



Zero Waste Update

September 2004, Issue 40

Mission Statement: "To encourage and motivate all sectors of New Zealand society to work towards a target of zero waste."

All types of plastics recycled for commercial success

Commercial recycled plastic products from a process with no sorting and no washing, is a success for an Australian company that has pioneered the technology.

The process uses all types of household, commercial and industrial plastic waste mixed together and fed into a processor to produce products such as vineyard posts, rail sleepers, wharf beams, pipe supports, baffles and pontoons. This process, using technology developed and patented by Omnipol, uses plastics of all polymers, so there is no need for sorting. Everything is mixed together including household plastic waste, oil bottles, plastic wrap, foam, polystyrene, polyethylene, polypropylene, and PVC.

The process takes the mix of plastics and removes impurities such as metals, sand and grit. Softer metals such as aluminium (eg. bottle tops) can go through the process along with other contaminants such as paper and the contents of containers (such as sauce and butter).

The mixed plastics are granulated and turned into an agglomerate that is heated and pumped or pressure filled into a mould. Material coming from the machine is pliable and easy to mould into any required shape where it is water cooled.

The Adelaide-based company, (co-owned by Bushmans and Collex and now trading as Advanced Plastics Recycling), that devised this process is successfully producing a huge range of recycled plastics products.

These are supplied to industries such as viticulture, agriculture, mining, aquaculture and transport. The products are suitable for timber replacement with characteristics such as longevity, durability, flexibility and



Plastic wood for export at APR.

resistance to moisture.

APR also exports dunnage and pipe supports to international markets. The APR product is more viable for overseas markets because it avoids the hazards and expense of fumigation and chemical handling needed for exporting says an APR spokesman Ryan Lokan.

The cost of a fully commissioned turnkey 1,000 kg/phr plastic recycling plant (plant includes shredder, granulator, extruder, correlating blowers, conveyors and tubing) is \$(Aus) 1.64 million.

The minimum daily kilo rate to breakeven is 2,000 kg per day, he says. This equates to about 2 hours per day of production. With the machine running realistically over a

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Zero Waste Conference for your Diary

Kaikoura is planning to host a Zero Waste Conference in April next year. The conference from April 6-8 will be jointly organised by Kaikoura District Council and Innovative Waste Kaikoura, and held at Takahanga Marae. The conference will look at the latest developments in waste minimisation and will provide a forum for discussion of zero waste issues, especially moving beyond diversion levels and closer to zero waste. The call for papers will be made soon and the conference is for everyone interested in zero waste, from community groups, local authority staff and councillors, to recycling organisations and individuals. The organisers encourage anyone planning to participate in the conference, to book their accommodation well in advance to avoid missing out. For more information, contact Ian Challenger on 03-319-5026 or ian.challenger@kaikoura.govt.nz

Comings and Goings at Zero Waste



Staff at Zero Waste are sad to farewell our Japanese volunteer, Hisayo Takada, who finished three months work experience in August. Hisayo graduated from Dokkyo University in economics, and came to New Zealand last year to improve her English, experience a different culture, and follow her passion for recycling. She started at Zero Waste in May and has been a huge help in the office, working on filing, office systems and creating a Japanese version of the Zero Waste website. Her last day at Zero Waste was spent fulfilling her request to visit a New Zealand landfill and a transfer station. This month she travels to the South Island where she hopes to catch up with zero waste workers. She travels home to Japan in late September to again work in a zero waste role.

Communications

Zero Waste Trust's new communications co-ordinator, Suzi Phillips, has a background in environmental journalism. Suzi recently added a graduate diploma in environmental management from Auckland University to her BA in political studies.

She has more than 20 years experience in journalism and communications, including environment reporter for the Christchurch Press and environment issues for a variety of community and rural publications, consultants and councils. "I'm keen to get the zero waste message out by helping people from all sectors - community groups, education, councils, business and industry - work towards the goal of zero waste in their community", she says.

New face in community liaison

Kathryn leGrove joins Zero Waste this month to work in office administration and community liaison for the Trust. She has experience doing waste audits and surveys of recycling operations from her last position with a waste management consultant. Kathryn has an interest in vermiculture, recycling and bee keeping – all of which she enjoys in her spare time. She takes over from Lindsey du Preez who will continue to work for Zero Waste part-time in September



Kathryn leGrove

Worm Farm Successes in Southern Abattoirs

Worms are working hard at Ashburton Abattoir this year. The abattoir produces between 15 and 20 tons of paunch waste and pig hair per week that was formerly dumped into the Ashburton landfill.

