

# Waste Water

One of the simplest and most effective ways for tourism operators to both reduce their environmental impact and improve their bottom line is to reduce the amount of waste they produce.

## Why should you reduce your waste?

It's simple; the more waste you are producing, the more it is costing you. Many businesses in the tourism sector are needlessly spending money on the handling, transporting and disposing of waste that could have been avoided in the first place, or that could be minimised, reused, or recycled.

Tourism operators can both reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve their resilience to the impact of climate change by improving waste management practices.

A good place to start reducing your waste and cutting costs, is by:

- > Encouraging purchase decisions that avoid creating waste in the first place;
- > Creating opportunities for staff to be creative about waste reduction opportunities;
- > Establishing waste reduction targets with key stakeholders and contractors; and
- > Reusing and recycling materials.

Tourism Australia believes all tourism operators have a responsibility to operate in a sustainable and cost effective way.

The good news is that there are now a number of examples in Australia of where hotels who have committed to reducing waste, have significantly exceeded waste reduction targets and saved money along the way.

## Why do I need to act on this now?

Recycling at home has become a routine part of many people's lives and consumers are increasingly expecting and choosing hotels, attractions and other workplaces who have a commitment to reduce, reuse, and recycle waste.

## Tips for reducing your waste

Tips for getting started:

- > Conduct a waste audit. It will help to identify the types of materials that are currently thrown out and the areas within the operation that are producing the most waste.
- > Set up a recycling system within your operation for paper, plastics, aluminium and glass.
- > Consider composting food waste from restaurants and hotel kitchens.

## Reduce your waste:

- > Work with suppliers to ensure that they minimise packaging and take back packaging which can't be readily recycled. This includes polystyrene packaging for electrical appliances.
- > Avoid single-serve products such as sugars, butters, condiments and coffee.
- > Use bulk dispensers in hotel bathrooms rather than small packages of soap, shampoo and conditioner.
- > Provide newspapers on request only.
- > Provide information on guestroom TV screens rather than in printed form.
- > Provide guests with the option of deciding whether to re-use linen and towels.
- > Buy reusable glassware, table settings and serving equipment for events.
- > Buy refillable printer cartridges that can be sent back to the manufacturer for recycling.

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## Use:

- > Fabric rather than paper serviettes.
- > Rechargeable batteries.
- > Email to send information.
- > Reusable envelopes for internal mail.
- > Ceramic mugs in offices, to avoid polystyrene cup waste.

## Re-use:

- > Cardboard boxes for packaging and moving.
- > Packaging and pallets.
- > Sell or donate obsolete equipment to community groups.

## Recycle:

- > Newspapers, office paper, junk mail and used phone books.
- > Fluorescent light bulbs.
- > Cardboard.
- > Plastic bottles, cans, glass bottles and jars.
- > Cooking oil.

## Electronic equipment:

- > Check if your old equipment can be upgraded before you purchase new products.
- > Consider donating your old computers to charity, schools or community groups.

## Kitchen Waste Composting:

- > Compost waste fruit and vegetables, peelings, coffee grounds, egg shells, bakery products and other leftovers from the kitchen using appropriate methods. These food scraps contain valuable nutrients that can be composted to produce a rich soil additive.

## Useful links

Sustainability Victoria  
[sustainability.vic.gov.au/](http://sustainability.vic.gov.au/)

Department of Environment & Conservation NSW  
[dec.nsw.gov.au](http://dec.nsw.gov.au)

Zero Waste SA  
[zerowaste.sa.gov.au](http://zerowaste.sa.gov.au)

Zero Waste WA  
[zerowastewa.com.au/](http://zerowastewa.com.au/)

ACT NOWaste  
[nowaste.act.gov.au](http://nowaste.act.gov.au)

Northern Territory Government  
[nt.gov.au/nreta/environment/waste/rethink/](http://nt.gov.au/nreta/environment/waste/rethink/)

Tasmanian Government  
[environment.tas.gov.au/waste\\_recycling.html](http://environment.tas.gov.au/waste_recycling.html)

Queensland Government  
[epa.qld.gov.au/environmental\\_management/waste/](http://epa.qld.gov.au/environmental_management/waste/)

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