

Media Release

Environment Protection Authority



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Reducing and reusing SA waste

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The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) will have stronger powers to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill and increase reuse of valuable resources, when new Waste to Resources legislation comes into effect on 1 September 2010.

The EPA's Chief Executive, Helen Fulcher said various wastes, including those with potential resource value such as computer monitors, television screens, light globes and whitegoods, will progressively be banned from going to landfill over the next three years and diverted to a system of recovery, reuse and recycling of materials and energy.

"Currently over one million tonnes of waste are deposited in South Australian landfills each year. Under the *Environment Protection Act*, the *Waste to Resources* Policy provides a stronger legal framework to divert and decrease waste and further improve South Australia's waste management practices.

"The *Waste to Resources EPP* also supports waste strategies led by Zero Waste SA that have reduced the amount of waste going to landfill by 14.4% since 2002-03."

Ms Fulcher says South Australia leads the other states in recovering resources from waste, with annual reductions equal to the greenhouse emissions from 214,000 cars and the electricity consumption of 189,000 households.

"However substantial quantities of waste which are suitable for recovery are still being disposed of to landfill," she says.

"The State Government is committed to further reducing the waste sent to landfill with the South Australian Strategic Plan target of a 25 per cent reduction (on 2002-03 levels) by 2014."

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The Environment Protection (Waste to Resources) Policy supports achievement of that target by:

PROHIBITING the disposal of certain waste types to landfill, with fines of up to \$30,000; and

REQUIRING that by September 2012 most waste produced in metropolitan Adelaide is not disposed to landfill, unless it has first been subjected to an appropriate level of resource recovery.

The policy also includes:

STRONGER enforcement measures for illegal dumping (unlawful disposal of waste), with fines up to \$250,000

PROHIBITION of unlawful stockpiling of waste, with fines up to \$250,000

CLEARER REQUIREMENTS for waste transporters

NEW REQUIREMENTS relating to the disposal of medical sharps to kerbside collection, that come into effect in September 2012.

OPPORTUNITIES for standardised waste practices within industry sectors using codes of practice

The timing of the bans varies to allow for alternatives to be put in place for the handling of these wastes, such as national “product stewardship” schemes – where manufacturers and the community take responsibility for the recycling and proper disposal of their products.

“The Waste Resources Policy has been developed in consultation with stakeholders, including local government and the waste and resource recovery industry. We appreciate their contributions and their commitment to more integrated and sustainable waste management and shared responsibility,” Ms Fulcher said.

Over the coming months the Environment Protection Authority and Zero Waste SA will be working closely together with the Local Government Association, the Waste Management Association of Australia (SA Branch) and other key stakeholders to ensure broad community and industry awareness of requirements under the new waste policy.

The Waste to Resources Policy is available from the Environment Protection Authority website www.epa.sa.gov.au.