When this landfill was closed in December 2003, the waste was then taken to the Christchurch landfill and dumped there at considerable cost, says Mary-Anne Mills, a director of Verkerks, owners of the Ashburton Abattoir.

The directors decided to investigate worm farming as an option and contacted Robbie and Rosanna Dick of Central Wormworx in Cromwell. In March this year, they bought 250kg of worms for the abattoir and a 'truckload' more a few weeks later.

"The worms settled in very quickly and started to work on the ricks that we had prepared for them," says Ms Mills. A few weeks later, they were checked by the Dicks and found to have settled in well. They were multiplying profusely and working their way through the food on offer.

"Since then we have had the colder months and have found that the pigs hair has had the effect of a built in duvet," she says. "The worms continue to multiply and grow and eat with gusto."

Other abattoirs to investigate establishing worm farms in the south include Pukeuri Freezing Works and Oamaru Abattoirs (to dispose of their paunch-grass waste) and Malvern Abattoir at Burnham near Christchurch.

Trials are also underway to use blended dairy by-product for worm farming. Dairy by-product is being blended with waste from a local stock truck wash and trialled on worms at Central Wormworx in Cromwell. The Fonterra Dairy Factory near Edendale and the Waitane Freezing Works near Gore may be able to set up a worm farm using a blend of their waste.

Stewart Island community excels at recycling

Stewart Island residents have helped to recycle nearly 40 tonnes of waste in the last six months, and they recently won a Green Ribbon award for their efforts.

The Rakiura Resource Recovery Centre opened in December, and between January and June, the centre has diverted 37.4 per cent from landfill.

This is a significant cost saving as all the remaining waste from the island has to be taken off by boat to Bluff and trucked to the Invercargill landfill, says SIESA contractor John Warren who works with centre supervisor, David Squires.

The Ministry for the Environment said the award was made for “empowering themselves and taking ownership of their waste stream ... The whole community has worked together to achieve significant environmental benefits and continues to do so.”

One of the innovative recycling uses at the centre is turning 19 tonnes of glass bottles into base course for tracks and drainage around the island.



Stewart Island's Green Ribbon award.

“There is no gravel on the island, so they will save on the cost of shipping gravel here,” says Mr Warren. Staff have built a crusher and are improving the grade of glass, so that it can be mixed with a gravel crusher dust and made easier to handle.

The new kerbside collection serves 370 households and picks up kitchen waste, recyclable plastics, and household waste in regulation council bags once a week.

A truck and trailer is used with sorting of paper and cardboard done on the truck during each run.



Recycling bins at Rakiura Resource Recovery Centre.

Recycling is done at the centre which was purpose built by Southland District Council and includes facilities for recycling, composting, hazardous waste storage, a Second Chance shed, and a hired baler for pressing cardboard and paper.

The bales are loaded on the trailer and taken off the island by boat to a maximum of four tonnes each trip. Scrap cars are also taken off in steel cages, and general waste is taken off in sealed skips, that are also then trucked to the landfill at Invercargill.

“Transport costs to get waste off the island are very high,” says Mr Warren. “Anything we can sell or recover, we offer to the public at a very cheap rate. Waste wood is given to the scouts to chop into firewood, and a tonne of kitchen scraps is put into our worm farm each week.” They hope to sell their vermicast by December.

He says the centre has the same problems as most recovery centres. The major ones are building materials such as tanalised waste wood and old roofing iron. Most is salvaged and sold off for uses such as tanalised timber for garden edging.

“Most of the residents accept recycling and support it well, says Mr Warren. “We are only a small population, but we can have anything up to 20 people visit the centre each day, bringing in rubbish or looking through the second chance bins.”

Residents have also made good use of mattresses recently removed and replaced from the Department of Conservation huts around the island. The good mattresses were put into the Second Chance shed, others were used as insulation for a shed, and some were being made into cushions.

Vodafone's 'Old Broke and Ugly' mobile phone recycling promotion has ended with customer incentives finishing on September 17. The Vodafone New Zealand Foundation has so far donated \$43,520 to Zero Waste New Zealand Trust. Vodafone prevented 6780kg of mobile phone equipment going to landfill – 16, 826 mobile phones. Vodafone will continue to take mobiles and accessories for recycling.

Waste Minimisation Study for Roothing

The benefits of waste minimisation for roading will be researched for Transfund this year.

