

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Food Waste off the Menu for genU

The Barwon South West Waste and Resource Recovery Group is playing a pivotal role in driving better business recycling habits across the region, through the implementation of its new waste self-assessment tool, 'Rethink Your Footprint'.

The free waste tool is a Leaders for Geelong initiative, designed to enable businesses to make significant improvements in their waste and resource recovery practices, providing both short-term and long-term positive impacts on both businesses and the environment.

One local organisation that has utilised the 'Rethink Your Footprint' waste self-assessment is genU, a leading disability provider with multiple locations across the region.

As a direct result of the tool and procedures implemented, genU's Business Enterprises are saving an estimated \$5,000 per annum, a figure that will likely increase as they roll out more recommendations from the tool.

The positive effect on the environment is also ongoing and compounding.

genU Business Enterprises, Food Services Manager, Peter Helyer, stated that when he came into the role 10 months ago, the organisation's waste procedures needed improvement.

"One of our primary services is food preparation, and as a result, we produce considerable amounts of organic waste. Yes, we had a recycling bin, but everything else was going into one skip which was being emptied twice a week."

The 'Rethink Your Footprint' self-assessment tool found that as much as 70% of genU's Business Enterprises total waste was flagged as organic waste going straight to landfill.

"The audit on our bins and processes was truly eye-opening," Helyer said. "It defined our issues in specific kilo/weight statistics, which helps you understand how you are doing things, and how a few operational changes can have a massive impact."

Fifteen different waste streams were identified in the genU Business Enterprises audit. Some simple recommendations to reduce costs and improve waste practices were to have skips emptied less regularly, and replace large skips with smaller, more defined, waste bins.

Helyer also lauded the ease of the transition towards a greener genU.

"Day-to-day, nothing has changed except where our waste goes. It's great knowing that we are now doing the right thing, as well as improving how we operate."

The 'Rethink Your Footprint' waste self-assessment tool is free for businesses. It is a simple and easy to use tool that takes only 5-6 minutes to use, and provides understandable, solid data to make informed business decisions for immediate and long-term sustainability.

The team at Barwon South West Waste and Resource Recovery Group provide additional follow-up support after use of the assessment tool, to help businesses improve their recycling habits.

It will be presented at the Leaders for Geelong Project Presentation Breakfast on October 18 at Novotel Geelong. Tickets and information are available at <https://committeeforgeelong.com.au/events/project-presentation-breakfast/>.

See the impact your business is having by using the 'Rethink Your Footprint' waste self-assessment tool:

<https://www.bswwrrg.vic.gov.au/business-and-industry/>

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