



Northern Inland Regional Waste

Annual Report 2008 - 2009

August 2009



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Executive Officer's Report

It is pleasing to reflect on our work during the past 12 months and report that we have once again delivered important programs in the region which both increase our resource recovery and reduce our impact on the environment.

Of course, this could not have been achieved without the continuing dedication and participation of our member Councils, and I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank all of our representatives for their individual contributions which ensure that our collective goals are achieved.

During this past financial year NIRW has been busy administering various requests for tenders on behalf of its member Councils, including the collection and processing of drumMUSTER containers, processing of green waste, collection of used motor oil and the transportation of e-waste. These regional tenders seek to minimise waste processing and collection costs through economies of scale while providing sustainable resource recovery services for communities within the participating Council areas.

Highlighting another positive achievement, I'm pleased to report that for the first time since the Annual Chemical Collection Campaigns began in 1999, we have seen a decrease in the amount of chemical collected, signalling that the program has had a positive impact on the amount of unwanted hazardous material being stored across our region.

NIRW was also successful in obtaining additional funding of \$12,000 from DECC to deliver a regional litter strategy and a further \$60,000 from NSW Health to coordinate a regional Community Sharps Management Program.

On behalf of the Group, I'd like to offer thanks to the NSW Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water (DECCW) who provide not only valuable funding that allows our Group to continue in its current form, but who through Ann Trofa, David Blackmore and Bernard Carlon have provided support and assistance throughout the year. It is pleasing that our Group has again received funding from DECCW to allow continuance of regional waste management programs throughout 2009/2010.

Our ongoing involvement with RENEW NSW has provided a valuable networking opportunity with our neighbouring waste groups which delivers a shared means of dealing with the array of waste management issues facing regional and rural councils.

Thank you to the NIRW program committee members, Mike Porter, Merv Prendergast and Sue Cox, who have committed additional time and effort to review and implement programs that provide benefits to the Group as a whole.

Thanks also go to Tamworth Regional Council for their continuing role in providing Executive support to the NIRW Executive Officer and Program Coordinator, and to Cr. Col Murray for again taking on the role as the Chair of our Group.

Many new challenges lay ahead in the waste sector over the next 12 months, and we can look forward to our Group continuing to deliver outcomes which will help us to meet the challenges and find new opportunities which will benefit both the environment and our region's citizens.



John Davis
NIRW Executive Officer

NIRW, The Model

NIRW is a voluntary local government networking group formed to specifically address waste management issues on a regional level.

The member Councils are: -

- Armidale Dumaresq Council
- Glen Innes Severn Council
- Gunnedah Shire Council
- Guyra Shire Council
- Gwydir Shire Council
- Inverell Shire Council
- Liverpool Plains Shire Council
- Moree Plains Shire Council
- Narrabri Shire Council
- Tamworth Regional Council
- Tenterfield Shire Council
- Uralla Shire Council
- Walcha Council

Since 1998, NIRW has been developing and implementing waste management programs on a regional level throughout the New England & North West of New South Wales.

The NIRW region comprises a total population of 180,000 and covers an area of 92,658km².



Objectives

- Develop and implement regional programs that achieve a sustainable balance between the region's social, economic and environmental needs.
- Encourage teamwork and cooperation between member Councils and external stakeholders for the overall benefit of the region.
- Identify and investigate all opportunities for coordinated approaches in the provision of waste management services and the achievement of waste avoidance and waste minimisation within the region.
- Consider all waste management issues affecting member Councils, where possible, and speak as one voice in response to State & Federal Government initiatives or directives.
- To prevent the generation of waste & promote awareness by commerce & industry with the ideal being – what is good for commerce & industry is good for the environment.
- To maximize the recovery, recycling & reuse of resources from waste whilst addressing the concept of renewable energy along with a change of thinking.
- Provide capacity building opportunities for staff to enable better management of waste.

NIRW Executive

John Davis, Executive Officer
Mike Porter, Assistant Executive Officer
Kate Newlan, Program Co-ordinator
Cr. Col Murray, NIRW Chairman

NIRW Program Committee

The NIRW Program Committee consists of the following members:

John Davis, Tamworth Regional Council (NIRW Executive Officer)
Mike Porter, Armidale Dumaresq Council (NIRW Assistant Executive Officer)
Kate Newlan, NIRW Program Co-ordinator
Merv Prendergast, Liverpool Plains Shire Council
Sue Cox, Gunnedah Shire Council

NIRW General Meetings

The NIRW General Meeting is attended by representatives from each of the member Councils. Representatives assist with the strategic direction of NIRW, through the sharing of knowledge and information in the area of waste and resource management.

