

## \$8000 expense turns into a money-making machine

When a Sydney business discovered they were paying \$8000 a year on bin hire, waste collection and landfill charges, they took a closer look at the contents of their waste bin.

They discovered the bin contained mainly cardboard. So they took advice and installed a bailer. Now they get paid for their bailed cardboard. Not only that, they switched to a smaller general waste bin which costs them much less for each lift.

With money from the sale of the cardboard, they calculate the cost of the bailing machine will be offset in just 18 months.

By recycling cardboard you too could save money by directly reducing the volume of waste in your bins.



Photo: Phil Molyneux

## Recycling cardboard saves energy and reduces pollution

In NSW alone nearly 1.1 million tonnes of paper was reprocessed during the 2007-2008 financial year.<sup>1</sup>

Using old paper and cardboard to make new paper-based products requires 65 per cent less energy than using virgin wood fibre. It also means that 18 per cent less carbon dioxide is generated in making the cardboard.<sup>2</sup>

So by recycling cardboard and using recycled paper products, Australians can avoid over half of the environmental impact of using virgin material.

Another good reason to avoid sending cardboard to landfill is that it decomposes and generates methane, a potent greenhouse gas that is harmful to the environment.

## Simple ways to cut cardboard costs

Think in terms of the waste hierarchy. How can you avoid, reduce, reuse or recycle cardboard?

- Avoid** → **Do we need it?**
- Reduce** → **Do we need so much?**
- Reuse** → **Can we use it again?**
- Recycle** → **Can someone else use it or convert it into something new?**



### AVOID

Ask your regular suppliers to provide products in reusable containers if possible. Reusable containers are more durable, reduce disposal costs, often provide superior protection for products and can be stacked on top of one another for easy return.



## REDUCE

Buy products with less cardboard packaging and ask your suppliers whether they take back packaging for reuse.

Where storage is available and cash flow permits, buy in bulk as this can reduce the amount of cardboard packaging.



## REUSE

Reuse cardboard boxes for storage, or offer them to other businesses or customers.



## RECYCLE

Visit **[BusinessRecycling.com.au](http://BusinessRecycling.com.au)** to find a local cardboard recycling provider. This useful website has a searchable database and you will be able to find the closest providers that do pickups as well as those who allow customers to drop off material.

Ask your recycling contractor about innovative ways you can make recycling cardboard easier. They can provide information on the latest cardboard management systems.

There are collection and compaction systems available for every situation. If the volume of cardboard your business generates is significant, consider investing in a bailer. Bailed cardboard takes up far less space, is safer to handle and easier for a service to collect.

Make sure staff and cleaners are aware of and follow your recycling program. All staff should understand and be committed to the recycling program to ensure cardboard, paper and other materials go in the correct bins.

Here are some more tips:

- Ask your cardboard recycling contractor to assist with staff training as well as advice on signs for bins.
- Ensure signs are on all bins and that they show clearly what items go in which bin. Colour code different recycling bins.
- Insist that the recycling bin is full before it's picked up. Consider a fortnightly pickup instead of weekly.
- If your cardboard quantities are too small to justify your own collection service ask a neighbouring business about sharing a collection service.
- Ensure there is no cross contamination of the cardboard or you will pay more for collection.

Tell customers and clients about your recycling efforts and ask for their cooperation. You could help spread the word about the benefits of recycling.

### For further information

Waste and Resource Recovery  
Resource Recovery Unit  
Email: [info@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:info@environment.nsw.gov.au)

EPA 2012/0350 November 2012  
ISBN 978-1-74293-885-1

### Published by:

Environment Protection Authority  
59–61 Goulburn Street, Sydney South 1232  
Ph: 131 555 (environment information and publications requests)  
TTY: (02) 9211 4723  
Email: [info@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:info@environment.nsw.gov.au) Web: [www.epa.nsw.gov.au](http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au)  
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