The study by Opus Central Laboratories in Lower Hutt, aims to develop a method to quantify the benefits of using waste minimisation techniques.

This will enable Road Controlling Authorities (RCAs) to evaluate the range of methods available to minimise waste and to determine where and when they should be used, says Opus' research manager for pavements, John Patrick.

These treatments include not only recycling existing materials, but recycling of other materials such as glass, and the use of materials that may not meet current specifications, but will give satisfactory performance on specific projects, such as marginal aggregates.

As part of the methodology, Opus will be looking at two groups of benefits; those of direct benefit to the RCA, (such as reduction of waste to a council-operated landfill or utilisation of aggregate from river management); and those of more indirect or intangible benefits, such as reduction in CO2 emissions, reduction in traffic delays etc.

"We will have a well-respected economist on our team and will be developing a method to compare the costs of transporting to a landfill versus recycling in roads," he says. A report on the research project is expected to be published in about a year.

Rethink Centre opens in Gisborne

Gisborne is encouraging its community to have a rethink about what they do with their waste with the recent opening of their innovative Rethink Environmental Education Centre.

The Rethink Centre is a Gisborne District Council initiative and is jointly funded by the Zero Waste New Zealand Trust. It's based at the AllBrites Resource and Recovery Centre. At a recent public open day the community celebrated both the Rethink Centre opening and the Recovery Centre's first year of operation with tours, activities such as composting and worm farm demonstrations, and junk sculpture and wearable art competitions.

The Rethink Centre has three rooms, two of which will be open to the public during the recovery centre's opening hours, says the council's environmental health educator, Anne Lister. It was designed by Gisborne resident Ian Smail who developed the concept in conjunction with Ms Lister.

The first room takes people through a zero waste journey, and the second into a landfill experience. The third room is full of interactive displays, including a shop offering environmental choices, and will be open to school and community groups under supervision.

"The aim of the centre is to help the community explore waste issues and the zero waste philosophy, and to challenge individuals to rethink how they deal with waste," says Ms Lister.

'The futures' wall looks at various pathways towards zero waste – through redesign, leasing instead of buying items, and new technology. The aim of the centre is to raise awareness and change behaviour to further Gisborne's progress towards zero waste, says Allbrite managing director, Tim Combs.



Japanese version of Zero Waste website

Anyone fluent in Japanese will be able to read the Zero Waste NZ Trust website from this month. Volunteer staff member, Hisayo Takada, began the task of translating the website while working at Zero Waste and will continue to finish the task from Japan. The 'What is Zero Waste' page is already translated, as are headings and some side panels. To access the Japanese version, people can click on a small Japanese flag in the top right hand corner of the home page.

Waste management attitudes under scrutiny

Waste management will be one of the issues facing local body candidates at public forums in the lead up to next month's elections.

Many environment groups around the country are holding local meetings to find out candidate views on a wide range of environment issues including the Resource Management Act review, energy and water conservation, pest and weed control, and waste management.

In Hamilton, the Environment Centre is organising a "Vote for the Environment" candidates forum together with the Waikato Environmental Business Network, Forest and Bird, and Newstalk ZB (who will be promoting it on radio). The forum, "Sustainable Hamilton – Fact or Fiction" will be held on Monday 20 September at 7pm, in the Chartwell Room at Hamilton Gardens.

"As happened before the last elections, we will develop a questionnaire for the candidates which will gauge their attitudes towards, and strategies for, the issues involved in Hamilton becoming a sustainable city," says Hamilton Environment Centre co-ordinator, Katherine Hay.

Candidates will also be invited to speak for a limited time and answer questions. Environment groups have been invited to submit questions for the candidates, to ensure a broad environmental focus.

Ask the candidates about Zero Waste

Here are some questions you can ask your local and regional council candidates about their attitudes to Zero Waste. We are also sending these questions to local newspapers around the country to put to candidates. We will encourage them to print the candidates' replies, so that their views are known to the community.

1. What is your vision for a clean green NZ; a heritage for your grandchildren?
2. How do you rate the waste disposal policies of the current council and what improvements would you like to see?
3. How do you feel the local council has dealt with the NZ Government Waste Strategy?
4. Are you aware if your council is a Zero Waste council?

Questions for Hospital Board candidates;

What are your policies on the disposal of waste pharmaceuticals from the hospitals ? and; What are your policies on the disposal of waste pharmaceuticals from households in the light of the recent change to a three month prescription policy?

