

**East Waste  
LGA Conference Presentation  
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Ann Blinman**

Some years ago George W Bush, when commenting on the problem of pollution in the environment, made the following statement, and I quote; 'It's not pollution that's the problem it's the impurities in the air and water that are doing it'

Good morning and welcome to you all.

My name is Ann Blinman and I'm delighted to have this opportunity to talk to you today about what we at East Waste are doing to reduce the pollution problem here in Adelaide: In particular our Recovery and Recycling of organic waste.

At East Waste, the Eastern Waste Management Authority, we've been doing this for a long time.

Some of you may remember our old name, The East Torrens Municipal Destructor Trust.

This ominously titled body was formed in 1928 out of the Municipalities of St. Peters, Norwood, Walkerville and the District Councils of Payneham and Burnside. This regional subsidiary has continuously succeeded in providing waste and more recently recycling and green organic collection services to its communities.

From the horse and dray days when waste was recycled as a valuable fuel for use in the brick kilns in the Eastern suburbs through to the present day, we've come a long way!

Waste is now recovered and recycled in many diverse ways

We now recover and recycle steel, aluminium, glass, cardboard for export and green organics to help soil improvement (in the form of compost). We are also running our vehicles on 20% bio-diesel made from canola oil to reduce our green house gas emissions.

We believe that East Waste is an excellent example of a continuing, constructive collaboration between Councils that enables Local Government to remain small, local and relevant to its community, whilst gaining important economies of scale that better utilize transport expertise, technological advancements, human resources and financial management.

East Waste is now made up of the member Councils of Burnside, Norwood Payneham & St Peters, Campbelltown, Adelaide Hills, Mitcham and Corporation of Walkerville. Covering 25% of metropolitan Adelaide and incorporating some 105,000 households with a population of approximately 250,000, East Waste has afforded considerable savings to both Local and State governments by centralising and funding the Research and Development necessary to achieve these economies of scale, thereby avoiding duplication by individual councils

The State Government's edict to reduce waste going to landfill by 75% by the year 2010 requires innovation and invention to achieve such a target

A target, I might add, that, at present, is not consistently reached anywhere in the world

Add to that the State Government's commitment to the removal of Polyethylene films such as plastic bags from supermarkets by the end of the year 2008, and one can see that we need to be leading the way in ensuring that these two events occur and that alternative disposal methods have been properly researched.

Rating and community revenue streams are also under pressure at the same time, along with the never ending transfer of legislative costs to Local Government.

This paints a sad picture indeed

So, what can be done to achieve these targets whilst retaining the relative financial integrity of Local Governments domestic waste collection activities?

Several things work in South Australia's favour in this regard and if we take full advantage of these we can resolve multiple issues in one exercise

I'd like to examine some of those things

Firstly, in SA all suburban councils work on the principal of separating waste at the source of collection: that is green organics and recyclables (such as glass, paper, cardboard, cans and aluminium).

It is in our favour that, at present, this is the most cost effective method of collecting household waste

Secondly, most councils in Adelaide provide a fortnightly Green Organics collection Service and we are fortunate that the major composting facilities which recycle this waste are located relatively close to their customers - that is market gardens, vineyards and orchards.

Thirdly, the infrastructure to facilitate the recycling of green organics has largely, already been built.

This eliminates the need for any immediate extra capital expenditure.

Overall, by world standards, we are doing well in our efforts to recover and recycle household waste in Adelaide.

However, in order to meet the requirements of the State government's edicts as mentioned earlier, we have to do more.

At East Waste We believe we have found an exciting, innovative and practical solution that will take us forward and help our Councils achieve these targets.

I would now like to show you a segment that aired recently on the ABC to introduce you to this new phase in waste collection and recycling.

PLAY TAPE

We believe that by utilizing the Bio Basket with its cornstarch liner we can remove up to 25% more of the putrescible waste that is produced by households in our council areas.

This waste is a valuable organic source that, at present, goes to landfill in plastic bags where it adds to the further degradation of the ozone layer.

The cornstarch bag is compostable within 18-45 days and at only 15 microns it is thin, yet strong.

This in-vessel composting system is already proven technology and is starting to be used in Europe.

I will hand out samples of the liner to you shortly.

At present they are only available from Italy and Norway, but manufacture in Australian is now being considered

As you could see in the clip just shown, the containers are aesthetically pleasing and will fit on any average sized kitchen bench

We plan to use stickers to encourage and educate householders to place only suitable waste in the Bio Basket.

Of advantage to us is that these bags when added to the green organics bin are able to be collected by existing vehicles and can then be aerobically composted.

The resulting product will be a much higher quality compost, rich in organic matter.

We believe it will therefore be much sought after for use by a wide variety of commercial growers as well as home gardeners.

A further bonus is that the composting process is simple, convenient and utilizes mainly existing infrastructure.

Some of you may remember the old environmental catch cry "Think Global – Act Local"

We believe that through this progressive system of green organic recovery and recycling we can educate and enable people to do just that.

It's a WIN, WIN, WIN situation!

State and local governments **win** by being able to convert 75% of household waste to useable products.

The householder **wins** by knowing that - even as individuals - they are making a difference.

And the **biggest winner** by far is our environment and, therefore, our future.

George W would be proud of us for reducing those "impurities" in the air and water that are doing it

Pity he forgot about the earth!!

I believe that we stand on the cusp of a new era in waste management and I hope that this brief example showcasing what we at East Waste are pioneering will encourage other local governments to recover and recycle their community's waste in this manner.

I thank you for your time and attention.