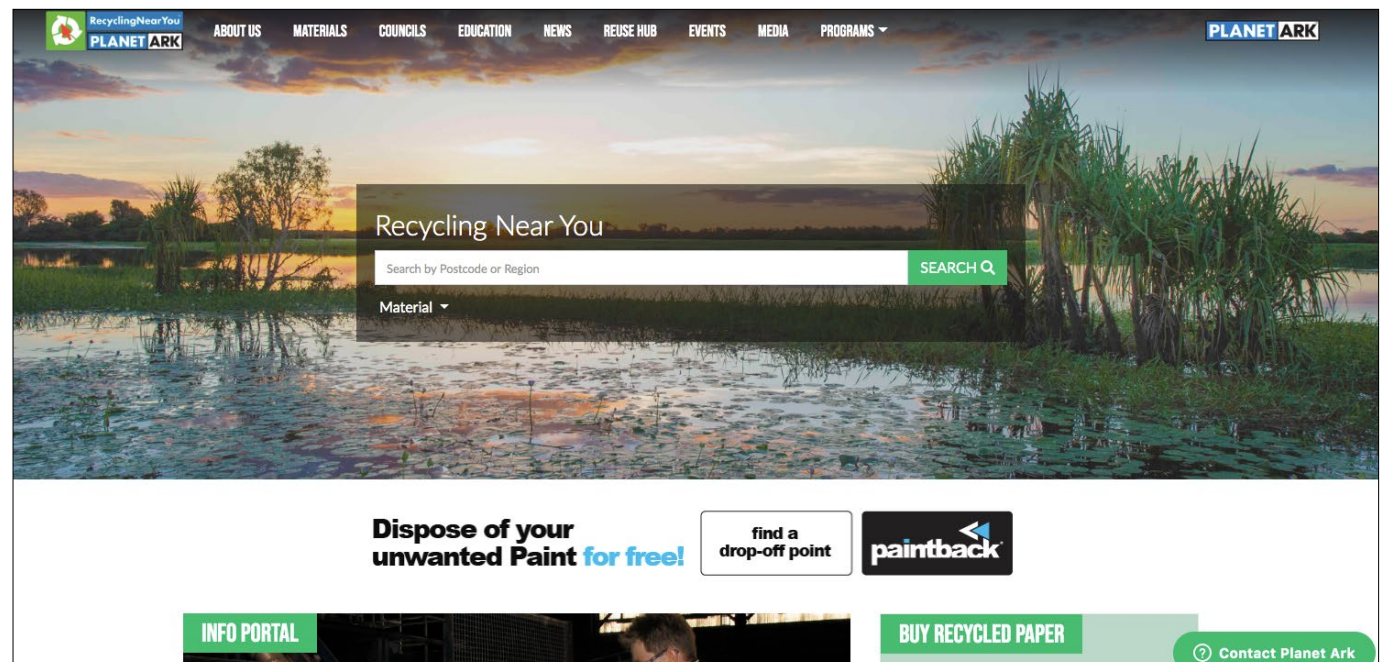
- ♻️ Every council in Australia has editorial access to its [RecyclingNearYou.com.au](https://RecyclingNearYou.com.au) web pages. The RecyclingNearYou Hotline (1300 733 712) can provide log-on details as well as assist in editing your pages.
- ♻️ Check, and if necessary, update the council related information including what's collected, collection times, bin replacement and other events.

### Promote Your Events

- ♻️ List your events on the National Recycling Week website to help your residents find out about them, and so Planet Ark can support them in the media.
- ♻️ Events listed on the National Recycling Week website will also appear in the 'Events and Notices' section of your council page on [RecyclingNearYou.com.au](https://RecyclingNearYou.com.au)
- ♻️ To register your events, simply visit [RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/Events](https://RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/Events) or call the Recycling Hotline on 1300 733 712.

## VISIT [RECYCLINGWEEK.PLANETARK.ORG/COUNCILS](https://RECYCLINGWEEK.PLANETARK.ORG/COUNCILS)

FOR A RANGE OF DOWNLOADABLE LOGOS, ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES AND FOR INFORMATION ABOUT NATIONAL RECYCLING WEEK. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION FEEL FREE TO CALL PLANET ARK ON 02 8484 7200 OR E-MAIL [RECYCLING@PLANETARK.ORG](mailto:RECYCLING@PLANETARK.ORG)





## ACTIVITY

## LOCAL MEDIA RELEASES

## OUTCOMES

- ♻️ Provide information about council activities.
- ♻️ Recycling education and information.

## CONSIDERATIONS

- ♻️ Planet Ark produces media releases for use by councils. They are sent via e-mail about a month before NRW. They can also be downloaded from [RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/Councils](http://RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/Councils).
- ♻️ For maximum impact, local information and quotes should be added to these releases.
- ♻️ Releases can be used to promote new initiatives as well as promoting existing initiatives as part of NRW.

