

Waste Wise Events Project – Case Study **Brunswick Valley Small Schools Cross Country Carnival 2010**

The Event



The Carnival is an annual interschool sports event organised and hosted by Durrumbul Primary School. Over 500 students, staff and parents from 6 other local primary schools participated. The Carnival involved races around the school grounds and beyond, a low waste lunch prepared by the Durrumbul P&C committee and an award ceremony and presentation for the competing students. As part of Durrumbul Public School's ongoing commitment to environmental education and creating a more sustainable school, they committed to making the Carnival a Waste Wise Event by integrating waste avoidance, reuse and recycling into all aspects of the event and encouraging the participation of all those involved.

The Challenge

The amount of waste generated at most events including school sports events, can be significant, creating an unpleasant mess, substantial clean up costs, wasting valuable natural resources and contributing to the pollution of our environment. The North Coast is host to over 80 interschool and regional sports events each year. The simple steps which can be taken to reduce the environmental impacts of such events were demonstrated at the Brunswick Valley Small Schools Cross Country Carnival. The implementation of a Waste Wise Management Plan resulted in a significant diversion of waste from landfill, reduction in litter, increased environmental awareness and capacity of the school community to incorporate sustainability into their regular activities.

Outcomes & Opportunities

A Waste Wise Management Plan was developed which focused primarily on raising waste wise awareness within the school community, in particular minimising non-recyclable packaging and maximising the capture of recyclables and organics. Outcomes for the event included:

- 78% of total waste generated at the Carnival was diverted from landfill and sent for recycling or composting;
- Contamination in the recycling stream was low at 5% indicating that mostly people made the correct decision when disposing of their rubbish;
- More than 70% of the organic waste (food & compostable paper) generated was collected for school composting or taken home for chooks;
- P&C group and the other food/drink providers minimised packaging and mostly used reusable or compostable items;
- Only 314 litres of waste was sent to landfill (that's less than 1.5 large wheelie bins);
- Increased capacity of event organisers to conduct waste wise school events in the future;
- Increased awareness and understanding by all the schools involved, regarding the importance of minimising waste and how to make it part of school life.



What Next with Waste?

Recommendations for future events include:

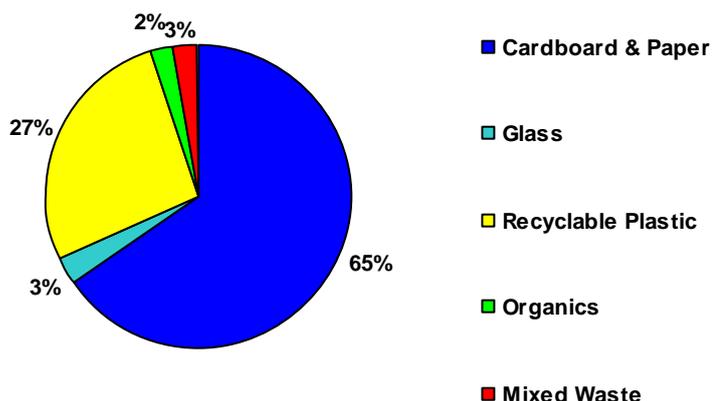
- The event organisers were pleased with the educational & environmental outcomes achieved & will continue to improve waste management at future events;
- A trained teacher to coordinate waste management and supervise students in the process;
- Reuse and amend the resources already developed to promote future events (flyer, newsletter brief, factsheet);
- Continue to encourage minimal packaging, student low waste lunches & use of reusable, recyclable or compostable items;
- Improve bin signage to encourage the correct separation and collection of compostable paper in the organic bins;
- Use bin monitors to assist students to make correct bin choice and minimise contamination;
- Offer an incentive to students to increase their level of compliance and minimise littering.

Results

A total of **1460 litres** of waste and recyclables was generated at the Cross Country Carnival. **78%** of this total, which equates to **1146 L** or **108 Kgs** of recyclable and compostable materials were successfully diverted from landfill. This was an excellent result, achieved through the dedication and commitment of Durrumbul Public School to creating a more sustainable interschool event.

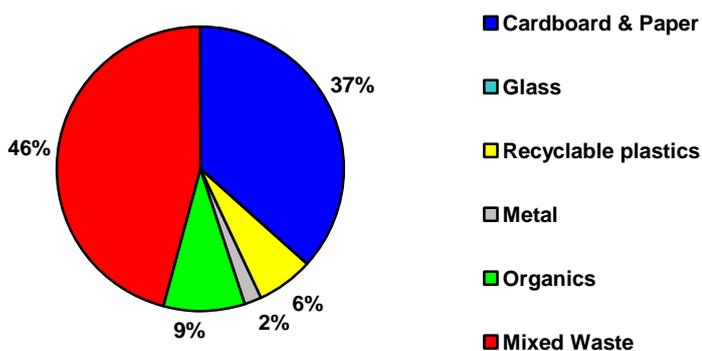
Recycling Bins

Cardboard & paper and recyclable plastic containers were the main components of the recycling stream. The contamination level was quite low at 5% and was mostly non-recyclable plastic such as lolly wrappers & chip packets and organics mainly compostable paper.



Waste Bins

54% of the materials in the waste stream could have been recycled if they had instead been put into the recycling bin or organics bucket. This indicates that at future similar events an estimated 90% of the waste generated could be successfully recycled if it was all placed in the correct bin.



Background

The North East Waste Forum (NEWF) is a collective of local councils working together to help avoid and reduce waste going to landfill in the Northern NSW region. The Forum provides support for participating local Councils, as well as advice and information to businesses and the general community in managing waste and how best to implement the sustainable practices that reduce waste generation and promote the recovery of recyclable resources.

The Waste Wise Events (WWE) Project was initiated by NEWF in Oct 06 and focuses on reducing waste to landfill by implementing Waste Wise Management Plans (WWMP's). So far over 25 Waste Wise events have been organised across the region, including agricultural, sporting, school family, food & music festivals with crowds ranging from 400 to 38,000.

Waste Wise Management Plan

A Waste Wise Management Plan incorporates waste avoidance & recycling objectives into each stage of the event planning, sets achievable targets and assigns roles & responsibilities. Targets set for this event included:

Packaging:

- All participating school students were requested to bring low waste snacks/lunch and a refillable drink bottle
- The P&C group and other food & drink providers were asked to minimise packaging wherever possible & to use only reusable, compostable or recyclable items.

Promotion of the waste & recycling systems:

- A flyer, newsletter article and Low Waste Lunch factsheet was sent out to the schools to inform them of the waste wise objectives and how they could help achieve them;
- Promotion to the whole community via a media story in the local paper;
- Signage on all bins and Council's Waste Wise Event banner & signs displayed at the carnival;
- Reminder to everyone at the start of event, to encourage correct use of the bins stations.

Recovery Targets:

- Recycle bins: plastic, glass and metal containers, cardboard & paper;
- Organic buckets: food organics (food scraps and compostable paper).

Equipment & Bin Management

- 4 bin stations each with 1 yellow lidded recycling bin and 1 red lidded waste bin;
- An organics bucket at two of the bin stations and one in the canteen;
- Monitoring of bins to encourage correct separation & minimise contamination.



Low waste BBQ Lunch

Contacts

North East Waste Forum

Co-ordinator

coordinator@northeastwasteforum.org.au

www.northeastwasteforum.org.au

Event Organiser

Anne Reichart

Principal - Durrumbul Public School

Ph. 02 6684 5229 E. Anne.Reichart@det.nsw.edu.au