NIRW General Meetings are held on a quarterly basis, at various locations throughout the region. During 2008-2009 meetings were held on the following dates:

14 August 2008	Gunnedah Shire Council - Gunnedah
13 November 2008	Gwydir Shire Council - Bingara
12 February 2009	Uralla Shire Council - Uralla
14 May 2009	Liverpool Plains Shire Council - Quirindi

NIRW Host Council

During 2008-2009, Tamworth Regional Council hosted NIRW staff and finances. NIRW wishes to thank Tamworth Regional Council for their continued support and assistance.

Resource Recovery Figures

Waste Type	Resource Recovery Rates 08/09	Resource Recovery Rates 07/08	Resource Recovery Timeframe	Measurement (tonnes/kg/m ³)	Recycled or Reused?
drumMUSTER	118,247	96,325	1 July – 30 June 2009	Drums	Recycled
Hazardous Chemical Waste	13,455	20,050	July & August 2008	Kg	Recycled & disposed
Greenwaste	87,237.64	74,854.77	1 July – 30 June 2009	m ³	Recycled
Metal Waste	3,183.68	4,076.36	1 July – 30 June 2009	Tonnes	Recycled
Batteries	50.4	117.84	1 July – 30 June 2009	Tonnes	Recycled & disposed
Sustainable On Farm Waste	6	n/a	December 2008	Tonnes	Recycled
E-Waste	36	n/a	1 May – 5 June 2009	Pallets	Refurbished & recycled

Regional Projects – 2008-2009 Achievements

Annual Chemical Clean Out Campaign

In July/August 2008, NIRW conducted its 9th Annual Chemical Clean-Out Campaign, which resulted in 13,455 kilograms of unwanted hazardous chemicals being removed from the region. This figure was down 6,596 kilograms from the previous year, signalling that the program has had a positive impact on the amount of unwanted hazardous material being stored across our region.

Landfill Operator Training / Asbestos Identification

In June 2009, NIRW facilitated Landfill Operator Training for member Council staff. The course was delivered by TAFE NSW and for the first time participants will earn recognition of prior learning towards the Cert III in Asset Maintenance (Waste Management).

Participants gathered in Armidale to attend the 2 day training course, which involved both classroom based learning and a site tour. The training, which aimed to increase the participants' awareness of waste management issues, was attended by a range of staff, including Managers, Technical Staff and Landfill Operators. It also provided an excellent opportunity for participants to network with other member Councils and discuss issues at a local and regional level. The training will be held again in 2010.



Aligned Sub Regional Waste Tender

NIRW coordinated an aligned sub-regional tendering process for the collection of garbage, recyclables and organics on behalf of three member councils; Tamworth Regional, Gunnedah Shire and Liverpool Plains Shire Councils. The Request for Tenders were called in May 2008, with a significant tender evaluation process carried out during the 2008-2009 period. This aligned process sought to minimise waste collection costs through economies of scale and to provide access to sustainable resource recovery services for the communities within the participating Council areas.

Sustainable On Farm Waste Management Program

The Group again worked in partnership with the Namoi CMA to conduct a 2nd Sustainable On Farm Management Campaign with the aim of providing the farming community with education on sustainable waste management practices, and encouraging the remediation of eroded gullies and surrounding land. A model farm was selected and clean up works were carried out as part of the promotion for the campaign. Landholders could register for a rural information kit, which contained information on waste disposal and recycling, NIRW programs and also drumMUSTER and ChemClear.



Before



After

Regional Organics Mapping Project

NIRW has partnered with the DPI on a regional audit of organic waste streams.

The objectives of this audit are:

- To more accurately identify present and future sources and volumes of organic material in the North West of NSW;
- Estimate the availability and cost of organic material; and
- Identify the most consistently available organic material and undertake a review of seasonal availability of these.

A report is due to be released by the DPI in the later part of 2009 and will be used to determine the volume and availability of organic waste streams in the North West region and estimate the product price for non energy usage.

NIRW has provided input for the report, and previous work carried out by NIRW on Organic Waste Stream Mapping has been provided to inform this current audit process.

Further involvement in the project will occur in the 2009-2010 program.

E-Waste

E-Waste is a rising problem within our community. The consumption of technology is growing each year and the number of items being deposited at landfills is increasing. There is a need to address this type of waste and reduce the number of items being buried at the landfill.

In the absence of a co-ordinated State or National approach, Armidale Dumaresq Council, in partnership with the Armidale Computer Library, have established the "Armidale E-Waste Processing Facility" at their local landfill to address this waste stream not only on a local level, but at a regional level.

In 2009, NIRW carried out its first "milk run" to supply e-waste to the Armidale Facility, with a total of 36 pallets delivered for refurbishment or recycling as at 30 June 2009.



2008 Youth River Health Conference

NIRW were a silver sponsor of the 2008 Youth River Health Conference held in Tamworth in November 2008. As well as participating as a member of the Conference steering committee, NIRW also facilitated a number of workshops with school students on worm farming and composting, and the waste management hierarchy.



