



Robyn Parker MP

Minister for the Environment

Minister for Heritage

MEDIA RELEASE

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WASTE LEVY TRIAL TO TACKLE ASBESTOS

Environment Minister Robyn Parker today announced that the NSW Government has committed \$3 million to trialling a Householders' Asbestos Disposal Scheme that will waive the waste levy on asbestos and reduce tip fees in participating council areas.

Ms Parker said the 12 month trial will remove the waste levy on asbestos in selected areas, while the EPA will contribute \$50 per tonne towards the costs of removing and transporting wrapped bonded asbestos that is disposed of as part of the scheme.

"Asbestos disposal is an increasing community concern as more home renovators undertake works on homes built before 1987," Ms Parker said.

"This trial will pilot innovative approaches to increase the lawful disposal of asbestos and discourage illegal operators by reducing the financial advantage.

"It is important that we continue to explore new opportunities to better manage our waste, and coupled with our new tough illegal dumping laws we are dedicated to stopping criminals from putting the community's health at risk.

"The pilot is now open for expressions of interest and will run at selected councils next year with results to be evaluated by independent experts to inform the EPA's future decisions on asbestos disposal."

Ms Parker also announced that \$40.6 million of grants that are part of the NSW Government's \$465.7 million *Waste Less, Recycle More* initiative are now open to councils, industry and community organisations.

"The grants are part of the largest ever commitment to waste reduction in NSW and are aimed at facilitating improvements in recycling, infrastructure, food waste avoidance, organics collection and illegal dumping," Ms Parker said.

"The programs will address problem wastes such as paints, lead acid batteries, and asbestos, as well as tackle a range of other recycling and waste issues.

"More than six million tonnes of waste goes to landfill in NSW each year and much of this waste can be re-used and recycled.

"This funding will ensure NSW continues to improve recycling targets by providing community education; funding for improved infrastructure and services to make it easier for households and businesses to better manage their wastes."

Waste Less, Recycle More Grants include:

- \$16.22 million Local Government Organics Collection Systems Program - to help councils implement new or enhance existing household kerbside collection services for organic waste.
- \$11.35 million for Community Recycling Centres - to establish infrastructure for community recycling centres by upgrading existing facilities, constructing new facilities, or trialling innovative solutions where a fixed facility is not practicable.
- \$9.65 million Resource Recovery Facility Expansion and Enhancement Program (waste-levy regulated area) - to stimulate and accelerate investment to enhance existing recycling facilities.
- \$2 million Combating Illegal Dumping: Clean-Up and Prevention program – to identify local dumping sites and implement prevention and clean-up action.
- \$1.4 million Love Food, Hate Waste program – to support food avoidance education and awareness projects with Love Food Hate Waste partners.

The Combating Illegal Dumping: Clean-Up and Prevention program and the Householders' Asbestos Disposal Scheme are managed by the EPA.

All other grants are being jointly managed by the EPA and the NSW Environmental Trust.

The EPA and Environmental Trust will be holding a series of grant information sessions in November. For information visit: <http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/waste/wasteless.htm>

Application closing dates:

All grants are open until 3 February 2014 except for the Love Food Hate Waste program which is open until 28 February 2014 and the Householders' Asbestos Disposal Scheme which is open until 9 December 2013.