**“Press releases seemed to give the greatest exposure based on responses.”**

**“Media releases increased take up of information and resulted in residents contacting Council for more information.”**

## EMMA PENFOLD, COUNCIL WASTE COORDINATOR

### ‘So you think you can recycle?’ Week asks

**D**ID you know the average Australian produces 647kg of municipal waste each year? This means that highlighting the many opportunities for improvements in waste reduction and recycling has never been more important.

As part of National Recycling Week, Port Stephens Council wants to help educate residents on the simple things they can do to make a difference.

The theme this year ‘So you think you can recycle?’ aims to highlight the golden rules of recycling that tackle the most common recycling conventions.

The week is a great platform to further educate the community.

In Port Stephens we have an excellent record of recycling with 7316 tonnes of waste recycled in 2015-16 alone – but like anything, there's always room for improvement.

A key issue for us is contamination, which has been highlighted in this year's campaign.

Contamination refers to incorrect items being placed in recycling bins causing problems during the sorting of recyclables and processing.

Eight out of ten councils surveyed by Planet Ark across metropolitan, regional and remote Australia identified reducing contamination as a high priority.

But there are a few simple things people can do to avoid contamination.

For example, it's important to know that plastic bags can't be recycled. Also note that jars and bottles should have their lids removed and be rinsed before being placed in the bin.

Planet Ark's Golden Rules of Recycling:

- Stay Loose: Recycling goes into the bin loose – never in a plastic bag, and keep other soft plastic out too.
- Easy does it: Simple materials like paper, cardboard, glass jars and bottles, metal cans and aerosols, cartons and rigid plastics are easy to recycle and accepted in almost all

kerbside collections.

- Into the Garbage: Crockery, window and drink-ware glass, polystyrene, plastic bags, nappies and food are the big baddies in the recycling.


- Keep It Clean-ish: Recycling does not need to be spotless – just scrape of solid food and give it a quick rinse.

National Recycling Week started Monday and runs until Sunday, November 13.

For any information on council's drop-off days or recycling activities visit [www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au](http://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au)



Example of a local newspaper article by council staff.



“Experience has shown these to be extremely effective in getting the benefits of recycling across to residents and developing their understanding of the recycling process”

## ACTIVITY

### MATERIAL RECOVERY FACILITY OR TRANSFER STATION TOUR

## OUTCOMES

- ♻ Education about contamination.
- ♻ Myth busting ie - what happens to recycling once it's picked up.
- ♻ Community engagement.

## CONSIDERATIONS

- ♻ Work with the recycling contractor to see whether running a number of tours throughout the day or week is possible.
- ♻ Begin promoting the tour several weeks before hand.
- ♻ Be clear about dress code and safety regulations.
- ♻ Award the tour as a prize to a school/ community group that has achieved some success in waste reduction, recycling rate increase or other achievement.



## ACTIVITY

# COMPOSTING / WORM FARMING WORKSHOPS

## OUTCOMES

- ♻️ Broaden the definition of recycling from just paper and co-mingled material.
- ♻️ Increase diversion from landfill.
- ♻️ Reduce organic waste.

## CONSIDERATIONS

- ♻️ Demonstrate composting and worm farming or launch a community composting service, or offer discounted worm farms or compost bins.
- ♻️ Special promotions should focus on identifying the workshop as a NRW event, including in any media releases.
- ♻️ Running existing workshops will have few or no resource implications.
- ♻️ Free or subsidised worm farms or compost bins could be distributed as part of the workshop or throughout the week.

See [RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/Councils](https://RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/Councils) for access to the NRW logo.



“Worm farming workshop always gets the most attention.”





## ACTIVITY

# PROMOTING 'CARTRIDGES 4 PLANET ARK', MOBILEMUSTER AND OTHER EXISTING E-WASTE PROGRAMS

## OUTCOMES

- ♻ Increase recycling rates for e-waste.
- ♻ Increase profile for existing programs.
- ♻ Link councils to existing programs.



