



# Rethinking waste in Queensland businesses

Everyone produces waste in their daily lives. As the population grows, so has waste generation.

Much of Queensland's waste is sent straight to landfill, meaning valuable resources are not being recovered.

Many businesses already have effective waste management and recycling practices. For them, nothing will change. But some need to rethink what they are doing.

## Waste management is changing

Waste reforms are being introduced that will change the way Queensland manages commercial, industrial, construction and demolition waste. The Queensland Government wants to:

- reduce waste
- increase recycling rates
- boost industry investment in recycling and resource recovery
- develop markets for recycled materials
- encourage 'green' jobs in recycling and reprocessing industries.

## What does it mean for business?

The Queensland Government's waste reforms include a strategy that sets new directions for waste and resource recovery, support programs to help business and local government, and a levy on landfill operators for industrial waste sent to them for disposal.

The levy sends a price signal to the waste generator to change behaviour. If waste generators choose to avoid generating waste, or to recycle the waste they do generate, they can avoid paying the levy.

## When will the waste reforms commence?

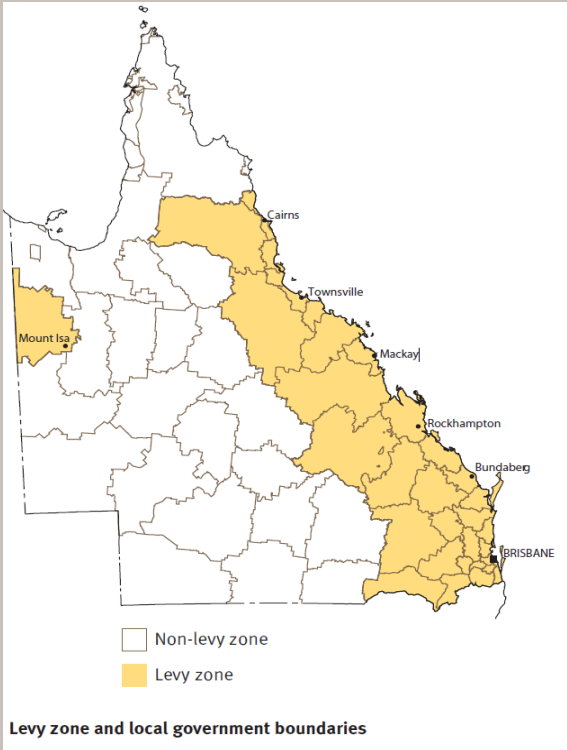
The new legislation will commence on 1 December 2011. Supporting programs for business will commence prior to the levy switch-on.

## What is the waste disposal levy and where does it apply?

Queensland's new waste strategy aims to help reduce the dependence on landfill as the first choice for waste management.

From 1 December 2011, a waste disposal levy will be charged to landfill operators disposing of waste in landfills within the levy zone. Waste disposal operators may choose to pass the levy charges on to their business clients. The levy does not apply to waste sent for recycling or reprocessing.

Landfill operators will be charged \$35 per tonne for commercial and industrial, and construction and demolition waste disposed of to landfill. Hazardous wastes will be charged at higher rates depending on the nature of the material.



## Can the levy be avoided?

Materials that are recovered, reused or recycled (that is, not sent to landfill) do not attract the levy. The more material a business can divert to recycling or resource recovery, the less possible impact the levy will have on the business.

Waste contractors or local councils can advise about recovery solutions, or visit the Business Recycling website <[www.businessrecycling.com.au](http://www.businessrecycling.com.au)> for details of the nearest resource recovery operators.

## Can business get help to rethink waste?

Yes. Funding from the levy will be set aside to move Queensland towards being a resource-efficient state. The aim is to reduce waste being generated in the first place and encourage more recycling and resource recovery. Businesses will benefit when new markets emerge for their waste products, part of driving new market and business opportunities for recovered materials.

The levy will fund new programs and initiatives to help business and industry implement new waste management and recovery practices, thereby reducing exposure to the levy.


Particular programs will aim to:

- support small and medium enterprises, including the reThink Business Waste program
- develop new products and expand markets for recovered materials
- offer grants to support the introduction of new resource recovery options
- support research and development to develop processes and innovative solutions to boost resource recovery
- create waste reduction and avoidance initiatives for business.

The government has partnered with the Business Recycling website, which provides contact details for local resource recovery operators. Listings are based on material types, so any Queensland business can easily identify and find the services it needs.

### Café and restaurant sector profile

The café and restaurant sector generates large amounts of food waste that currently go to landfill. By reviewing waste management practices and thinking differently about processes that produce waste, businesses can save money.



#### Food and kitchen waste (59.3 per cent)

- Check that the business is not over-ordering.
- Review portion sizes.
- Donate foods to other businesses that can use them.
- Separately collect food scraps in the kitchen area and introduce an on-site composter for fruit and vegetable peelings, leftovers and coffee grounds.
- Identify a local food waste collection service at <[www.businessrecycling.com.au](http://www.businessrecycling.com.au)>.

#### Glass (12.6 per cent)

- Buy in bulk to reduce glass.
- All glass containers, including beer, wine, soft drink and sauce bottles, can be recycled either through a mixed recycling service or separated out for collection.
- Heat-treated glass (drink ware, ceramics and oven-proof glass) cannot be recycled and can contaminate recyclable glass.
- Glass does not need to be cleaned before recycling – simply remove food scraps.

#### Paper (8.2 per cent)

- Ask your supplier for options that are made from recycled content.
- If you are using paper in the office, print double-sided and re-use paper when possible.
- Clean, dry paper can be recycled using a commercial service or separated out for collection.
- Used paper napkins and paper could be used in compost, a worm farm or bokashi bucket. It may be able to be included in your food waste collection.

#### Plastic film (5.4 per cent)

- Plastic film can be recycled by some providers listed on <[www.businessrecycling.com.au](http://www.businessrecycling.com.au)>.
- If you produce a large amount of plastic film it may be beneficial to use a baler to compact the film before collection.

#### Support services to help businesses improve their waste management include profiles of typical waste streams in key business sectors.

### Get started today

1. Visit <[www.derm.qld.gov.au/waste](http://www.derm.qld.gov.au/waste)> for current information, including FAQs, the waste strategy and case studies.
2. Register online at <[www.derm.qld.gov.au/waste](http://www.derm.qld.gov.au/waste)> for updates on the waste strategy, upcoming information seminars and business support programs.

Visit <[www.businessrecycling.com.au](http://www.businessrecycling.com.au)> for local recyclers and waste receivers.

