



## From the Chairman ...

### REPORT TO NORTH QUEENSLAND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

I am pleased to be able to report a reasonably busy half year for LAWMAC with a significant workshop program and our regular meetings as well as our Annual General Meeting in August where I was re-elected as Chairman and Vern Veitch from Townsville was elected as Deputy Chairman.

■ Our workshop program has been well attended with informative workshops on environmentally responsible disposal of fluorescent and mercury vapour lamps by CMA Ecocycle which effectively removes the mercury from all types of lighting which contains mercury and recycles the entire unit back into glass fines, refined mercury, aluminium ingots and phosphate which ends up in a fertiliser stream for reuse in agriculture.

■ One of the major workshops was the one held on the Queensland Government's Waste Strategy and in particular the issues of the Landfill Levy which will amount to \$35 per tonne on low-risk commercial waste to landfill and will rise over the coming years after implementation from 1 July 2011.

At this point in time it is not proposed to be imposed on domestic waste from kerbside collections or self haul domestic waste delivered to facilities. However the residual waste from material recovery facilities will not be exempt. This is a point of contention with operators and councils as this is residual waste from recycling bins. Should this waste have come from putrescibles waste bins, no levy would be payable. There will also be issues over the collection of waste by front lift industrial bin trucks which are collecting from both domestic and business premises.

Working groups have been formed on which LAWMAC is represented by Gary Ewart from Townsville City Council. Gary is referring several issues raised by members to the groups.

Another area of concern is from the "Not for Profit" sector which is collecting much domestic waste by way of recyclable, resalable and reusable items and will also be subject to the landfill levy on any residual waste generated. This is a sector of the community which generally employs persons with disabilities and other disadvantaged job seekers so this action will have a significant effect on the employment of such persons. This

apparently does not rate highly with the State Government but it is interesting that the Federal Government pushes very hard for these persons to find suitable employment. I could say a lot more on the issue as I am chairman of two organisations assisting persons with disabilities and other disadvantaged job seekers and find it repugnant that life is being made even more difficult for them by one level of government.

Many Councils will have difficulty being ready for the implementation of the levy in so far as very few regional facilities have weighbridges and, for example, Mackay Regional Council has only one facility out of 17 with a weighbridge. Despite the formulas being used for volumetric deliveries in the facilities, there will be quite a deal of angst over the conversion formulas where weighbridges are lacking.

■ LAWMAC members also held a workshop session for the National Waste Report in October and showed a number of areas where the reporting mechanism was deficient and also major issues over the currency of the data relative to the individual state reports which were much more up to date.

■ Nominations have now been received for the annual ROSSKO award which has now been judged and will be awarded later in 2010. The nominees were Shiels Barra from Cook Shire for his efforts in turning around the waste problems and issues over non compliance with EPA (now DERM) for a large shire with a very small population. The other nominee was Matt McCarthy from Townsville for the innovative work he has done post-amalgamation with the truck and collection fleet and also work with GPS technology to improve the efficiency within Townsville Waste Services.

■ The threats of the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme / ETS seem to have abated somewhat for the present but I am sure will once again rise to prominence again at some later stage.

■ Thanks as always go to our associate members and also to the officers from DERM namely Kylie Hughes, Peter Collins and Dean Sharp with whom LAWMAC has an excellent working relationship. – **Cr Greg "Tommo" Thomsen**

## Artwork promotes waste messages

As part of National Recycling Week, Townsville Waste Services in conjunction with Queensland Nickel and the Together Townsville Program, recently held a Waste Minimisation Graphics Arts contest.

The aim of the initiative was to get primary and high school students to think more about waste issues and produce artwork reflecting this message. Prizes on offer included a \$500 donation to the school, prizes for all participating classes with their artwork "blown up" and placed on the side of a garbage truck. Over 40 individual items of artwork were submitted for judging with four winners selected for the major prize.

The successful classes were invited to a special presentation on 12 November to receive their prizes and to view their winning artwork – full size, on the a garbage truck. This great artwork and waste minimisation messages will provide ongoing promotion throughout the city for the next year and will be enjoyed by all.



■ *One of the winning entries of the Waste Minimisation competition – see the other winning artworks on Page 2.*

# School artworks promote waste minimisation



■ Three of the winning entries of the Waste Minimisation competition conducted by Townsville Waste Services in conjunction with Queensland Nickel and the Together Townsville Program as part of National Recycling Week.



