

A Business Waste Reduction Case Study **Casino Village 2009**

Casino Village



Casino Village is a recreational vehicle (RV) traveller park located on a 115 hectare site on the out skirts of the northern NSW town of Casino. The Village boasts amenities for RV's, rally sites, a Club House for dinners and functions, camping area, recreational facilities, kitchen facilities, a BBQ Hut, a swimming pool, games room and library. It also has cabins and a manufactured housing precinct for permanent residents. Many events including a regular craft market are held at the Village.

In August 2008 Casino Village and the North East Waste Forum began to discuss options to separate recycling from the general waste stream of the Park, in an attempt to improve the parks environmental footprint. The actions of volunteer residents working with management became the way forward for the Village.

The Challenge

The main aim of the BWRP is to assess the efficiency of the waste management practices of businesses, characterise their waste streams and come up with waste management systems that would reduce the volume of waste going to landfill through waste avoidance, reuse and recycling. It also aims to save businesses money and transfer lessons learned to other businesses in the region.

Waste Characterisation

In 2008 Richmond Valley did not have a kerbside recycling service available. Recycling could be taken to the landfill at Nammoona and deposited into glass and paper bins. Bulk paper collection could also be obtained from a private contractor.

Casino Village has its own waste truck and removed waste to the landfill on a twice weekly basis. Aluminium cans were collected by a resident for charity but there was no other separation of recyclable material.

A waste audit is often the initial step in planning a new waste management system. However, at Casino Village a visual assessment of the waste truck and the flexibility of management allowed for recycling to be trialled without the need to conduct an audit. This visual assessment indicated that almost half of the waste stream could be recycled if a system could be developed.

In early 2009 residents expressed an interest in assisting with any recycling initiatives. Bulk recycling was cost prohibitive so wheelie bins were purchased and distributed around the park. Trial and error determined the final location, signage was attached and the volunteers stepped up to the plate.



Recycling bins near permanent residences



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The Results

The recycling trial by volunteers at Casino Village required a number of adjustments to deal with the issue of contamination. Most recycling bins were re-sited from the camping areas to the housing precinct due to the large amount of non-recyclable material travellers were depositing in them. In addition, glass bins had to be re-labelled due to plastic contamination. Bins also had to be removed from covered areas after one caught alight when a cigarette was disposed of. Despite these initial problems the residents persisted and the system is currently operating effectively.

A period of 10 weeks was monitored by volunteers who worked for 2 1/2 hours per week to collect the recycling bins with a utility and take them to the landfill. Bins were then emptied into the glass and cardboard bins provided, returned to the village and redistributed. The average diversion per week was 480 litres of glass and 1560 litres of cardboard and paper. This equates to 4.34 tonne of glass and 8.1 tonne of paper and cardboard diverted from landfill annually. These figures are conservative as they reflect non-peak season times and it is anticipated that during busier times this figure may double.



Background

The North East Waste Forum (NEWF) is a collective of local councils in the Northern Rivers region of NSW who take a regional approach to waste management. An initiative of the NEWF, the Business Waste Reduction Project (BWRP) works with the local businesses to assist them in developing waste management strategies that promote waste reduction and resource recovery. The project began in April 2005 and has collaborated with a wide variety of businesses and institutions. An integral part of the project is to transfer information from participating businesses to other similar operations within the region. The project also works with industry organisations, such as Chambers of Commerce, to further disseminate information on commercial waste reduction.

Opportunities

There are further opportunities for Casino Village to minimise their waste and improve their recycling. In January 2010 Richmond Valley Council will introduce kerbside recycling. Initially this recycling service will only be available to residential areas but a second phase is planned within the year to make the service available to commercial operations also.

At present volunteers are observing a large quantity of PET plastics in the glass only recycling bins. This is no doubt due to the fact that most recycling systems take co-mingled material with glass, plastic and metal collected in one bin. This is not the case in Richmond Valley and additional signage or an education campaign may assist in lowering this contamination.



There is also the potential for composting or worm farming at the Village as many residents have their own yards and gardens. Larger communal open space areas and a nursery are also located on site. If household organic food waste was able to be composted the waste to landfill would be greatly reduced. In addition, these processes produce a rich fertilizer for private and communal gardens and could enhance the existing development by management of green screens and corridors. The potential to run worm farming or composting workshops for residents has been discussed with management.

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