

### Recycle and save

Around 60 per cent of what is thrown into a typical pub or bar waste bin consists of food, paper and cardboard, while another ten per cent is glass and plastic<sup>1</sup>.

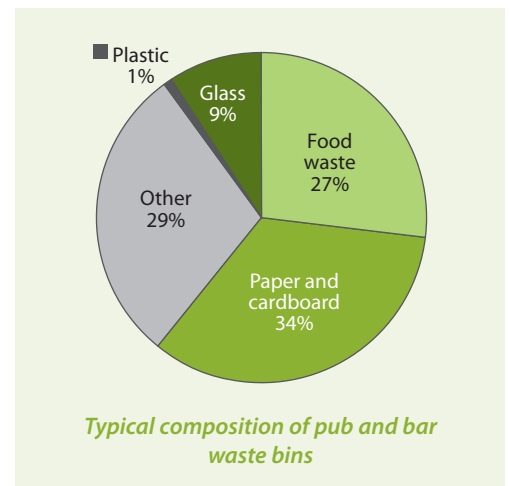
You probably know that most of this material can be recycled instead of being sent to landfill. But did you realise that by putting these materials in the correct bins your business could save money via a reduced waste collection charge? The wider benefit is that by recycling you will be helping our environment.

In NSW, food waste accounts for the second largest identifiable portion of commercial and industry waste. In Sydney alone, the total food waste amounts to over 300,000 tonnes<sup>2</sup>.

Between June and August 2008, DECCW found that 74 per cent of food wasted in Sydney was thrown away even before it got to the consumer<sup>3</sup>. This means that you or your staff could literally be throwing money in the bin.

You can recycle everything from coffee grounds, which can be composted, to cooking oils, which can be converted to biofuels. Paper, cardboard and plastic can be recycled instead of going to landfill.

If you collect enough material like cardboard and paper, you could even be paid for your recycling efforts.



### Simple ways pubs and bars can reduce waste and save

Think in terms of the waste hierarchy. How can you avoid, reduce, reuse or recycle.

- Avoid** → **Do we need it?**
- Reduce** → **Do we need so much?**
- Reuse** → **Can we use it again?**
- Recycle** → **Can someone else use it or turn it into other products?**



#### AVOID

To avoid food waste, make sure products from suppliers are in good condition. You should store or refrigerate perishable items immediately to maintain food safety and quality. Give preference to local suppliers who can deliver fresh produce frequently. Consider these steps:

- Order and prepare appropriate amounts of food.
- Give customers the choice of serving sizes to reduce waste.
- Move to paperless systems such as electronic order taking.
- When you're comparing products, take into account waste. Cheaply priced goods may end up costing you more than an expensive item, when you consider their waste due to poor packaging or quality. Avoid over-packaged goods.
- Avoid items that only get used once and then thrown away such as plastic cutlery, paper plates and cups.

Visit [lovefoodhatewaste.nsw.gov.au/business](http://lovefoodhatewaste.nsw.gov.au/business) for information on food waste avoidance.

<sup>1</sup> DECCW, unpublished data

<sup>2</sup> DECCW (2009), *Commercial and industrial waste in Sydney – overview*, <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/warr/CommercialIndustrialWaste.htm>

<sup>3</sup> DECCW (2010), *Audit of commercial and industrial waste in Sydney – full report*, <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/warr/CommercialIndustrialWaste.htm>



## REDUCE

Buy perishable and non-perishables in bulk. It will mean you pay for less packaging and have to dispose of less material. For example, spirits come in bulk bottles that you can attach to a dispensing system.

When possible, buy items in returnable containers, such as milk crates. Set up a system to return containers to your suppliers.

Keep your work areas clean and tidy. If things are well-organised and labelled clearly, you know where everything is. This encourages you and your staff to use only resources you need. Put up signs about reducing waste and recycling.



## REUSE

Buy products with reusable packaging. Great examples are beer kegs and plastic drums for post-mixes. When suppliers suggest moving away from reusable packaging, remind them that you pay for extra disposal costs.

Speak to your meat and fish supplier about using reusable plastic tubs instead of disposable polystyrene and cardboard packaging. These are some other reuse examples:

- Filter and reuse cooking oil before you collect it in an oil drum for recycling. The useful life of oil can be prolonged by ensuring it is only heated in equipment like deep fryers when necessary for cooking.
- Return wooden and plastic pallets to suppliers.
- Return clean, undamaged polystyrene and waxed cardboard boxes if possible to your suppliers.
- Reuse or return chemical containers and drums to your suppliers. If your supplier won't collect them, there may be others who will.



## RECYCLE

First consider donating unused food to a suitable charity which supplies needy clients. Then sort out what can be recycled. It can be cheaper to have recycling bins picked up rather than general waste bins that go to landfill.

Go to **[BusinessRecycling.com.au](http://BusinessRecycling.com.au)** to find if there are any local charities where you can make donations of food as well as details of recycling service providers. This website allows you to search for service providers in your area that collect specific materials for recycling or allow you to drop them off. It will provide information on services that deal with everything from cardboard to cooking oil recycling.

Make sure any staff or cleaners follow your recycling program and that they put materials in the correct bin. Save money by matching your bin collection timetable to your business needs. If your bins are not normally full after a week then consider moving to a fortnightly collection cycle.

Here are some other ways to improve your recycling:

- Look for extra places where recycled material can be stored for collection inside and outside the building.
- Share recycling bins and baling equipment with a neighbouring business if necessary.
- Establish a commingled recycling system that takes a mix of aluminium cans, recyclable plastic drink bottles, containers, steel cans and glass. Check with your recycling service about what materials they can accept.
- Cooking oil can be recycled into useful things like vehicle fuel, animal feedstock components, fertiliser and soil conditioner. Find a recycler who does this and get them to collect your oil. It is illegal to dispose of cooking oil or fat down the drain.
- Buy products with recycled content such as paper napkins, toilet paper, stationary and packaging.
- If your brochures, catalogues, sales letters and other promotional material are printed on recycled paper, mention that in the content. This helps to build demand for more products made from recycled materials.

Your sustainable waste policies could save you money, help attract or retain customers and preserve the environment.

### For further information

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