## School gets behind recycling trial

Cassowary Coast Regional Council, Education Queensland (through the Earth Smart Science Program Facilitator) and its waste contractor, Subloos Transport, are undertaking a recycling trial to determine the feasibility of recycling throughout the Council. The program has only just started and there is one school currently up and running, Goondi State School. The school has been very proactive and was eager to be involved in the recycling trial. The Principal and teachers have been very active in providing awareness and educational material for the students – even recycling old voting boxes for the poster boards!

The school implemented a two bin system for the trial: one being recyclables and the other organic food waste. There is also a wash basin or a sink nearby for students to rinse their recyclables first. Any other rubbish must be taken back home.

Organic matter is composted onsite and used for landscaping. Plans are being made to expand the composting system next year. Gardens have been established during the year and there is a current garden group of interested students meeting about once a week.

The recycling bins are being trialled on Prep children and Year 6/7 first but it will soon be expanded to all year levels. Students throughout the school are very eager to participate and cannot wait for their recycling bins!

Leading up to the first pick-up, rubbish was inspected by staff and students from Goondi State School. When inspected at Subloos recycling facility, there was a very low contamination rate which can be attributed to the passionate and proactive actions by the staff and Principal.

The recycling trial will also assist the school to achieve its waste reduction target as set by the Earth Smart Science program which sets a target of 50% reduction of waste sent to landfill.



# News from the Packaging Stewardship Forum



## PACKAGING STEWARDSHIP FORUM

Over the last 12 months, the Packaging Stewardship Forum of the Australian Food and Grocery Council (PSF) has been working on a number of significant projects within the LAWMAC region focusing on airports, universities and TAFEs, stadiums and major entertainment venues to reduce littering and improve the recovery of our members' packaging.

### PUBLIC PLACE RECYCLING

■ Queensland Airports have embraced recycling with Queensland's largest and busiest airports all launching new public place recycling infrastructure in the last 12 months. Brisbane International Terminal, Virgin Blue terminal at Brisbane Airport, Cairns, Gold Coast, Mackay, Rockhampton and Townsville airports have all partnered with the PSF to install new infrastructure allowing more than 19 and a half million people visiting Queensland airports each year to recycle away from home.



■ Westfield Shopping Centre in Chermside recently launched the Queensland rollout of new public recycling bins across their other Queensland shopping centres including Westfield Carindale, Garden City, Helensvale, North Lakes and StrathPine, aiming to recycle up to 122 tonnes of beverage containers annually in Queensland alone. Nationally, Westfield will install new recycling systems in participating centres by the end of 2010 thanks to a partnership between industry and government through the Australian Packaging Covenant. Funding partners include the Australian Food and Grocery Council (AFGC) Packaging Stewardship Forum, Australian Packaging Covenant Industry Association, state governments in the ACT, NSW, QLD, SA, VIC and WA and the Coca-Cola system in Australia.

### DO THE RIGHT THING SIGNAGE

The Packaging Stewardship Forum (PSF) of the Australian Food and Grocery Council is offering free roadside signage, waste and recycling bin stickers and posters under the fourth round of its "Do the Right Thing" signage support program. Ninety-five communities across Australia were successful in the 2009-2010 rounds, with a total of 694 road side signs, 25,287 waste and recycling stickers and 5,344 posters delivered. Applications are open to local councils, schools and community organisations with new or existing litter abatement and public place recycling projects.

Application forms can be downloaded at <http://www.afgc.org.au/psf> and must be received by Friday 19 November 2010.

### REGIONAL OPPORTUNITY FOR RECYCLING OF WASTE GLASS

The Packaging Stewardship Forum of the Australian Food and Grocery Council is working to increase the recovery and recycling of waste glass across Australia particularly in regional areas.

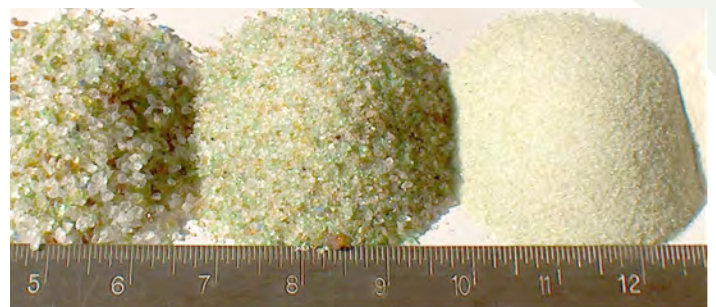
To this end, we are prepared to offer contributory funds towards glass reprocessing infrastructure that has the capacity to turn MRF reject glass into a recycled crushed glass product suitable for alternate uses such as sand replacement in asphalt, concrete or pipe embedment.