Bulk recycling introduced for Porirua

A new centralised bulk recycling facility will be opened by Porirua City Council early next year. Now that the council has introduced kerbside recycling it's able to close its suburban recycling centres and centralise operations at Trash Palace – a community recycling centre.

The cost of upgrading the suburban recycling stations, resource consent issues and illegal dumping, were some of the reasons that led council to change its recycling operations.

The Council consulted residents, asking them what they thought should be done about recycling.

The four options were; to retain the status quo and spend \$100,000 upgrading and updating

resource consents for each of the suburban recycling stations; no bulk recycling; centralising bulk recycling operations at Trash Palace; or building a new bulk recycling facility in central Porirua city.

"The public response was equally divided between centralising at Trash Palace and continuing with five or so suburban recycling stations" says Porirua's Zero Waste Co-ordinator, Helen Schafer.

The survey helped council to decide that they should centralise recycling operations at Trash Palace. Bulk recycling will be available there seven days a week within landfill hours and the site will be monitored.

During 'Cleanup New Zealand' week the Council will engage the community and publicise Trash Palace to help raise awareness about recycling and foster community pride in keeping Porirua City clean. The council is also working with Housing New Zealand tenancy managers, giving them information on recycling, so they can pass it on to residents.



Trash Palace recycling centre at Porirua

International Waste Management News

20 per cent of waste shipments illegal

About twenty per cent of all waste shipments in six European ports are illegal, according to checks carried out by Environmental Inspectorates in Belgium, Germany, England, Poland, Latvia and the Netherlands.

The inspections were carried out under the direction of the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (VROM) between September 2003 and March 2004.

Based on the infringements detected, the Inspectorates conclude that it is essential for the European rules on waste shipment to be enforced jointly. The purpose of the cooperation between the six countries is to improve the European enforcement of the regulations on the export of (hazardous) waste substances. During the cooperation, agreements were made on inspection methods, numbers, inspections, and important destinations and waste flows. Agreements were likewise made about how to record and exchange warning signs and intelligence on potential, illegal waste shipments. As a result of joint enforcement, the Member States have become aware of the problems of illegal waste shipments

Electrostatic sorts waste stream

A new technique using a controlled non-contact electrostatic charge has been developed which enables domestic waste packaging to be identified and sorted into material groups before recycling. Plastic packaging items can be separated from items of similar size and shape constructed from wood, cardboard or paper. The project to develop an automated pilot-scale system was concluded with the construction of a laboratory scale pilot system in the Wolfson Electrostatics Laboratories at the University of Southampton which demonstrates the separation techniques. The separation is achieved by applying a controlled level of electrostatic charge and comparing the rate of charge relaxation using a non-contacting method. Plastic packaging items such as bottles, food tubs and trays can be streamed into their polymer groups using a series of triboelectric probes.

Use of these techniques has resulted in the successful separation of plastics from non-plastics and the separation of plastics into polypropylene, PET/PS, PVC and HDPE streams.

New bio-plastic developments

New vegetable-based plastic, or bio-plastic, with shape memory and outstanding recyclability was developed recently by the NEC Corporation of Japan. Japan for Sustainability reports that this plastic is the first of its kind in the world, and can return to its original shape after being

deformed by heat or pressure.

This shape memory effect was achieved through improvements in polylactide (PLA) resin, a major material used in bio-plastics, that made it heat-reversible, (ie. enables it to be repeatedly dissociated by high temperatures and recombined by cooling it down). When deformed by heat or pressure, the bio-plastic can return to its original form by heating it for about 30 seconds to approximately 60 degrees celsius, a temperature attainable with a hair dryer. It can also be reprocessed into a different form and recycled once its intermolecular bonds have been dissociated by heating it to about 160 degree celsius.

Economic outlook on waste indicators

Waste generation and management in the European Union enlargement countries were analysed for today and in scenarios up to the year 2020 in a study from IPTS in Spain. The study covers municipal waste and selected industrial wastes (such as wastes from coal mining, coal-fired power plants and the iron and steel industry). It is part of the Institute for Prospective Technological Studies work on prospective analysis of structural indicators in the EU with a special focus on environment-related indicators in the enlargement countries. To put the waste indicator in perspective, the analysis also assesses the different environmental implications of waste generation and management today and in the future. It also explores the employment opportunities in municipal waste management. Two distinct future scenarios have been defined and analysed. They are both based on 'business-as-usual' assumptions, (i.e. they assume that future developments will be gradual or incremental, no sudden disruptions will occur and existing policies will be continued). Copies of the study (2.5MB) are available from the IPTS website.

