



# Northern Inland Regional Waste

## Annual Report 2006 - 2007

September 2007



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# Executive Officer's Report

It has been my honour to act as the NIRW Executive Officer over the last twelve months or so. I have been left with a legacy from my predecessor of leading a group that has proven its worth to the region over and over. It is difficult to place a value on the performance of our voluntary group, suffice is to say that the value to the citizens of our region and our broader environment has been immense.

The NIRW success is achieved through the enthusiasm and interest of our dedicated Council representatives. As a group, without a commitment and willingness of Council staff to participate, the group fails. Conversely, through the current commitment of Council staff for delivering benefits to the respective communities in a collaborative manner, our group thrives and continues to succeed.

NIRW's successes continue to flow from our regional approach to waste management issues. Regional contracts continue to deliver benefits for our citizens and the environment, our networking delivers a shared means of dealing with issues and our collaborative approach allows our voice to be heard in the forums of the decision makers.

In recognition of the successes of the past and our vision for the future it is particularly pleasing to recognise that the New South Wales State government has continued its financial commitment to assist groups such as ours. This is in part thanks to our achievements, but equally importantly, the benefits derived from all rural and regional groups "banding" together to present a common voice to the government through the "Regional Waste Forum" now known as RENEW NSW. This is a critical conduit with government and the decision makers that we need to continually support.

There are many challenges for NIRW remaining. We have the Productivity Commissions report to consider, the recently released Parliamentary Committee report on Municipal Waste Management, product stewardship issues and our own backyards to consider. Our group needs to remain focussed on meeting our own communities needs but we cannot ignore the external influences that impact on us. Together the Councils can face and deal with many of those externalities.

Kate Newlan, the group's Program Coordinator over the last 12 months, has brought a new bout of enthusiasm to the role and our group's thanks must go to her for her dedicated and professional efforts. Additionally, the inspiring efforts of the program committee need to be recognised. These people meet regularly and get much of the business done for the group. Together they have contributed a huge amount to the success of the NIRW group.

The group also owes sincere thanks to the support it receives from our sponsors the NSW State Government and its representatives Ann Trofa, David Blackmore, Tim Rogers and their support staff from the Department of Environment & Climate Change.

It is pleasing to reflect on a year that delivered much for the region's citizens and to look forward to working with both member councils and RENEW NSW in the ensuing year. We can collectively continue with the delivery of waste management outcomes that enhance our environment and are appropriate and affordable for our region's citizens

**John Davis**

NIRW Executive Officer

# NIRW, The Model

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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 92,658km<sup>2</sup>.



## Objectives

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- 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.

## NIRW Executive

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

## NIRW Program Committee

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The NIRW Program Committee consists of the following members:

John Davis, Tamworth Regional Council (NIRW Executive Officer)  
Kate Newlan, NIRW Program Co-ordinator  
Mike Porter, Armidale Dumaresq Council (NIRW Assistant Executive Officer)  
Maurice Freixas, Liverpool Plains Shire Council  
Amy McKey, Moree Plains Shire Council  
Andrew Croft, Narrabri Shire Council  
Sue Williams, Narrabri Shire Council

NIRW Program Committee meetings are held on a bi-monthly basis. During 2006-2007 meetings were on the following dates:

20 July 2006	Tamworth Regional Council
5 October 2006	Narrabri Shire Council
21 December 2006	Tamworth Regional Council
8 February 2007	Walcha Council
19 April 2007	Liverpool Plains Shire Council
31 May 2007	Gunnedah Shire Council

## NIRW General Meetings

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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 2006-2007 meetings were held on the following dates:

17 August 2006	Moree Plains Shire Council
9 November 2006	Tamworth Regional Council
8 February 2007	Walcha Council
10 May 2007	Inverell Shire Council

## NIRW Host Council

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During 2006-2007, Tamworth Regional Council hosted NIRW staff and finances. NIRW wishes to thank Tamworth Regional Council for their continued support and assistance.

## Resource Recovery Figures

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Waste Type	Resource Recovery Rates	Resource Recover Timeframe	Measurement (tonnes/kg/m <sup>3</sup> )	Recycled/ Reused
drumMUSTER	137,591	May 2006 - June 2007	Drums	Recycled
Hazardous Chemical Waste	15,277.80	July & August 2006	Kg	Recycled & disposed
Greenwaste	93,380.95	July 2006 – June 2007	m <sup>3</sup>	Recycled
Metal Waste	4,627.37	July 2006 – June 2007	Tonnes	Recycled
Batteries	135.98	July 2006 – June 2007	Tonnes	Recycled & disposed
Sustainable On Farm (AusScrap)	32.74	July & August 2006	Tonnes	Recycled
LPG Gas Cylinders	6	May & June 2007	Tonnes	Recycled & reconditioned

# Regional Projects

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## **drumMUSTER**

Challenge Disability Services were awarded the NIRW Supply of Container Collection, Processing, Removal and Disposal Services under the drumMUSTER Program Contract.

The contract commenced in July 2006, and 137,591 drums were processed during 2006/2007.

In May 2007, member Councils agreed to extend the contract with Challenge Disability Services was extended to July 2008.

## **Regional Annual Chemical Collection Campaign**

NIRW aims to continue to deliver an annual hazardous chemical collection program to member Councils throughout the region.

The program accommodates various sectors within the region including household & rural chemicals & provides an efficient & timely service to the respective communities to minimise public health & environmental risk.

The 2006/2007 Household Chemical Waste Collection Program had collection sites in all 13 member Council areas.

In total, 223 customers visited the collection sites, with over 15 tonnes of chemical waste collected. The main types of chemicals collected included paints, pesticides and poisons.

## **Regional Green Waste Processing Contract**

Shoalhaven Recycling were awarded the NIRW Green Waste Processing Contract.

