



WASTE FACTSHEET

THE WASTE HIERARCHY & WASTE AVOIDANCE

The average NSW household generates 21.75kg of waste a week! Small changes to our everyday behaviour can help reduce the generation of waste and preserve the life of landfills.

THINKING OF WASTE AS A RESOURCE



Reducing waste generation and keeping materials circulating within the economy are critical to achieving a sustainable future. Thinking of waste as a resource allows us to avoid or minimise the generation of waste where possible, maximising the recovery of valuable resources and protecting the environment from the impacts of disposal.

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

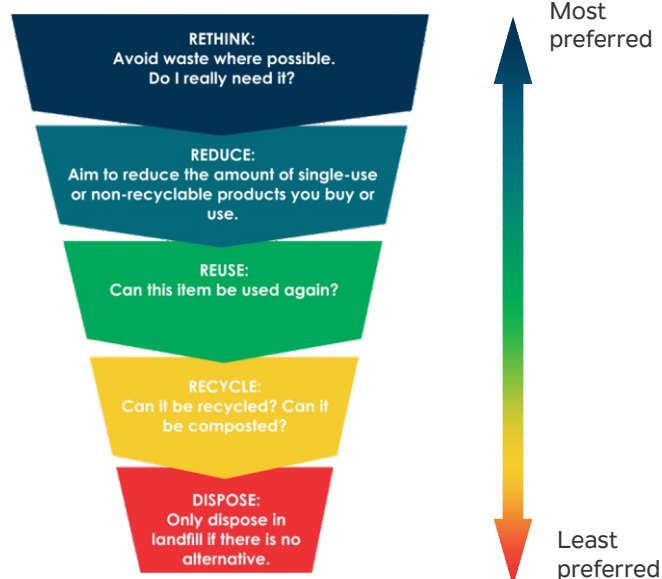
Thinking of waste as a resource has several benefits:

- Conserves landfill space - minimising waste prolongs the life of existing landfills, meaning that valuable local land can be preserved for environmental, economic or social purposes now and into the future
- Reduces pollution - less landfills means less windblown litter and potential for air and water pollution
- Conserves resources and energy - the production of recycled materials requires less natural resources and energy (such as coal, oil, water, trees and minerals) to be manufactured than creating items from raw materials
- Financial and social impact - by only purchasing items you really need or reusing items, you can save money. The recycling industry also creates more jobs, estimated to contribute 9.2 full time equivalent jobs per 100,000 tonnes of waste, compared to only 2.8 jobs when landfilling alone

UNDERSTANDING THE WASTE HIERARCHY

The waste hierarchy is a tool that can guide individuals to make positive waste management decisions that maximise the use of resources. By following the waste hierarchy, we can make choices that are best for us and the environment.

THE WASTE HIERARCHY





RETHINK AND AVOID

Waste avoidance is at the top of the waste hierarchy. This step encourages individuals to consider if a product really is needed or if there are more sustainable alternatives. By avoiding the production of waste, we can help minimise our footprint on the environment. Preventing waste generation can be achieved by changing our everyday behaviours.

Start thinking about what you really need and refuse the things you don't. When considering buying new things, first ask yourself:

- Do I really need it?
- Can I borrow it (if I won't need it frequently)?
- Can I use something I already own instead?
- Can I buy something of better quality that may be slightly more expensive but will last much longer?
- Can I buy this item with less packaging?
- Is the packaging reusable or recyclable?

REDUCE

Reducing the production of waste as much as possible is a great way to minimise our impact on the environment, as it conserves natural resources and valuable landfill space. Avoiding disposable or single-use goods is a great way to achieve this.

Easy examples of reducing waste:

- Shop smart - buy pantry staples and spices from bulk wholefood retailers and take your own jars or containers
- Pack a 'waste-free lunch' - see our factsheet on this for more details!
- Reduce food waste by meal planning and using up leftovers - see our factsheet on this for more details!
- Buy products that are made from recycled materials or are recyclable, reusable or compostable
- Make your own baked goods at home rather than buying them ready-made
- Compost your food scraps or set-up a worm farm at home

REUSE

Reusing items supports the avoidance and reduction of waste. Many products can also be easily repaired, sold or given away for free on platforms like Gumtree and Facebook Marketplace, or donated to charities.

Some easy examples of reuse includes:

- Using beeswax wraps instead of cling wrap, or place food in reusable containers
- Take a reusable coffee cup to your local café
- Replace juice boxes and bottled water with bulk juices and flavoured milk or water in reusable bottles
- Take fruit nets to use instead of produce bags, or place produce loosely in the basket or trolley
- Consider using menstrual cups or underwear instead of disposable products
- Consider using cloth nappies instead of disposable ones
- Reuse non-recyclable waste materials in craft projects
- Print on both sides of paper or reuse the reverse side for drawing or lists

RECYCLE

The yellow-lid recycling bin is only for recycling household packaging containers and paper and cardboard, and these items must always be placed loosely in the bin. However, there is so much more that can be recycled, provided we are willing to collect and drop off to a separate recycling collection point.

Drop off hazardous wastes like car batteries, gas bottles, paint, motor oils, fire extinguishers and fluoro light globes to the Community Recycling Centre, located at the Dyring Rd Waste Management Facility. Items such as e-waste (computers, TVs, phones and all accessories), aluminium and steel, polystyrene and plastics can also be dropped off for recycling.

Collect household batteries (A, AA, AAA, C, D and 9V), button, e-bike and power tool batteries and drop them off to the specially marked B-cycle bins at ALDI and Woolworths. Batteries should never be placed in household bins due to the risk of truck and facility fires that endanger waste workers.

Collect soft plastics, like plastic bags, packets and bubble wrap, and return them to specially marked REDcycle bins at Coles and Woolworths.

DISPOSE

Disposing of items in the red-lid general waste bins should be a last resort, as they are sent to landfill and buried, where some items can take hundreds or even thousands of years to break down.