## CONSIDERATIONS

- ♻ By tapping into existing programs there are few resource implications for council.
- ♻ Collection points can be established in council properties (libraries, service centres) or council can promote existing collection points (eg, Australia Post and Officeworks).
- ♻ Council can work with local schools and/or businesses to establish them as collection points.
- ♻ NRW can be used as the launch event in an ongoing collection program.
- ♻ Other materials that can be collected may include Compact Fluorescent Light-globes, batteries, household chemicals and paints, motor oil and so on.
- ♻ For more info or to register:  
visit [Cartridges.PlanetArk.org](http://Cartridges.PlanetArk.org) or call 1800 24 24 73; or [MobileMuster.com.au](http://MobileMuster.com.au)  
or call 1300 730 070

**“Tapping into these programs is an easy and effective way to reduce waste without needing to invest many resources.”**



## ACTIVITY

# TV AND COMPUTER RECYCLING



## OUTCOMES

- ♻ Increase recycling rates for e-waste
- ♻ Support the National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme.
- ♻ Link to existing council programs

## CONSIDERATIONS

- ♻ Establishing a permanent or temporary e-waste collection can take considerable resources.
- ♻ By tapping into existing programs, such as the National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme, there are fewer resource implications for councils.
- ♻ Televisions, computers, printers, and computer accessories (such as keyboards, mice and hard drives) are covered under the Scheme, but other e-waste items that householders may want to dispose of are not.
- ♻ By partnering with an approved arrangement under the Scheme, such as TechCollect, councils can benefit from a national collection, recycling and community education service that is environmentally robust, cost effective and community friendly.
- ♻ Council may consider combining an e-waste collection event with a household chemical and paint collection event. This will maximise the opportunity for residents to recycle more during their visit and it can make more financial sense for the council to combine two events in one.
- ♻ For more information, contact TechCollect at [techcollect.com.au](http://techcollect.com.au) or on 1300 229 837.







## ACTIVITY

# SUPPORT SCHOOLS RECYCLE RIGHT CHALLENGE

## OUTCOMES

- ♻ Education about what can be recycled.
- ♻ Community engagement.

## CONSIDERATIONS

- ♻ The Schools Recycle Right Challenge has a wide range of events and activities that run through October and November.
- ♻ Council may be able to provide support to a school that is already participating in the Challenge.
- ♻ Council make be able to encourage schools to become involved.
- ♻ Information about the Challenge is available at [SchoolsRecycle.PlanetArk.org](https://SchoolsRecycle.PlanetArk.org)

**“We participated to increase awareness of the purpose and process of recycling and to promote alternative thinking about reusing items”**

**Schools  
Recycle  
Right**



**NATIONAL  
RECYCLING WEEK  
PLANET ARK**



## ACTIVITY

## COMMUNITY STALLS

(Shopping Centres, Councils Buildings, Fairs/Events and/or Schools)

## OUTCOMES

- ♻️ Education about contamination.
- ♻️ Myth busting re what happens to recycling.
- ♻️ Community engagement.

## CONSIDERATIONS

- ♻️ A Stall needs an activity or draw card to encourage people to approach and engage with it.
- ♻️ Examples of activities that have been effective include:
  - △ Give-aways like mini bins, fridge magnets, pamphlets etc,
  - △ Short recycling quiz,
  - △ Guessing competition (how many crushed cans in a bale etc),
  - △ Display of Items made from recycled materials,
  - △ Encourage residents to reduce single use plastic, maybe have some reusable shopping bags to give away or some reusable coffee cups as prizes,
  - △ Display and ask common open questions that residents find confusing about recycling. e.g. “Where can plastic bags be recycled?”, “Which bin do empty aerosol cans go in?” or focus on a problem waste issue in your area.



One of the quiz questions available from [RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/Councils](https://RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/Councils)

“Staffed shopping centre displays and handouts receive the most interest. Residents are already there and can afford to spend a few seconds asking ‘that’ question they needed to ask but wouldn’t otherwise.”





*“When asked about the main message guests were taking home from the event, many indicated they were taking home reuse tips (29%) and positive messages about recycling (59%). These are significant responses and it seemed as though the reuse message got across to most guests.”*

Hornsby Council Evaluation.

**Big  
Aussie  
Swap**



**NATIONAL  
RECYCLING WEEK  
PLANET ARK**

## ACTIVITY

### BIG AUSSIE SWAP PARTY

## OUTCOMES

- ♻️ Diversion of waste from landfill.
- ♻️ Normalise and promote re-use initiatives.
- ♻️ Community engagement.
- ♻️ Kerbside recycling education opportunities.

## CONSIDERATIONS

- ♻️ At a Swap Party participants bring unwanted items, hand them to staff in exchange for a token. The items are then displayed for participants to browse. Once the Swap Party opens they can swap their tokens for items brought by other people.
- ♻️ To be part of the National Recycling Week Big Aussie Swap an event needs to occur during NRW and be open to the public – or a segment of the public such as ‘mums and babies’.
- ♻️ A Big Aussie Swap can be as big or as small as is locally appropriate or relevant.
- ♻️ Planet Ark has developed a comprehensive “How to Host a Swap Party” guide including sections on: What to swap; Rules; Costs; Partnerships; Dealing with left-overs; and more.
- ♻️ A wide range of downloadable resources are also available including: Adaptable media releases; Promotional posters; signage; Case Studies and more.
- ♻️ All of these resources can be found at [RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/CouncilSwap](https://RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org/CouncilSwap)



