



Business Waste Reduction Project Casino Business Waste Survey Report

Introduction

The Business Waste Reduction Project, an initiative of the North East Waste Forum (NEWF) is aimed at assisting businesses within the region to reduce the quantity of waste they generate and send to landfill through more efficient waste management practices. The service is free to business and is supported by your local council. The waste practices and attitudes of businesses in the Casino CBD were surveyed in May 2011 in order to assist local business and improve waste reduction outcomes where possible.

Benefits to Business

Implementing more efficient waste management and resource use practices has the potential to bring the business and wider community many benefits, including:

- Reduced waste collection and disposal costs;
- Improved operational efficiency, reduced production costs and improved staff morale;
- Improved environmental credentials & enhanced corporate image;
- Conserving natural resources, energy and water;
- Reduced pressure on landfills & less impact on the environment from air & water pollution.

Existing Waste & Recycling Services

The waste and recycling service options currently available in Casino:

- i) Richmond Valley Council can provide
 - ✓ 240L green lidded wheelie bins for waste (weekly collection)
 - ✓ 240L yellow lidded wheelie bins for comingled recyclables (fortnightly)
- ii) Private Waste Contractors can provide
 - ✓ bulk bins for waste, cardboard/paper, recyclable containers (generally not mixed)
 - ✓ 240L wheelie bins for cardboard/paper or recyclable containers.

Survey Summary

A total of 60 businesses in the Walker Street, Convent Parade, Canterbury St and Barker St precinct responded to the survey. The graph at Figure 1 below illustrates business responses regarding participation in the recycling of cardboard/paper, recyclable containers and food organics. The positive response indicators are inclusive of those businesses that have a recycling collection service as well as those who recycle via alternatives such as taking home, or where the items were reused e.g. as packaging.

Overall the survey results were very encouraging with the majority of participating Casino businesses taking steps to reduce the waste they send to landfill through a variety of recycling and reuse options. Opportunities still exist for some improvements in the rate of recycling and diversion of waste from landfill, particularly from some of the hotels and cafe businesses.

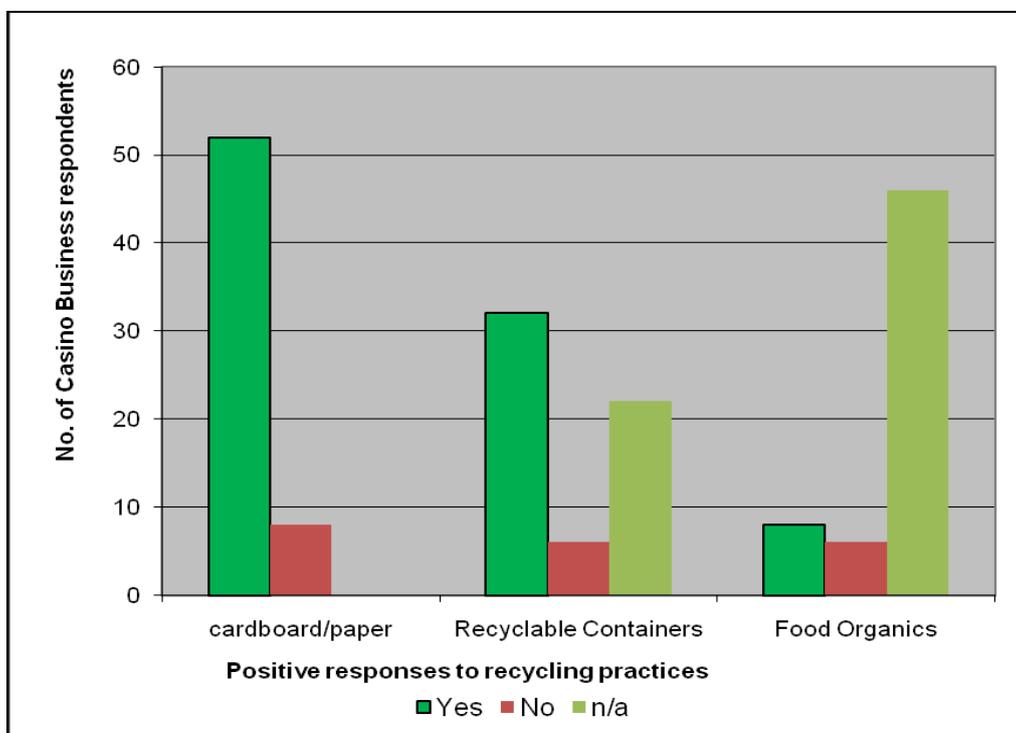


Figure 1. Positive Business Responses to Recycling Practices

The survey results suggest that:

- 87% of surveyed businesses are recycling or reusing their cardboard & paper;
- 53% of businesses are recycling or reusing containers (*glass, plastic, metal, milk & juice cartons*);
- 57% of the food and hospitality businesses surveyed were recycling at least some of their food waste (taken home or collected for composting or chooks);
- 12% of businesses are still sending all waste (including potential recyclables) to landfill

Some of the other important strategies adopted by Casino businesses to minimise waste to landfill include:

- donating fabric off cuts to local charity shops;
- free delivery of electronic equipment and accessories that are no longer of use to the Namoon Landfill E waste collection facility;
- used motor oil collected by local hospital for reuse as boiler fuel;
- used printer cartridge recycle collection boxes for use by the community (<http://recyclingnearyou.com.au/cartridges/>);
- collection of used cooking oil for reprocessing into biodiesel;
- mercury based batteries collected for overseas recycling (<http://www.batteryback.org/>).

