



Robyn Parker MP

Minister for the Environment

Minister for Heritage

MEDIA RELEASE

Saturday, 23 February 2013

NEW WASTE AND RECYCLING AGENDA DRIVEN BY \$465M FUNDING PACKAGE

Environment Minister Robyn Parker today unveiled a new waste and recycling agenda for NSW which includes a \$465.7 million five-year recycling funding initiative and improvements to the waste levy system.

Ms Parker said the Waste Levy is the NSW Government's key market-based instrument for driving waste avoidance and resource recovery to meet the State's recycling targets

"In 2010/11, NSW residents and businesses recycled almost 11 million tonnes of waste, achieving an overall recycling rate of 63 per cent, a significant increase from a recycling rate of just 45 per cent in 2002/03," Ms Parker said.

"While this is good news, we can do even better through the new strategy, the Waste and Resource Recovery Initiative."

Ms Parker said the Waste and Resource Recovery Initiative was a result of a comprehensive independent review last year.

"I appointed an independent analyst to review the waste levy to examine its impacts on households, recyclers and illegal dumping and consider opportunities to stimulate investment in new recycling infrastructure and regional jobs," Ms Parker said.

"The Review presented 17 key recommendations and provided the NSW Government with a strong evidence base to bring forward a new waste and recycling agenda.

"*NSW 2021* sets out strict targets to reduce illegal dumping and littering and the strategy will help us achieve those goals by improving infrastructure, engaging local communities and increasing regulation and compliance activities.

"The five-year \$465.7 million waste and recycling initiative will deliver economic, employment and environmental benefits for local communities – and provide greater incentives to invest in new innovative recycling infrastructure."

The Waste and Resource Recovery Initiative includes:

- **\$250 million for Waste and Recycling Infrastructure** including: \$70 million for drop-off centres and new services for household problem wastes, a \$70 million organics infrastructure fund and a \$60 million Waste and Recycling Infrastructure Fund to support waste levy-paying communities
- **\$137.7 million dedicated Local Government program** to transition and then replace existing funding programs to support the delivery of recycling programs, community engagement, regional waste groups and infrastructure planning
- **\$58 million to combat illegal dumping** as part of a new state-wide Illegal Dumping Strategy
- **\$20 million to tackle litter in communities** through education campaigns, infrastructure and increased enforcement

“The program will facilitate initiatives such as large scale infrastructure to sort household and business waste, upgrade recycling facilities, food and garden waste collection systems and accessible household drop-off centres,” Ms Parker said.

“A \$250 million investment in infrastructure will not only help to improve recycling in line with our increasing waste generation but also deliver employment opportunities by creating jobs in both facility operation and construction.

“For local government, the program offers \$356.7 million funding over five years through both guaranteed funding and contestable grants.

“This includes \$137.7 million set aside to help levy-paying councils support their own waste and recycling initiatives, \$85.1 million exclusively for councils as part of a contestable grants process and a further \$133.9 million in contestable grants open to councils, industry and not-for-profit organisations.

“The initiative also incorporates a new \$58 million state-wide Illegal Dumping Strategy and a draft Energy from Waste policy that will be open for public consultation.”

Ms Parker said the Waste Levy system will also be improved in line with the Review’s recommendations with changes, including a five-year structural adjustment program to assist NSW metal shredders modernise their operations to reduce the amount of waste generated.

The announcement was welcomed by Mr Ron Wainberg, National President of the Waste Management Association of Australia who said “the NSW Government is maintaining a financial commitment to continuing improvements in waste management, recycling and the recycling industry, particularly during difficult financial times.”

Mr Grant Musgrove, Director of the Australia Council of Recycling, also welcomed the package saying it will save jobs in the metal industry, lead to more recycling and maintain investment in NSW.

“We congratulate the Government and the Minister for securing levy reductions for metal recyclers and maintaining funding for infrastructure and jobs into the future,” Mr Musgrove said.

More information about the Waste and Resource Recovery Initiative, including the review, can be found at www.epa.nsw.gov.au/waste/wasteless.htm.

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