Highlands Regional Waste Management Group

Essential reading for everyone!

JunkMail

Issue 16: March 2011

☆☆☆ 3Star Certification

Highlands RWMG were presented with our ResourceSmart Government 3Star Sustainability certificate by Anita Roper, CEO Sustainability Victoria. Achievement at the 3Star level means that we are performing well within the sector and have a strong commitment to sustainability. RSG 5Star Sustainability certification has, so far, only been awarded to ourselves, Rural Finance Corporation and the Dept of Justice.

Anita Roper presenting the certification to HRWMG Chairman Cr. Noel Perry

HRWMG has proud history as a leader in sustainability. Our involvement in Waste Wise and now ResourceSmart is due to our strong commitment to environmental sustainability and to lead by example, to practice what we preach

Our experience with Waste Wise enabled us to develop our Environmental Policy and Action Plan without any of the formal training that has been provided to other sectors.

Some of the actions we have implemented

- No waste bins under the desk, there is only one landfill bin and it is in the kitchen
- purchase of a duplex laser printer has significantly reduced our use of paper
- 20% reduction in paper use from 2008
- purchase 100% post consumer recycled paper
- comingled recycling
- purchase 100% Greenpower
- Energy efficient lighting
- Water use - 11 litres per person per day

Western Highway Roadside Litter Program – update

The aim of the Western Highway Roadside Litter Campaign is to reduce the incidence of roadside littering on the Western Hwy by 30% at selected sites. The campaign is using a range of tools to educate highway users that littering is an inappropriate behaviour. The project also promotes the EPA's Litter Report Line.

Key project dates:

- Initial clean up 16/S17 October 2010
- Baseline audits 13/ 14 November 2010
- Project launch Mon 15 November 2010
- Project audits 12/ 13 February 2011
- Final audits 30April/1May 2011

An extensive radio campaign commenced on 15th November. The radio campaign is the primary interface with the community and targets them in their cars. The ads will be broadcast via 3BA and Power FM in Ballarat and 3WM and Mixx FM in Horsham.

Signing mat and custom display box for the car litter bags

The radio campaign is supported by the distribution of car litter bags, posters, key rings etc. The car litter bags are fully biodegradable and compostable to AS 4736. A Schools Pack CD resource is currently being prepared and will be sent to all schools in Highlands, Grampians and Desert Fringe

Dob in a Dumpsite

The Dob in a Dumpsite project was funded by an EPA grant from money generated from fines as a result of the Litter Report Line. The Highlands Regional Waste Management Group (HRWMG) coordinated the project in partnership with its Member Councils, DSE, EPA. Parks Vic, VicRoads, HVP Plantations and LGL Ballarat Goldfields to combat illegal dumping.

The community response to our advertising campaign was most satisfactory, clearly demonstrating the community support for this initiative and an understanding of the negative impact the illegal dumping has in the environment.

- 25 sites were investigated,
- Over 8.5m^3 of waste has been collected,
- Fines totalling $ 1,165 were issued,
- Dumpers have been made to clean up their mess,
- 20 "Warning Severe Penalties Apply for Illegal Dumping Area Under Surveillance and Patrol" signs have been installed on local roads, and
- 9 "Report Illegal Dumping 1800 Litter" signs have been installed on major highways.

Overall, the project was a success and the project partners look forward to working together on projects in the future

BlinkyBulb

The aim of the program was to set up a process so that as many people as possible would have access to convenient, safe and cost-free disposal of their used fluorescent tubes/globes, which are then recycled, preventing a significant source of mercury pollution from going to landfill.

BlinkyBulb was a 12 months trial that was to conclude on 30 June 2010. BlinkyBulb has been an expensive model for the collection for recycling of domestic sourced mercury containing tubes, especially when the effort of the Rotarians is taken into consideration.

This is the scenario that is often presented for recycling of specialised waste streams. They are expensive but this needs to be balanced with the perceived environmental benefit of removing this mercury source from landfill and ameliorating the environmental risk.

Despite all of this BlinkyBulb has been a success. Over 13,000 mercury containing tubes and globes have been diverted from landfill. This is an outstanding result and clearly demonstrates that the community have embraced recycling and will support new initiatives if the process is made easy.

Due to the strong ongoing support from the community and the continued interest by Rotary, it has been possible to keep BlinkyBulb, in its current format, going until June 2011.

The introduction of FluoroCycle in 2010, under the auspice by the Lighting Council of Australia, now provides a structure for the recycling of fluorescent tubes from industry. It is hoped that it will not be long before this initiative is made available for domestic sourced tubes. www.blinkybulb.com.au

FluoroCycle

FluoroCycle is a scheme that aims to increase the recycling of lamps that contain mercury and reduce the amount of mercury entering the environment, just like our BlinkyBulb project.

To achieve this, FluoroCycle provides a national, voluntary scheme which businesses, government agencies and other organisations join as Signatories. The scheme gives public recognition to the Signatories for their commitment to recycling.

HRWMG is a Foundation Signatory Facilitator Government. We will be hosting an information session for interested organisations and businesses shortly. *Contact Rosemary for more information.*

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