Obstacles to minimising waste and maximising recycling include:

- ❖ Reliance on property owners/agents to provide suitable waste/recycling services for tenants;
- ❖ Concerns about cost and space for bins;
- ❖ Lack of knowledge regarding available services;

65% of surveyed businesses said that they also undertook other sustainable actions in their businesses beyond recycling cardboard and containers. The most popular were:

- i) switching off appliances when not in use;
- ii) offering customers an alternative to plastic bags or minimising plastic bag use;
- iii) using energy efficient lighting;
- iv) reduced paper use &/or reuse of paper.

Council is considering offering commercial customers a larger (360L) recycling bin and a weekly service option (currently recycling is collected fortnightly only). 23 businesses indicated their interest in the larger bin service and 17 businesses requested that Council contact them regarding a new recycling bin service or increasing the collection frequency of their existing service. 7 food, hospitality and florist businesses indicated that they would be interested in a Council commercial organics (food & green waste) collection service if one became available in the near future.

Conclusion

The level of participation by Casino businesses in the survey was very encouraging as were the overall survey results. Council's recent introduction and promotion of its commercial recycling service has resulted in up take by more than half of the businesses surveyed but opportunities still exist for further improvements in the rate of recycling and diversion of waste from landfill, particularly from some hotels and cafes. The feedback and interest in a recycling service from some businesses, indicates that further improvements are likely.

During the survey emphasis was placed on the potential savings for businesses through reducing waste to landfill costs, which can then offset the cost of recycling. The continuing promotion of recycling and its benefits, with an emphasis on the increasing cost differential between waste and recycling (due to the government waste levy) should encourage more businesses to take up a recycling service in the future. Engaging property owners/agents through the provision of relevant information will also assist in ensuring that waste and recycling services and costs are adequately embodied into future lease agreements.

Richmond Valley Council congratulates business on their recycling efforts whilst the North East Waste Forum, on their behalf will continue to:

- provide assistance and support to interested businesses where possible;
- promote successful waste reducing businesses and the benefits they gain;
- continue business networking; and
- increase the distribution of information via the NEWF's E newsletters.

Business Highlights

Promoting the sustainable waste practices of local businesses is an ideal way to share knowledge and success, strengthen local networks, engage others and reward those demonstrating leadership for their efforts. Several Casino businesses stood out from the crowd for their efforts in sustainable waste management. A summary of them is outlined below.

❖ Karam's Fruit Market

Frank Karam and Leanne Allen are committed to reducing the waste generated at the fruit market on Walker St. Cardboard boxes are the main waste and are either reused for packing orders or flattened and stacked for free delivery each week to the Namoonah landfill for recycling.

Any recyclable containers including glass, plastic, aluminium or steel cans, milk or juice cartons and clean paper are placed into the yellow lidded wheelie bin, which is collected each fortnight by Richmond Valley Council and sent on for recycling.



Fruit and vegetable scraps are also a major waste generated at the fruit market. Leanne said



“we have an arrangement with a local farmer whereby we collect the scraps separately and he picks them up 2-3 times a week while in town, for use as animal feed. So it saves us both money, him on animal feed and us by reducing waste disposal costs”.

The business purchases some of its produce locally. This helps to support the local economy and reduce the environmental impacts associated with packaging and transporting food long distances, “not to mention how much fresher and tastier our local produce is” said Leanne.

❖ **Muntien Chinese Restaurant**

An estimated 80 - 90% of waste from hospitality businesses is recyclable, reusable or compostable with 25% of this being food waste alone (*source 'Sustainability Victoria' 2005*).

The Muntien Chinese Restaurant is a Casino hospitality business that has begun to significantly reducing the waste that it sends to landfill. All cardboard boxes are recycled via a bulk bin which is emptied each fortnight and aluminium cans are collected for recycling on a regular basis by a local. The restaurant intends to get a Council comingled recycling bin service in the near future so that other items such as plastic, glass containers, milk and juice cartons can also be easily recycled. By recycling these items, the business may be able to get rid of 1 or more of their existing waste bins so saving the business on waste disposal costs and offsetting recycling costs.

Kitchen food scraps are also recycled through daily collection for home composting and chook food. Keeping organic waste out of landfill helps to reduce associated pollution and greenhouse gas emissions as well as contributing to a further reduction in the business’s waste disposal fees as the cost of waste to landfill continues to increase each year.

❖ **The Royal Hotel Motel**

Management at the Royal Hotel has reduced the volume of waste sent to landfill by arranging 2 bulk bins, 1 for cardboard/paper and the other for glass containers. The bulk bin services are provided through a local waste & resource recovery contractor who collects the materials for recycling. For businesses with large quantities of recyclables, particularly cardboard, and the available space, a bulk bin service is often a more suitable and affordable option than numerous 240L wheelie bins.

Royal Hotel staff also reuse many plastic containers for storage in the kitchen and recycle food scraps by taking them home for composting. These combined waste minimisation initiatives have enabled the business to manage its waste with only 2 wheelie bins emptied once per week.

Further Information

The North East Waste Forum encourages businesses wishing to improve their waste management practices and sustainability to check out the business waste reduction DIY toolkit and other useful resources online at www.northeastwasteforum.org.au. The Project Coordinator can be contacted for support on ph. 02 6687 4945 or business@northeastwasteforum.org.au