



# NetWaste Community News

**NetWaste**  
A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

*A Collaborative Approach*

**The average Australian household generates over 1 tonne of waste per year.  
Let's RETHINK  
REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE.**



### What is an Environmental Footprint?

This is the footprint you leave behind on the environment by your actions and choices.

**Heavy prints:** are caused by people who harm the environment by using a lot of natural resources, including water, energy and land.

**Light prints:** people harm the environment as little as possible, using the smallest amount of natural resources as they can.

### IT'S ALL IN THE PACKAGING.

Until the early 1970's packaging was not a major issue in Australia or the world. We did not have the need for the large amounts of packaging we find in the shops today. Communities were smaller, and people were more self sufficient. People used the local shops to buy their groceries.

Packaging has changed in many ways over the past thirty years, leading to an increase in the amount of waste we produce. When we go shopping we buy the goods we need but we also buy the rubbish we will throw away as well. Packaging comes in numerous layers some of which is unnecessary. We all need to become 'smarter shoppers' and look at the packaging, avoiding excess packaging and asking ourselves can the packaging be reused or recycled rather than be disposed of. This way we will buy less and therefore throw away less.

To become a successful smart shopper and avoid producing waste we need to:

**RETHINK** our action      **REDUCE** packaging  
**REUSE** packaging      **RECYCLING** packaging

### Every dollar you spend at the shops increases the size of your 'shopping footprint'.

Everything item you buy has an impact on the environment because it takes energy, water and other natural resources like oil and iron ore to create and deliver these items. A shopping 'footprint' includes:

- the raw materials items are produced from (sand to produce glass and iron ore to produce steel)
- how the items are manufactured (water used in paper manufacturing)
- how the items are transported (oil and petrol used as fuel)
- where the items are sold (large shopping malls compared to small local shops)
- how the items are packaged (is the packaging recyclable)
- how the items are disposed of (is the packaging recycled)

### SMART SHOPPING TIPS

Successfully avoiding waste means **RETHINKING** our actions, particularly when shopping. **REDUCE** the amount of waste collected wherever possible.

Ask yourself these questions:

- Do I really need this product?
- How am I going to dispose of it?
- Is it reusable?
- Is it recyclable?
- Can I buy the same or similar product with less packaging?



### We can also do these simple actions to reduce our waste when we go shopping:

- Take your own bag, box or basket
- Use a list and only buy what you need
- Avoid over packaged and 'mini' sized goods
- Buy in bulk
- Buy concentrates or refillable items
- Buy fresh food if possible and compost the scraps

**Waste Hotline 1300 725 415**

For Community Waste Education enquiries  Sue Clarke 6393 8772.







## DID YOU KNOW...?

When you recycle the items are reprocessed and made into new products. This reduces the amount of natural resources such as water, coal, oil, sand and metal ore used to manufacture new products. When you recycle 1000 tonnes of recycling you save:



**6** Olympic swimming pools of water



Greenhouse gas savings equal to removing **121** cars off the road



Energy savings equal to the annual electricity needs of **71** households

There are three basic steps to recycling:

1. Collecting recyclable items
2. Producing new items from the recyclables
3. Selling the new product that contains recyclable content

When we 'buy recycled' we are increasing the demand for recycled content products and encouraging the manufacture of recycled products. This is called 'Closing the Loop'.

### The Shopping Transport Footprint

How do your products get to the shop?

- **Aeroplanes:** fresh food is sometimes transported by plane. This causes the most pollution and uses the most natural resources per tonne carried.
- **Boats:** This form of transport causes the least pollution. Most cars, electrical and white goods and non-food products are transported this way.
- **Trains:** These cause more pollution than boats but not as much as aeroplanes.
- **Trucks:** Are used at the final stage of the transport line and cause more pollution than trains or boats per tonne carried. They are usually needed to transport the products to the shop where they will be sold.

### Shopping Closer to Home

A lot of the **natural resources** used to make and operate the transport system are **non-renewable**. This means they cannot be replaced. **Fossil fuels** such as oil and coal are used for this industry and once burned for energy or fuel, create pollution. One form of pollution is **greenhouse gas**, responsible for **global warming**. Buying an item made on the other side of the world uses a lot more energy, creates a lot more greenhouse gas than a product made close to home.

Produce that has been manufactured closer to home has a lighter environmental footprint than that produced overseas. If you purchase an item produced locally you will be having less of an impact on the environment and reducing your environmental footprint.

Take advantage of your farmers markets, buy in bulk where possible (to reduce the number of trips you make to the shops) or try buying online and getting home delivery.



### Recycling Mobile Phones

Making mobile phones uses a lot of natural non-renewable resources. Disposing of them is extremely toxic to the environment. A battery from a mobile phone can pollute up to **600 000 litres** of water with poisonous chemicals such as mercury and cadmium. On average most people get a new mobile phone every **18 months** and only **5 per cent** are recycled. You can find out the closest place to recycle your mobile phone by calling **1300 730 070** or visiting [www.phonerecycling.com.au](http://www.phonerecycling.com.au) [www.recyclingnearyou.com.au](http://www.recyclingnearyou.com.au)

## Plastic, Plastic Everywhere!

### Ten Ways to Reuse Plastic Bags

1. Reuse plastic shopping bags as bin liners for household waste.
2. Place wet or soiled clothing in plastic bags to separate them from other items.
3. Use a plastic bag to store items in to keep them dust free.
4. Make a kite.
5. Use a plastic bag as a tidy in the family car.
6. Take a plastic bag with you when walking your dog. It is easy to carry and you can pick up any little surprises your dog might leave behind!
7. Use a plastic bag to carry several things at once, saves juggling things in your arms.
8. If you need to decorate a cake you can reuse a clean plastic bag to pipe icing.
9. Place dirty nappies in a plastic bag.
10. Tie them around your shoes when in the garden to protect them from mud.



'Chooks' made from plastic bags. Part of an entry from Forbes in the 'Waste to Art' Competition. Artists: Rosie, Claudia, Louise, James, Liz, Melanie, Mady and Simon.