Recycled crushed glass has been in use in other countries for a few years now with specifications in place and acceptance of the product in the market.

**Waste glass can be converted from this.....**



.....To this



The picture above shows the grades of product that have been used in civil construction applications within Australia.

Projects have been undertaken in NSW, Tasmania, Victoria and WA that have demonstrated the effective use of recycled crushed glass with the support of local and state government in each of these states.

Regional Councils and/or their waste and recycling service providers who would like some more information or are interested in participating in a project with the Packaging Stewardship Forum please contact Chris Jeffreys, Program Manager Glass Recovery and Recycling.

Email: [chris.jeffreys@afgc.org.au](mailto:chris.jeffreys@afgc.org.au) or phone: 0403 486454

# Waste reform update – from DERM (November 2010)

The Queensland Government has a strong vision for waste reform. The Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM) is now in the final stages of drafting the Queensland's Waste Strategy 2010–2020, setting new directions for waste and resource management.

With a strong legislative base, these reforms and actions encourage the behavioural changes needed to avoid waste, and focus on reusing and recycling precious materials that are currently being buried.

Central to a better future for waste management industries are new business opportunities and new jobs in recycling.

By creating less waste, our impacts on the Earth are reduced and we can foster social and economic benefits; in effect, using precious and ever-more expensive resources more efficiently, and doing more with less.

## Progress

Our waste reform team is making strong progress towards 1 July 2011 when new waste disposal reforms become reality. To deliver this reform and realise our vision for a low-waste Queensland, we have developed a robust framework including:

- Queensland's Waste Strategy 2010-2020, providing guidance on how to shape the program
- legislation providing a contemporary regional way forward
- a price signal in shape of a levy providing a further incentive and funding for future environmental waste initiatives, and
- incentives and support programs for resource recovery, better waste avoidance practices and community projects to reduce our total waste output.

The Queensland Government could not deliver this program without expert advice and has consulted with a wide variety of stakeholders to help us shape and move through this process in the lead up to 1 July 2011.

This consultation process has been invaluable as an information gathering and has further strengthened our relationships with stakeholders.

We will continue to consult with industry, local government and other stakeholders in the coming years to ensure the waste reforms deliver on the vision and more importantly – that Queenslanders see the expected benefits.

## Consultation

The strategy underwent a formal 10-week consultation process between May and August 2010.

Throughout the consultation process, DERM continued to talk with key stakeholders about legislative provisions, levy design and program development.

Our consultation efforts across southeast and regional Queensland have so far reached more than:

- 110 waste and resource recovery sector representatives
- 80 general business and industry representatives
- 60 local government representatives
- 20 environment and community organisation representatives.

The consultation process attracted 95 submissions from industry, government and community stakeholders.

In general, stakeholders were widely supportive of the waste reform principles and a majority have provided support for a levy to further reduce waste and encourage the economics of recycling.

These are on-line at [www.derm.qld.gov.au](http://www.derm.qld.gov.au)

Following this process, a Stakeholder Advisory Committee

(SAC) and Technical Working Groups (TWGs) were set up to help us further shape and improve the direction and detail of the program.

These discussions will continue as the waste strategy, legislation and programs are developed in readiness for 1 July 2011.

Our team is now concentrating on collating this consultation feedback and the summary submissions report will be released in coming weeks.

## What about local government and waste facilities operators?

DERM has been working closely with local governments state-wide and in particular with local government associations to help them get ready for 1 July 2011.

In advance of the levy going live on that date, we are providing grants to local governments to build necessary infrastructure such as weighbridges.

The current draft of the strategy document provides an assessment option for those local governments that do not have weighbridges.

The term deeming provisions is commonly used by local governments and it allows the waste operator to estimate the size of the load when weighing is not possible.

This term will continue to exist as part of the new Act. Specifics of how this will work will be outlined in early 2011.

## What programs will be available?

We are working with a range of stakeholders to design a suite of programs and initiatives to help encourage waste avoidance, reduction, re-use and recovery efforts.

The programs, from the Waste Avoidance and Resource Efficiency (WARE) fund and current allocations, are currently being fine tuned and will be announced in the coming months including:

- training for industry and local government most likely in April and May 2011, to outline how the system will work and help stakeholders to implement reforms and improve waste management practices
- local government grants program to help with building infrastructure such as weigh bridges
- Public Place Recycling (PPR) program to help members of the public recycle when away from home through the 'Do the right thing, use the right bin' recycling campaign
- school recycling project to help implement new resource recovery systems and teach our children about correct recycling practices
- getting business levy ready to support small to medium size enterprises to better manage waste, enter into appropriate arrangements with waste contractors and work collaboratively with other businesses to avoid waste generation
- other programs that will encourage and provide information to industry, local government and general public to support the waste reforms and improve their waste practices.