NamoiROC Green is the New Black

NamoiROC have received a grant through the Urban Sustainability Program in the amount of \$1.98 million for a project titled "Green is the New Black". NIRW have partnered with NamoiROC on the project and during 2008-2009 participated in the application process and subsequent business plan development. Through this process, NIRW identified working with industry as a priority in terms of reducing the amount of commercial and industrial waste being landfilled. NIRW's involvement will be ongoing during 2009-2010 and will focus on waste auditing of businesses/industry and Councils as well as investigating organics trials in the region.

Regional Litter Strategy

\$12,000 was received from the Department of Environment and Climate Change (DECC) to undertake a regional litter strategy. The program was aimed at reducing the incidence of littering behaviour, and the key objectives were:

Promotion - Promote community awareness, knowledge and understanding of the littering issue and how it impacts the New England/North West region;

Prevention - Facilitate litter prevention behaviour by promoting simple, practical methods for individuals in the community; and

Prosecution - Promote awareness of the potential prosecution and/or fines associated with littering.

A television commercial was produced to raise awareness of the fines associated with littering behaviours and this was run across the region over a number of months. Various promotional materials were also produced, such as stickers and posters as well as practical resources which included personal ashtrays and cornstarch car tidy bags printed with the 'Don't be a Tossler' and NIRW logos. Signage for roadside hotspots and Council parks was also provided to member Councils. DECC's Council Litter Prevention Kit was used as the basis for the development of all of the materials produced.



Landfill Greenhouse Gas Emission Assessment

With the introduction of the National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Act 2007 (NGER) and the proposed Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme, it was timely for a number of our member Councils to evaluate any likely reporting and/or permit liabilities under these schemes in relation to Landfill operations. As such, NIRW coordinated a pilot project by engaging Renewable Australia to assess any liabilities for the five member Councils most likely to exceed the thresholds for reporting and/or permit obligations. The pilot will serve to inform the member Councils as well as educate the waste managers of the region about the methodologies available to measure landfill emissions.

As at 30 June 2009, reports were being drafted, with completion expected in August 2009.

Community Sharps Management

NSW Health provided NIRW with funding of \$60,000 to implement a community sharps management programs across 9 member Councils.

NIRW have worked with NSW Health and TAFE NSW to establish a regional approach to the management of sharps in participating member Council areas, which has included training of operational staff and also managers and supervisors and the provision of draft OH&S/procedural documentation.

Infrastructure has also been purchased for the Councils, including large public place housing units (twelve purchased in total), public toilet wall units and pharmacy bins.

A community education campaign will begin in September 2009 (after all Council infrastructure has been installed) which will include printed materials and television commercials.



Regional Tenders – 2008-2009 Achievements

drumMUSTER

Challenge Disability Services were awarded the NIRW Supply of Container Collection, Processing and Removal for Recycling Services under the drumMUSTER Program Contract. The contract is for a term of two years with an optional 12 month extension period.

The contract commenced in September 2008, and 118,247 drums were processed during 2008 -2009.

Regional Green Waste Processing Contract

Shoalhaven Recycling were awarded the NIRW Green Waste Processing Contract in October 2007 for a two year period with an optional 12 month extension period.

In 2008-2009, 87,237.64m³ of processed green waste was produced.



Regional Metal Waste & Battery Collection Contract

NIRW encourages member Councils to increase the amount of metal waste collection in their local government area & actively separate batteries for suitable disposal.

In early 2009, a twelve month contract was awarded to OneSteel Recycling.

A total of 3,183.68 tonnes of scrap metal, and 50.4 tonnes of batteries were collected from the NIRW region in 2008-2009.

Inter-Regional Tender for Used Oil Collection

NIRW and NetWaste called for tenders from service providers for the collection and appropriate reuse and/or disposal of used oil, and included the option for collection and processing of plastic oil containers and used oil filters. A contractor was selected to service both regions and contractual arrangements have now been finalised. NIRW will commence reporting on used oil collection figures in the 2009-2010 program year.

Program Milestones for 2009-2010

Program milestones for 2009-2010 include:

- Regional contract for the processing of construction and demolition waste
- Completion of Landfill Gas Emission Assessment
- Further involvement with the NamoiROC "Green is the New Black" project
- Further involvement with the DPI on the regional organic waste stream audit
- Continued provision of landfill operator training for new landfill operators/waste management supervisors to encourage resource recovery and operational improvements.
- Preparation of regional event calendar to increase the use of the Waste Education Trailer and selection of events to implement event recycling activities.



- Continued facilitation and monitoring of regional contracts for garden organics, metals & batteries, drumMUSTER and used oil collections
- Investigate options for recycling of plastic wastes generated through on farm practices, both within and outside the region, and educating the rural community about these options
- Implementing a second regional anti litter education and awareness campaign in the NIRW region, in line with the NIRW Regional Litter Strategy
- Development of a regional Illegal dumping strategy
- Finalise development of education materials & waste education mascot



Recycling is a hoot