Food waste recycling by 2006

The Taiwanese Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is targeting food leftovers in its goal of reducing the overall waste produced in the nation by one-third. The recycling of table scraps and other food waste will become compulsory by 2006 nationwide, and will create about NT\$2.4 billion (GBP39 million) in economic benefits, the EPA said, according to reports in the Taipei Times. The new policy, which will make mandatory the recycling of all leftover food waste will begin in January next year and be fully implemented by 2006. Waste produced by households and restaurants will be subject to the new regulations. The policy is part of an effort to ease the burdens on waste incinerators. Officials said that Taiwan produces about 4,500 tonnes of leftover food waste daily,

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International Waste Management News

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which accounts for 25 per cent of all household waste. Currently, the amount of leftover food waste recycled daily in 254 townships in the nation's 25 counties amounts to 836 tonnes, but this is done on a voluntary basis. The food waste is used in areas such as livestock feed and in the production of compost.

Extracting petrochemicals from plastic

A Japanese company has developed technology that allows it to extract raw material for petrochemical products from waste plastic, with a recovery rate of about 60 percent. Although there are already methods of recycling plastic into fuel or naphtha, this is the first technology for recovering a high-value-added petrochemical material in a stable manner, according to the major heavy electrical machinery manufacturer.

The new technology developed by Shikawajima-Harima Heavy Industries Co, works on the waste plastic components of polyethylene and polypropylene. Gallium silicate is used as a catalyst to break down plastic into hydrogen and BTX, which contains benzene, toluene and xylene. BTX, used as a raw material for drugs and plastics, has been in short supply due to soaring crude oil prices. IHI has constructed a small recycling plant that can process 1kg of waste plastic per hour at its Yokohama factory. About 600 grams of BTX can be recovered from 1kg of plastic, and the plant can run continuously for 100 hours.

Major study shows litter improvements

Survey results from 2003 by a Litter Monitoring Body in Ireland has shown that the litter situation there is improving. The national litter pollution monitoring system provides statistical data about the nature and extent of litter pollution in Ireland. The results were announced recently by the Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. The system is designed to answer 3 key questions; how littered is the country at local and national level? ; what are the main constituent elements of litter pollution? ; and what are the main causes of litter pollution? "This report is an invaluable source of information on littering trends", the Minister said. "The guiding principle of the system is: 'If you can measure the litter problem, you can manage it'.

Mobile Ashtrays in Japan

Mobile ashtrays are the latest trend in the clean up smoking campaign in Japan. A television "smokin clean" advertising campaign by a cigarette company influenced smokers to use a variety of mobile ashtrays and these are now being mass-produced by several Japanese companies.

The mobile ashtrays are made from non-flammable fibre,*Zero Waste 'Update' September 2004 page 7*

metal, treated wood or plastic and can be cleaned and reused. The simplest version can be bought at a convenience store or railway station kiosk for about \$1.50, or people can choose to buy a brand name with a leather case for a gift at up to \$50. Recent data shows that 70 per cent of Japanese smokers have some form of mobile ashtray and 70 per cent of them carry it for their daily use. Several city councils have staff handing mobile ashtrays to passers-by in front of stations to raise public awareness.

In other cities, community groups protest against this because they say it encourages people to walk while smoking and increases the risk of passive smoking.

Like many other countries Japan has a smoking population of about 28 per cent, (46 per cent of men, and 10 per cent of women in 2001). The authorities have tried a variety of ways to get rid of cigarette butts.

The first place to introduce a bylaw for tossing cigarette butts was Chiyoda ward in the heart of Tokyo. This area covered thousands of offices including the national government, the Imperial Palace, the central station and 40,000 residents. The bylaw bans the throwing of cigarette butts in specific public areas with fines up to \$280 for an offence. Studies show the number of dropped butts has decreased substantially (in one area from about 1000 to about 100 per month) since the bylaw was introduced in September 2002. The success at Chiyoda ward has encouraged other city councils to take action against cigarette butts and 896 (or 27 per cent) of Japanese local authorities have also established similar bylaws. In Japan mobile ashtrays have won acceptance from most smokers.

All types of plastic recycled

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year (220 working days at 24 hours per day), one plant can recycle 5,280 tonnes of plastic per year.

The plants are designed to be used in conjunction with council operated landfills and collection depots.

The APR process is environmentally friendly with no emissions into the atmosphere (apart from a little steam).

