



Media Release

24 April 2018

Cockburn committed to recycling despite change to Chinese processing policy

The City of Cockburn will not stop its weekly recycling collections, despite restrictions to the type of recycled products that will be accepted by global waste importers in China.

Recycling collected in the City of Cockburn's yellow-lid bins is processed by the SUEZ Recycling and Recovery Facility in Bibra Lake.

Most of this material is sent to countries other than China, which dramatically reduced the contamination rate for the recyclables it will receive for processing as of 1 January this year.

City of Cockburn Waste Manager Lyall Davieson said the City was as committed as ever to recycling.

"The best thing people can do to ensure recycling continues into the future is to reduce contamination of household waste streams and follow local Council guidelines on how to use their bins," Mr Davieson said.

"Our residents have responded well over many years to an extensive education program about waste separation, resulting in low contamination rates and an environmentally conscious community that embraces sustainability.

"In 2016-17, 83 per cent of recycling collected by the City was successfully recycled and 48 per cent of the contents of Cockburn's general waste bins were converted to compost.

"By investing in recycling and composting, the City reduces waste being sent to landfill where precious resources are lost and harmful greenhouse gas emissions are produced, contributing to climate change.

"It is currently 17 times cheaper to recycle the contents of the recycle bin, than to compost the contents of the general waste bin.

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“Sending residual waste that can’t be recycled or composted to landfill costs \$155 per tonne and the State Government will increase its Landfill Levy in coming years.

“It makes financial sense to continue recycling as much as possible. Investing in separation of our recyclables at the SUEZ facility ensures local jobs to recover precious resources so that they can be reused.”

SUEZ Recycling & Recovery Australia State Infrastructure Manager Craig Barker said SUEZ would invest \$3m in state of the art optical sorting machines in 2018 to improve product quality in response to the market demanding less contamination.

“I am part of the State Government taskforce looking at local downstream processing at the moment,” Mr Barker said.

“SUEZ will work with Federal, State and Local Government to secure markets for product.

“We are also looking to engage with packaging manufacturers to minimise packaging and encourage them to focus on recyclable materials.”

The Waste Management Association of Australia estimates China’s new National Sword Policy will impact about 1 million tonnes of recyclable commodities each year from Australia.

WMAA CEO Gayle Sloan said rather than seeing the change as a negative, she believed it was an opportunity for Australia to invest in significant remanufacturing capacity for recyclable products.

Where does SUEZ send your recycling?

- Metals e.g. steel cans – Australia, Japan or India
- Glass e.g. jars – Western Australia
- Paper and cardboard e.g. newspaper – Indonesia, India, China and Vietnam.
- Plastics e.g. beverage containers and milk bottles – Australia, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia.



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How can you help?

It's vital that all waste is placed in the correct bin to minimise contamination and maximise the opportunity for recycling.

Please DO NOT:

- Place items like nappies, sanitary pads, tampons, food and garden waste, used tissues, large steel or plastic objects, clothing, hoses electrical cables, toys and e-waste in recycling bins.

Please continue to:

- Place recycling loosely in the bin. Bagged recyclables cannot be separated and will be sent to landfill
- Remove or scrape food from cans, pizza boxes and jars
- Rinse containers
- Purchase items with recycled content – a market for these products within Australia will encourage more businesses to invest in technology to process recyclable materials
- Think about what you buy to reduce the amount of waste you generate
- Educate yourself – come along to the City's tours of a recycling facility and Henderson Waste Recovery Park, or get involved in our sustainable living events.

For more information on how to deal with your waste in the City of Cockburn, visit <https://www.cockburn.wa.gov.au/Waste-and-Environment/Rubbish-Waste-and-Recycling> or call the Waste Services team on 08 9411 3444.

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