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MEDIA RELEASE

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MINISTER LAUNCHES NEW AUSTRALIAN RECYCLING LABEL TO REMOVE CONFUSION

Environment Minister Mark Speakman today joined Planet Ark to launch a new recycling label that will end the confusion over what can be recycled from the kerbside.

On the eve of National Recycling Week, Mr Speakman said there was a great deal of confusion in the community over what can and cannot be recycled because there were almost 300 different recycling labels in circulation.

“Planet Ark research found that 99 per cent of people surveyed are confused about the recyclability of at least one common item of packaging,” Mr Speakman said.

“This new label, the Australian Recycling Label, designed by Planet Ark, will clearly spell out which bin the various components of a packaging item should be put in, whether that be the recycling or the general waste.

“The Australian Recycling Label is a standardised, evidenced-based label that provides clear instructions to consumers about how to dispose of each component of an item of packaging.”

Planet Ark conducted research in Australia and overseas to find out what people want on recycling labels and to find out what works and what does not.

The new label uses a simple illustration of the mobius loop to provide instructions for each of the pack’s components.

The system works by showing three symbols - what can be placed in a kerbside recycling bin and what should be placed in landfill waste bin.

The third symbol is a maybe, depending on what the local council accepts. If the council accepts it, it goes in the recycling, if not it goes to landfill.

For example, it may identify some parts, like a bottle, as recyclable and others, like the lid, as not recyclable. It will also provide instructions for trickier elements like aluminium foil, which needs to be ‘scrunched’ to be recyclable.

“This is a welcome step by Planet Ark, which will help simplify the often confusing decision about what bin to use for waste,” Mr Speakman said.

“This label will help take the guess work out of what bin to use when disposing of waste.”

Anyone who wants to use the label needs Planet Ark’s approval in order to prevent the new label adding to the confusion.

Already two of Australia’s biggest companies Blackmores and Officeworks have adopted the new label.