

Waste Management for the 2011 LGSA Conference

Overview

The LGSA Conference for 2011 was held in Nowra at the Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre from Sunday 23rd October to Wednesday 26th October. Approximately 600 delegates from across NSW plus staff from 60 trade displays attended the event.

The conference was an opportunity to put in place best practise event waste management for both front of house facilities and back of house kitchen and food preparation areas. Resourcefull Recycling in partnership with Green Connect were engaged to manage waste for the conference. The aim was to maximise the recovery of resources and minimise waste to landfill. The waste collected was divided into four streams:-

1. Landfill waste
2. Paper and cardboard
3. Mixed recycling – bottles, cans and plastic containers
4. Organic - Food and other compostable material

In order to assist in reducing waste to landfill, compostable paper plates, corn starch knives and forks were used as well as compostable paper cups, biodegradable plastic cups and recyclable plastic cups. An onsite aerated compost system was supplied by “BiobiN” to compost these material plus all food preparation and residual food waste.

Pictured Right – The 4.5cubic metre BiobiN being delivered to the SEC loading dock area.



The waste management was concentrated on 6 different areas in and around the Entertainment Centre

- Cafe Area
- Bar and exhibition area
- Kitchen
- Hokeur - Food delivery and trade displays
- Outdoor eating area
- Back of house bulk waste skips

Public Areas, Front of House Bin Stations and Monitors

Five Waste Stations were set up consisting of 4 x 60 litre bins, colour coded and labelled according to the waste type as follows :-

- Landfill – red
- Paper & cardboard – blue
- Mixed recycling – yellow
- Organic – green



A 60litre waste station using the Eco-bins. These are distinctly colour coded and clearly labelled. These were monitored by Green Connect.



Green Connect were engaged to provide staff whose role was to assist delegates, trade exhibitors and catering staff to separate waste into the 4 streams.

They provided teams who monitored the bins, proactively engaged and educated users, guiding them to place their waste in the appropriate bin to maximise recovery, minimise contamination and minimise waste to landfill.

The Waste Stations and monitoring by Green Connect moved around the venue in response to the different activities of the conference to leverage maximum exposure, capture of waste and minimise contamination.

Whilst Green Connect focussed on “front of house”, Resourcefull Recycling concentrated on the bulk waste storage bins locations at the rear of the kitchen and the loading dock. Visual auditing of volumes were recorded as well as waste sorting & volume reduction practises.

This hands on approach influenced the kitchen staff to come on board and change habits in regards to waste separation and recycling. Although all catering companies agreed to follow the four waste stream system, it appears that management had not informed staff of this or if they had, little or no training had been provided so that work practises could be modified.

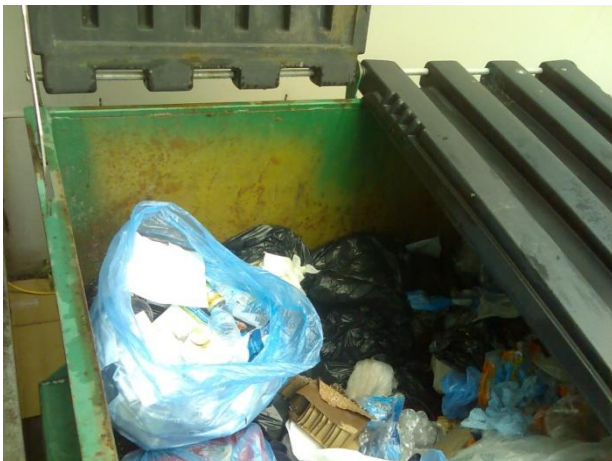
This training happened during the conference and was met with some resistance at first, but overall went well.



Pictured Left - Is the landfill skip bin at the rear of the kitchen. Adjacent to this are 240 litre MGB's for capturing mixed recycling.

On the far side, out of picture, is a paper and cardboard skip bin.

Resourcefull Recycling assisted with the servicing of these bins to maximise the volumes of materials in each e.g. broke down cardboard boxes to flat pack them in the skip; flattened 2 litre milk bottles; recovered recycling from the landfill bin; sorted the contents of the black plastic bags; pushed air out of the black plastic bags to reduce volume.



Auditing and recycling the contents of bags in the landfill waste bins.



Materials sorted into recyclable waste and landfill waste.

On the final day of the conference both Green Connect and Resourcefull Recycling staff recovered resources from the landfill bin in loading dock area, back of stage. This was an area that was not provided with the 4 waste stream collection bins and received no monitoring. It is also where the SEC cleaners deposited their waste.

No contact was made with the cleaners before or during the event.



Compostable plates, cups, knives and forks in the BioBiN.



Pictured above – Water from drink bottles was recycled through the BioBiN.



Pictured left – BioBiN with LGSA contents arriving to be composted with shredded green waste.

Results

Landfill	3500 litres
Mixed Recycling	3720 litres
Cardboard	7590 litres
Food organics & Compostable	4440 litres

Total Waste	19,250 litres
% Recycled	82%
% to Landfill	18%

Amounts Recovered from Landfill Bins

Mixed Recycling	510 litres
Cardboard	340 litres
Food organics & Compostable	920 litres

Air Fleet Museum Gala Dinner

On the Tuesday evening of the Conference a Gala Dinner for delegates was held at the Air Fleet Museum, Albatross Air Base, Nowra.

There was a sit down dinner for the 600 delegates. Resourcefull Recycling worked with the catering company to separate and capture the waste into the 4 waste streams.

A series of coloured coded and labelled 240litre MGB's were used to capture the separated waste. Food preparation waste and plate scraping was captured in the organics recycling bins; cardboard boxes were captured and recycled from the kitchen and bar areas; bottles, cans and drink bottles were captured in recycling bins located at each bar station; landfill waste was captured and where necessary sorted by Resourcefull Recycling.

Visual auditing and recording of waste stream volumes was completed by Resourcefull Recycling.

Results for Air Fleet Museum Dinner

Landfill	720 litres	Total Waste	4040 litres
Mixed Recycling	2160 litres	% Recycled	82%
Cardboard	960 litres	% to Landfill	18%
Food organics	200 litres		

Conclusion

The diversion from landfill and recycling rate of 82% is a noteworthy result for both venues. This would be considered a best practise result and would be further enhanced if the volumetric figures for each waste stream were converted to weights.

Green Connect played a crucial role in achieving this result through direct engagement and education of the delegates. This result was further strengthened by the engagement, systems and support offered by Resourcefull Recycling to the 3 Catering Companies and SEC and Shoalhaven Council Staff.

The use of the on-site composting system from BiobiN simplified the management of the food and compostable materials. It was an oversight in the planning that cleaners for the SEC were not consulted with prior to or during the conference. Further engagement with staff on the ground prior to the conference would have reduced the pressure from on the job training learning how to use the 4 waste stream system.

Recommendations

To further improve this good result and engender behaviour change for the conservation of resources at local government events the following are suggested –

1. Early engagement for Trade Exhibitors on the waste & recycling system and the expectation of them to participate in the system
2. Early engagement of Caters prior to events
 - Asking for their waste reduction & sustainability policy
 - Sourcing appropriate biodegradable and recyclable materials
 - Training (site induction) for front of house staff on separating and recycling waste
 - Training (site induction) for kitchen staff on utilising in-house recycling and waste reduction
3. Consultation with cleaning staff for the venue prior to and during the event