## ACTIVITY

# BUY IT BACK DAY

## OUTCOMES

- ♻️ Raise resident awareness of re-use initiatives within the community
- ♻️ Encourage residents to reduce and reuse materials thereby reducing waste to landfill
- ♻️ Community engagement

## CONSIDERATIONS

- ♻️ Engage with tip shops/community recycling and re-use centres etc to host Buy It Back Day on the Saturday of National Recycling Week.
- ♻️ Put on a BBQ or entertainment and maybe have stalls with local up-cycled or recycled goods on sale.
- ♻️ Run a recycled art competition in the lead-up to the event, announce winners and give prizes on the day.
- ♻️ Schedule some make-do-and-mend workshops or a repair cafe for residents to learn to fix household items.
- ♻️ Hold a discount day at the tip shop or re-use centre or send residents vouchers to use on the day.
- ♻️ Host a community garage sale either in a central space or encourage residents to get together and host their own.



## ACTIVITY

### HOST A MONDAY MUSTER

## OUTCOMES

- ♻ Team-bonding
- ♻ Keeping resources in circulation
- ♻ Diverting resources from landfill

## CONSIDERATIONS

Don't let mobiles go to landfill or gather dust in a drawer. With an estimated 25 million now is the time to get your workplace involved in a Monday Muster! Having recycling programs in place is not only good for the environment but research shows that it is also good for staff morale with three in four employees agreeing that having recycling at work makes them feel better about their employer.

Every Monday for the month of November as part of National Recycling Week, Planet Ark is encouraging workplaces around Australia to recycle old mobile phones.

To find out more and register your muster visit our [Monday Muster](#) page on our National Recycling Week website.





“The event helped to promote sustainability across Council. Seeing other council staff members involved in a sustainability activity helps staff to think about sustainability as not just the sustainability officer’s role.”



## ACTIVITY

### FRIDAY FILE FLING

## OUTCOMES

- ♻ Council staff and/or local business engagement
- ♻ Increased material into re-use and recycling streams.
- ♻ Paper re-use.

## CONSIDERATIONS

- ♻ Office paper has a relatively low recycling rate because so much of it is stored in files that will never be used again. As well as providing a positive staff engagement activity, the Friday File Fling will encourage re-use and recycling of good quality paper.
- ♻ Workplaces and businesses are asked to set some time aside and encourage staff to clean out their files. This can be carried out as an activity within council offices and/or promoted to local businesses.
- ♻ Good quality single sided paper can be used as note pads – either by binding or gluing it or putting it into a folder.
- ♻ Producing a printable cover for these notepads is a good way to demonstrate your workplace’s commitment to sustainability.
- ♻ It might be necessary to order extra recycling bins, or set up a collection system for the paper so it can go in existing bins when there is space.
- ♻ Make sure sensitive or confidential documents are disposed of correctly and that mandatory retention rules are adhered to.
- ♻ Add an afternoon tea or drinks to the event and make it a social event.
- ♻ A ‘How to Host’ guide is available at [RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org](https://RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org)

## OTHER SUGGESTIONS

### CONSIDER

- ♻️ Providing residents with life cycle information for a range of key materials.
- ♻️ Developing back to basics campaigns (maybe in conjunction with waste/recycling contractor).
- ♻️ Hosting a community town clean up event (like Clean Up Australia) with appropriate materials being separated and sent for recycling.
- ♻️ Launching a public place recycling trial.
- ♻️ Using NRW as a launch pad for new initiatives.



## CASE STUDY

### HORNSBY SHIRE COUNCIL CLOTHING SWAP PARTY



With its proven success in inner Melbourne and Sydney, trialling a clothing exchange in Hornsby Shire during National Recycling Week seemed like a great idea. By creating an event where clothing items are swapped for tokens and these tokens swapped for another participant's clothes, we aimed to create a place where our guests re-think unnecessary consumerism and reuse and recycle their clothing.

The event was undertaken with the help of Anglicare, and a partnership formed enriching the event as we shared resources. Guests were invited to check-in from 6:30pm - 7:30pm and received tokens for each clothing item accepted. Nibbles and drinks were also offered at this time whilst Council and Anglicare staff were accepting and hanging clothes. The exchange itself was between 7:30pm – 9:30pm, and when checking out, guests were asked to fill out a brief survey.

Survey results from this trial event indicate that the exchange was a success, with 95% of participants indicating they would attend similar events in the future. We estimate approximately 90 participants attended, the majority bringing the maximum 6 items of clothing to exchange. 96% of participants indicated they enjoyed the event, and when asked why, 12% of survey responses indicated it was because it was a good way to recycle or reuse their clothes.



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