The contract commenced in March 2006. In 2006/2007, 93,380.95m<sup>3</sup> 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.

Smorgon Steel Recycling were awarded the NIRW Metal Waste and Battery Collection Contract in August 2006. A total of 4,637.27 tonnes of scrap metal, and 135.98 tonnes of batteries were collected from the NIRW region in 2006/2007.

A substantial financial return for scrap metal and batteries collected at Council waste facilities across the region occurred in the last financial year. The servicing arrangements and proportional financial return has been delivered at both small and large sites in our region thus benefiting all regional Councils. The income has allowed investment in improving waste management operations and making services more sustainable for the respective communities.

## **LPG Gas Cylinder Collection**

NIRW introduced the collection of LPG gas cylinders from participating member Council areas. East Coast Revalvers began carrying out the collections in May and collected 6 tonnes of cylinders for reconditioning or recycling in May and June 2007.

## **Used Oil Program**

NIRW coordinated grant applications under the Product Stewardship for Used Oil Program and was successful in obtaining funding from the Department of Environment and Heritage for Armidale Dumaresq Council, Liverpool Plains Shire Council, Moree Plains Shire Council and Tamworth Regional Council to establish a total of 15 used oil collection facilities at landfill sites.

NIRW also began investigations into commencing a regional used oil collection contract. This project will be progressed further under NIRW's 2007/2008 plan.



## Waste Education Trailer

NIRW received funding from the Environmental Trust to undertake a Regional Roadshow with the Mobile Waste Education Trailer. The Roadshow was aimed at communicating waste management messages of reduce, reuse, recycle, the concept of smart shopping, composting and worm farming and promoting NIRW campaigns to schools and the local communities.

The Mobile Waste Education Trailer has been developed as a resource for the Northern Inland Regional Waste Group (NIRW) to be utilised in the New England and the North West regions. The Waste Education Trailer provides an innovative, interactive and interesting learning experience for all ages within the community. Literature & educational giveaways were provided to ensure that the messages being communicated were retained and induced action.

The trailer travelled throughout the NIRW Member Council area to both educate and encourage the community to actively help their local environment through adopting simple waste management practices. These practices include reducing, reusing and recycling waste, composting, being a smart shopper and other waste management options applicable in their local Council area. The trailer promoted the various campaigns that NIRW oversees across the region such as Chemical Collection and drumMuster.

The Roadshow commenced on 22 August 2006 and was completed on 26 January 2007.

The Waste Education Trailer Roadshow's targeted audience included community groups, schools and businesses in the region.

Key objectives were –

- Strengthen relationships with stakeholders
- Enhance community education on the waste hierarchy
- Increase awareness of key issues, strategies and programs to encourage community adoption.



The trailer was displayed at the following events:

- Ag-Quip
- Quirindi 150 Year Celebrations
- Armidale Relay for Life
- Uralla Thunderbolt Festival
- Tamworth Garden & Outdoor Expo
- Tamworth Country Music Festival

In total, 16 schools were visited with an estimated total audience of 1,000 students.

The trailer was on display at community events and CBD locations for a total of 18 days.

### **Sustainable on Farm Waste Management Program**

In 2005/2006, NIRW rolled out the Sustainable On Farm Waste Management Program in partnership with the Namoi Catchment Management Authority. The Program is designed to remove metal & waste material from farm gullies & provide access to information to improve natural resource management.

The program was run in Gunnedah Shire Council, Liverpool Plains Shire Council, Narrabri Shire Council and Tamworth Regional Council. The last collections were carried out under this program in July & August 2006, which resulted in the removal of 32.74 tonnes of material from 2 properties. A total of 225.22 tonnes of material was collected under the program.

In 2006, NIRW applied for further funding from the Namoi Catchment Management Authority and received \$15,000 to carry out a second round of this program. This will be carried out under NIRW's 2007/2008 plan.



Before



After

## Waste > Art & Design Competition

The NIRW Waste > Art & Design Competition opened on 26 March with local competitions held in 8 member Council areas. Winners from local competitions went on to compete in the Regional Competition and Exhibition which was hosted by Narrabri Shire Council in July & August 2007. The exhibition, held at the Crossing Theatre, featured over 40 artworks.

2007 marked the 7<sup>th</sup> year for competition, which encourages schools, community groups and individuals from all walks of life to take up the challenge and create a 'new life' for materials that would otherwise have been thrown away and considered useless.

The major sponsor of the event was Smorgon Steel Recycling who provided generous support to NIRW.

The competition featured categories for primary school students, secondary school students as well as the open community. There were 6 first place and 6 second place prizes awarded.



## ROMPS – Stage 3

NIRW have undertaken Regional Organic Waste Stream Mapping for the region and have produced a Final Report. A synopsis of this Final Report was also prepared for dissemination to industry & stakeholders. Active partnership building will be undertaken in the NIRW region as a means of utilising available organic wastes, identify value adding options, foster marketing investigations & facilitate sustainable use of the resource.

In 2007, NIRW worked with the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) in Tamworth on some small scale trials using mulch and compost product sourced from Tamworth Regional Council's Forest Road Landfill. The DPI will provide NIRW with an evaluation of the trials. Future plans for the expansion of the trials will include larger broad acre cereal crops in the winter months and will also see the mulch and compost material incorporated into the soils.

NIRW may also work together with the DPI on some further projects, including the use of organic material in the re-establishment of vegetation in scolded or saline earth.

## 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.

Armidale Dumaresq Council are seeking to establish 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. This initiative is in line with NIRW's regional objectives and strategies and NIRW will support the initiative in a variety of ways.

NIRW intends to promote the facility within the local regional community and to include information on our website. NIRW intends to investigate the potential of a regional collection contract to service member councils and conduct any subsequent tender or expression of interest process.

