



# Robyn Parker MP

## Minister for the Environment

## Minister for Heritage

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### MEDIA RELEASE

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Wednesday, 18 December 2013

#### **COUNCILS TO SHARE IN GRANTS FOR MAJOR WASTE INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS**

Environment Minister Robyn Parker today announced applications are open for the first round of more than \$84 million in grants to help reduce organic materials from going to landfill and further increase recycling.

Ms Parker said grants of up to \$10 million are open to local councils, industry and not-for-profit organisations across two grant programs.

The \$43 million *Major Resource Recovery program* includes grants of between \$1 million and \$10 million for waste and is open to councils and businesses that process waste from the-levy paying areas, to construct new facilities that can process recyclables from household and business waste.

“The grants will help construction of new facilities that could include waste treatment plants, council transfer stations and processing facilities for priority recyclables like plastics, timber, paper and packaging,” Ms Parker said.

“These grants will build new infrastructure to help NSW meet our 2021 recycling targets of 70 per cent for municipal waste and commercial and industrial waste.

“They will also stimulate investment in new and upgraded infrastructure, and generate regional employment with an estimated 9.2 full time employees for every 10,000 tonnes of waste recycled, compared to only 2.8 jobs for waste sent to landfill.

“The *Organics Infrastructure program* includes grants of between \$25,000 and \$5 million for large infrastructure projects to sort and process organics waste, through to smaller council-run initiatives such as compost bins and worm farms.

“Grants are also available for not-for-profit organisations, for small infrastructure such as vans, refrigeration and storage warehouses, to enhance the collection and redistribution of food waste from businesses to people in need,” Ms Parker said.

“The EPA estimates that businesses in NSW send over 400,000 tonnes of food waste to landfill each year much of which is edible and approximately half of the average household bin contains organic material that could be recycled.

“It is important that we find ways to improve the infrastructure and capabilities to process organic waste and support programs that redistribute and donate useable food.”

“By improving our ability and capacity to recycle we can reduce the amount of waste that ends up in landfill.

“I encourage councils and business to do their part in working towards these goals by developing innovative and value for money infrastructure opportunities to deliver regional employment, new infrastructure and waste diversion from landfill.”

The grants are managed by the Environment Protection Authority and administered by the NSW Environmental Trust.

The Organics Infrastructure grants complements the \$16.22 million Local Government Organics Collection grants program opened by the EPA in November that provides an incentive for local councils to increase the collection of organic materials.

Both the Organics Infrastructure Fund and Major Resource Recovery Infrastructure Grants grants will be open for application until Friday 7 March 2014.

More information about the program, how to apply and the *Waste Less, Recycle More* initiative is available on the EPA website here:

<http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/waste/WasteLess.htm>