

Frequently Asked Questions:

Barwon South West Waste and Resource Recovery Implementation Plan

What is the Barwon South West Waste and Resource Recovery Group?

The Barwon South West Waste and Resource Recovery Group (BSWRRG) is a Victorian State Government statutory authority responsible for coordinating and facilitating the delivery of waste management and resource recovery services across nine council areas – Borough of Queenscliffe, City of Greater Geelong, Colac Otway, Corangamite, Glenelg, Moyne, Southern Grampians, Surf Coast and Warrnambool City.

Our vision is 'Leadership and innovation in waste minimisation and resource recovery'.

What is the Barwon South West Waste and Resource Recovery Implementation Plan?

The Barwon South West Waste and Resource Recovery Implementation Plan (BSW Implementation Plan) is a requirement under the *Environment Protection Act 1970*.

It has been developed to help councils, industry, community and other stakeholders to participate in planning for the waste and resource recovery infrastructure needs for at least the next ten years. It will ensure we have the right infrastructure, in the right places, while reducing our reliance on landfills.

What are the main actions of the plan?

Essentially the plan highlights the need to reduce waste sent to landfill, increase our organic waste recovery, deliver benefits for the community, environment and the economy, and plan for infrastructure needs for the next 10 years.

The actions in the plan are to:

- 1. Facilitate behavioural change to reduce waste generation, improve source separation and recovery rates.**
- 2. Support the development of innovative and viable opportunities to increase recovery of priority materials including organics, wood/timber, plastics, and textiles.**
- 3. Facilitate viable systems to increase recovery rates, including those from mixed loads of waste and bin collection arrangements.**
- 4. Facilitate viable solutions to increase the recovery of materials currently going to landfill including those sourced from municipal, agricultural industries and commercial businesses.**
- 5. Facilitate regional and cross sectoral linkages to improve markets for materials that could be diverted from landfill and used by another industry as a resource.**
- 6. Facilitate collaborative procurements to improve economies of scale and cost efficiencies.**
- 7. Facilitate the aggregation of material streams to improve economies of scale and cost efficiencies.**
- 8. Assess the future strategic role of landfill and resource recovery needs within the Barwon South West Region.**
- 9. Work with planning authorities to recognise and protect existing facilities and hubs from encroachment and ensure that waste and resource recovery infrastructure planning is appropriately integrated with land use and transport planning.**
- 10. Work with councils and other relevant authorities to reduce risk and to ensure contingency plans are in place for managing waste.**
- 11. Work collaboratively with all stakeholders to ensure statewide policy, planning and funding programs support the region's infrastructure needs.**
- 12. Work with all stakeholders to establish an integrated and effective data network.**

For a copy of the BSW Implementation Plan
visit: www.bswrrg.vic.gov.au

How is the BSW Implementation Plan different to the State Infrastructure Plan?

The State Infrastructure Plan sets out a 30 year vision and direction to guide future planning for waste and resource recovery infrastructure in Victoria.

The BSW Implementation Plan describes how this vision for Victoria will be achieved in the Barwon South West region over ten years.

How was the BSW Implementation Plan developed?

The plan was developed in close collaboration with Sustainability Victoria, EPA Victoria and the Department of Environment Land, Water and Planning.

Barwon South West Waste and Resource Recovery Group (BSWWRRG) also asked for perspectives and feedback from industry, councils and community stakeholders as part of the plans development.

How was community feedback used in the development of the BSW Implementation Plan?

Community input was considered as part of the development of the BSW Implementation Plan and the consultation period provided a range of opportunities for public comment. Industry, business and councils were extensively engaged throughout the development of the BSW Implementation Plan and their feedback was incorporated accordingly.

Key themes to come out of the consultation process can be viewed in the BSW Implementation Plan 'Response to Comments' document and the BSW Implementation Plan which is available on the BSWWRRG website. BSWWRRG has provided a written response to those who made a formal submission.

How was the BSW Implementation Plan approved?

The BSW Implementation Plan was approved by the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change.

What is in the BSW Implementation Plan to reduce landfilling?

The primary objective of the plan is to increase recovery and recycling and reduce reliance on landfills. There is a focus on resource recovery and moving towards alternative technologies and ensuring the organic processing sector has the capacity to recycle growing volumes of garden and food organics.

BSWWRRG supports the Victorian Community and Business Waste Education Strategy to encourage households and businesses to actively separate waste and recycle waste more effectively.

What about increasing the recycling of organics – does the BSW Implementation Plan encourage this?

Yes, BSWWRRG is working with councils and industry to support organic processing facilities. There is an opportunity to further expand the collection and processing of garden and food organics from households, and so BSWWRRG will continue to support councils to collect garden and food organics for recycling.

BSWWRRG will also work with businesses that generate food waste and the recycling industry to create ways of collecting and recycling these organics.

What is a waste and resource recovery hub?

A hub is a facility or group of facilities that manage or recycle waste.

An ideal hub has appropriate buffer zones, well established feeding spokes and good access to transport networks, has close proximity to complementary activities, has minimised community, environmental and public health impacts and contributes to the local and state economy.

Where are hubs of state importance located in the region?

The BSW Implementation Plan lists Corangamite Regional Landfill as a hub of state significance. The BSW Implementation Plan includes a list of hubs of regional and local significance. (Refer to section 4.7 in the BSW Implementation Plan for more information.)

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How can BSWWRRG ensure waste and resource recovery hubs provide good environmental and community outcomes?

BSWWRRG will work across government to better integrate waste management and planning controls that help protect communities and resource recovery sites.

Does the BSWWRRG have sufficient landfill capacity for the next 10 years?

Yes. Based on the detailed landfill assessment, the Barwon South West region has the landfill capacity to service its needs for the next 10 years.

Did the BSWWRRG seek interest for new landfill capacity?

No. Due to the modelling of existing available airspace, current and projected resource recovery and expected waste volumes, it was determined that additional landfills were not required.

Why should we keep organics out of landfill?

In the short term, we are working on how we can reduce the impact of existing landfills on community amenity and safety.

Diversion of organics from landfills reduces the risk of:

- greenhouse gas emissions
- odours
- methane and other gases impacting on the surrounding land
- organic compounds and other contaminants polluting groundwater.

Does the BSW Implementation Plan deal with toxic and hazardous waste?

Consideration of toxic and hazardous wastes (also known as prescribed industrial waste) is not within the scope of the BSW Implementation Plan. However, some consideration of management of domestic quantities of asbestos waste is included given it is a waste stream that is relevant to so many people and entities in the region.

Does the BSW Implementation Plan tackle waste minimisation?

The BSW Implementation Plan explores how the community, industry and all levels of government can minimise the amount of waste that is produced.

Maximising the amount of recycling undertaken by homes and businesses is also key, if we are going to work towards a future where we rely less on landfills. Education will be an important factor in minimising waste and recovering more resources in the future.

Is waste management an essential service?

An essential service can be defined as a service that is recognised as a basic right for the community. Any failure to deliver this service results in risks to the community. Waste management is therefore an essential service as it is a basic right to the community and if unmanaged poses significant risks to the community and environment.

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