

BIN TRIM IS HELPING TURN WOOD WASTE INTO PROFIT



Case Study



Pallet Collars Australia is a family-owned timber packaging business. With help from a Bin Trim rebate, they are recovering 90% of their wood waste and saving on waste removal costs.

Turning wood waste into profit

“We’re turning what was waste into a new, green and profitable resource.”

Kari Esplin
Pallet Collars Australia and Recycling Technologies Group

Pallet Collars Australia and Recycling Technologies Group

With financial assistance from the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) Bin Trim program, two co-owned Bega Valley businesses – Pallet Collars Australia and Recycling Technologies Group – have been able to implement an innovative and profitable wood waste solution for themselves and a neighbouring sawmill.

The companies used a Bin Trim rebate to help with the cost of purchasing new equipment that manufactures wood waste into fuel pellets for household wood-pellet heaters.

The companies are now recovering approximately 180 tonnes of wood waste a year, have diversified the business and are providing an outstanding example for other businesses that generate wood waste.

Pallet Collars Australia is a family-owned business based in Eden in southern New South Wales. The company manufactures and supplies thousands of wooden packaging components, called pallet collars, every year. Large production volumes means the company generates large amounts of wood waste – 2.5 tonnes of wood waste was being sent to landfill each month, at a significant cost.



This project is a NSW Environment Protection Authority Waste Less, Recycle More initiative funded from the waste levy.
epa.nsw.gov.au/bintrim



“In winter, we make wood heating pellets and in summer we make smoking wood pellets for barbecuing. The whole year is covered!”

Tony Esplin

Pallet Collars Australia and Recycling Technologies Group also knew that wood waste was being burnt by a neighbouring sawmill, as a means of disposal. The mill was burning 3 tonnes of wood waste a week.

As a business that offers recycling infrastructure solutions for manufacturers, Recycling Technologies Group saw there was an opportunity to create a higher value for the businesses’ combined waste.

How Bin Trim helped

Recovered wood waste such as sawdust, shavings and wood offcuts can be used as the raw material for making heater pellets – the fuel used by domestic pellet heaters. Pellet heaters look similar to other domestic combustion heaters. However, rather than burning logs of firewood, pellet heaters create heat by burning small wood pellets. The pellets burn efficiently because of their density and dryness.

Pallet Collars Australia and Recycling Technologies Group contacted the EPA Bin Trim team to seek help with purchasing a wood pellet production plant. The companies successfully applied for a rebate of \$12,904 to help offset the capital cost of purchasing the new equipment.

The new equipment now enables Pallet Collars Australia to turn its wood waste, along with large quantities of wood waste from the neighbouring sawmill, into high-energy 6-millimetre diameter, 30-millimetre long pellets. Using recovered wood waste to make the heating pellets provides the additional environmental benefit of not using raw forest products.

The numbers

- Bin Trim rebate: \$12,904
- New equipment:
 - wood pellet production plant
- 180 tonnes of wood waste recovered and repurposed each year.
- \$5000 savings in waste costs each year.

The benefits



Less waste going to landfill



Lower waste disposal costs



More re-use and recycling



Purchase of recycling equipment



A new profit-making enterprise



Above: Wood pellet production line.

Right: Wayne Carracher and Tony Esplin inspecting the pellet press die.

Pallet Collars Australia has also found a market for flavoured smoking pellets to barbecue and smoke meats, providing an extra income stream from the wood pellet production plant during the summer months.

Results

Participation in the EPA Bin Trim program has helped the companies to deliver significant results:

- Pallet Collars Australia and Recycling Technologies Group are now recovering 90% of their wood waste, diverting approximately 2 to 2.5 tonnes from landfill each month, and saving \$5000 a year on waste disposal costs.
- The companies are also recovering up to 3 tonnes of wood waste each week from the neighbouring sawmill, greatly reducing the quantity of wood the mill was burning as a means of disposal.
- In total, the companies are now recovering approximately 180 tonnes of wood waste each year.
- By reducing the capital set-up costs for the wood pellet business, the Bin Trim rebate helped with the financial viability of the new enterprises.
- The business is now more diversified: as well as producing new products, Recycling Technologies Group has been able to sell the pellet production equipment to other businesses.
- The set-up provides a working model for others – it can be replicated in almost any facility that has a similar resource of undervalued wood waste.

Take action

Could your business save on waste?

Register your interest to join 22,000 businesses recycling more through the Bin Trim program.

Visit

www.epa.nsw.gov.au/bintrim

Email

Bin.Trim@epa.nsw.gov.au

Call

131 555

(ask for the Business Recycling Unit)

NSW Environment Protection Authority

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