The process is also low on energy use, (as the heat used is generated by friction), and uses little water (for closed-circle cooling).

"APR wishes to create a sea-change in views on waste plastics," says APR director, Chris Lokan. "We see waste plastics as a resource - to be reformed and reused in innovative, long-lasting products."

"The proposition often applied is that organics, metals, ceramics, mineral materials, paper and cardboard should be removed from landfill leaving plastics as the main ingredient - which seems immoral in light of our sustainable technology," says Mr Lokan.

Zero Waste Conference Calendar

September

21-24 Waste and Recycle 2004 “**Setting outcomes and Measuring Performance**”, Freemantle, Perth, SA. Details at www.wasteandrecycle.com.au

22-24 Working Together for Better Resource Management Coffs Harbour, NSW. Details at www.impactenviro.com.au/

23-25 “Clean Ideas for Europe, Waste and Recycling strategies”. This conference will address a variety of current strategic issues for local and regional waste management actors including the principles of European waste management policy and their impact on municipal management of waste, the producer responsibility and municipal services and rules of the game for a cooperation. Kassel, Hesse, Germany.

October

6 – 8 New Zealand Water and Wastes Association 46th Annual conference and expo in Christchurch.

Details at www.nzwwa.org.nz

17-21 ISWA World Environment Congress and exhibition, in Rome, Italy. Details at www.iswa2004.org

November

9 - 11 WasteMINZ 16th Annual conference, workshop and expo, at SkyCity Auckland Convention Centre. Details at www.wasteminz.org.nz

24 - 26 Sustainable Waste Management; Melbourne Waste Management Association of Australia. Details from www.sustainablewm.com.au

March 2005

29- April 1 EIANZ Conference on “Working on the Frontier: Environmental Sustainability in Practice”, Christchurch. Details from www.conferenceteam.co.nz/eianz

April 2005

6-8 Zero Waste Conference at Kaikoura (See page 1 for details).

Auckland Recycling Directory online

The Auckland Recycling Directory is now complete and online at www.ronz.org.nz. The Directory is an online regional directory that enables businesses, organisations and the general public to identify specific materials that can be recycled, and the recycling service providers in the Auckland region.

Users can search the directory in a variety of ways including by category (hazardous, glass, metal etc), by material type (solvents, photo chemistry waste etc), or if they know the name of the company they're looking for - by company name. There is also a site map function that displays all of the material types under their category heading. The project supporters are Auckland City Council, Auckland Regional Council, North Shore City Council, Manukau City Council and Waitakere City Council.

New website to help sustainable homes

A new website was launched this week that will support New Zealanders' efforts at home to care for the planet and have a healthy lifestyle. The 'Sustainable Households' website at www.sustainablehouseholds.org.nz has free information and downloadable file resources aimed at helping people reduce their impact on the planet.

It looks at helping the typical urban kiwi household to improve its own clean and green image with information on sustainability issues such as energy use, shopping and waste reduction, water consumption, packaging, gardening and healthy travel options. The website project was developed in partnership with 12 local and regional councils, and support from environment centres, continuing education, and the Ministry for the Environment's Sustainable Management Fund.

The partner councils are; Waitakere City Council, North Shore City Council, Auckland Regional Council, Hamilton City Council, Environment Waikato, Hutt City Council, Greater Wellington, Nelson City Council, Tasman District Council, Marlborough District Council, Christchurch City Council, and Environment Canterbury.

Recycling improves in the UK

Levels of recycling in Britain are currently at their highest in history, according to the results from this year's *Municipal Waste Management Survey*.

The survey shows a 2 per cent increase in household waste composting and recycling, up from 12.5 to 14.5 per cent. The statistics include recycling paper and newspapers, glass, plastic bottles and containers, tin cans, and composting organic waste.

UK Environment Minister Elliot Morley said that these encouraging figures would help to meet the national target of recycling 17% of all household waste for 2003/2004.

“We are now recycling more than ever. As councils around the country have set up kerbside recycling schemes it's becoming easier for people to do their bit. Now let's do more. It can be as easy to put aside waste for recycling as it is to throw it away. Every old newspaper or empty tin can make a difference.” The Government has now set a more ambitious national target of composting and recycling 25% of household waste for 2005/2006

Local authorities will be required by law to recycle and compost waste to meet the national 25% target. The Government has designated around £265 million to provide funding and support services to help them meet these requirements between 2003-2006.

But despite this there is criticism that waste budgets are already squeezed and there is a lack of sufficient funding to meet the Government targets.

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