## Need more information?

*If you would like to be placed on a list to receive information regarding the waste reforms, including electronic newsletters, please email [wastecomms@derm.qld.gov.au](mailto:wastecomms@derm.qld.gov.au). Also, keep an eye on the DERM website [www.derm.qld.gov.au](http://www.derm.qld.gov.au) for regular project updates.*



## New look for Atherton waste transfer station

The Atherton waste transfer station has undergone a revamp to enable more effective management of the site. Situated on the Atherton-Herberton Road, the site facilities include a waste transfer station, materials recycling facility and dry landfill. Prior to October 2010, there was a contractor who operated a buy back shop.

A number of factors early in 2010 influenced the decision to give the site a new look. A contributing factor included a DERM inspection whereby it was acknowledged that the landfill operations were not up to scratch, including the vast array of buy-back materials scattered throughout the site as a result of the contractor's influence on the site.

The release of the Queensland Waste Strategy also provided Tablelands Regional Council waste staff with some direction on how the site needed to be operated as of July, 2011.

To increase the efficiency of operations at the site Council waste staff have instigated a number of changes including:

- Landfill compaction previously done by a loader is now done by a 31 tonne landfill compactor.
- The buy-back shop contract expired and ceased with the contractor vacating the site.
- Access to the landfill by householders was reduced by installing bulk bins at the transfer station.
- A gatehouse was installed with a contractor engaged to take fees and direct people to the appropriate disposal location.
- Landfill surveys are being undertaken regularly to determine the volume and fill rate.

As a result of these changes, revenue from disposal fees has increased by at least 50% and disposal behaviour has greatly improved with waste being disposed in their appropriate locations. The changes also cater for installation of a weighbridge to enable Council to be prepared for the introduction of the landfill levy. It is also proposed to provide the community, at some future time, with a buy-back shop situated in a more appropriate location within the site.

## LAWMAC meeting

The next LAWMAC Workshop and general meeting is scheduled for **18-19 November** at the Bamford Lane Depot, Kirwan/Townsville.

## 'Rossko' Award nominees

Two nominations will be considered for the Ross Overton Memorial Award for Excellence in Waste Management in North Queensland.

The award honours the memory of Ross Kenneth (Rossko) Overton (1950-2006), who was the architect and founding Chair of the Local Authority Waste Management Advisory Committee. To maintain Ross Overton's legacy and to honour his memory across regional Queensland, LAWMAC established the annual "Rossko Award" for leadership, innovation and dedication in the field of waste management in the North Queensland Local Government Association area. The two nominations for this year are Sheils Barra of Cook Shire Council and Mathew McCarthy of Townsville City Council.

The winner of the award will be selected soon and members will be advised.

## TRC Waste Strategy starts to take shape

It has been a long time coming, but the Tablelands Regional Council's Waste Management Strategy is getting closer to release.

Shaping the strategy is a thorough cost analysis of the entire waste operations.

Council staff have invested much time and energy in the understanding of costs from pre-amalgamation and since the formation of TRC and this has alleviated any concerns with the financial data that was available to produce an accurate analysis.

The cost analysis examines and compares 10 different scenarios with each scenario providing a financial outcome based on a combination of options including: Recycling; Landfill disposal options; Alternate waste technology; and Kerbside collection options.

To complement the cost analysis, staff have also developed a long-term financial plan for the waste business, which includes savings from implementation of the strategy and future major capital expenditure such as landfill capping.

The aim of this exercise is to determine the required annual revenue to fund current and future expenditure and relate this as a rateable waste management levy.

The above two components of the strategy will be presented to Council at a workshop on 2 December, 2010 with the results of the workshop to be adopted at a future meeting.

Development of a Kerbside Collection Strategy is occurring concurrently with the Waste Strategy in preparation for releasing a new kerbside collection contract in the first half of 2011.

To provide direction in development of the collection contract TRC staff presented a Kerbside Collection Policy to Council. Although the policy won't apply until commencement of the new contract in July 2012, it provides Council and staff with a clear understanding of wheelie bin ownership, replacement situations, eligibility, presentation of bins, exemptions, charging mechanisms and most importantly performance measures.