



WESTERN AUSTRALIAN
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

Policy Statement on HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE

PREPARED BY THE



MUNICIPAL WASTE ADVISORY COUNCIL
"Getting the Environment Right"

December 2003

Status of this Policy Statement

This Policy Statement has been prepared by the Municipal Waste Advisory Council and adopted by the Western Australian Local Government Association. The Municipal Waste Advisory Council is a standing committee of the WA Local Government Association with delegated authority to represent the Association in all matters relating to solid waste management.

The Municipal Waste Advisory Council has been formed through collaboration with Regional Councils who are not ordinary members of the WA Local Government Association. The resulting body effectively represents the views of all Local Government bodies responsible for waste management in Western Australia.

Policy Statements adopted by the WA Local Government Association represent a consolidated viewpoint from local government and may differ from the positions adopted by individual member organisations. The Municipal Waste Advisory Council and the WA Local Government Association will strive to promote this Policy Statement and to act consistently with its contents. Individual Local Governments and Regional Councils are encouraged to support them in this but are not bound by the document.

Policy Statements adopted by the WA Local Government Association are reviewed and new Policy Statements are developed regularly. The latest WA Local Government Association Policy Statements can be obtained from the website: www.wastenet.net.au

In-line with standard MWAC policy, this policy statement will be reviewed 6-months after its endorsement by the State Council. It will be reviewed again at least every 2-years subsequent to this; with any significant developments acting to instigate an earlier review.

The Municipal Waste Advisory Council's member organisations are:



Policy Statement on HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE

<p>Title:</p>	<p>WA Local Government Association Policy Statement on Household Hazardous Waste (December 2003)</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Prepared by the Municipal Waste Advisory Council</p>
<p>Statement of Policy:</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Waste Hierarchy The principle of waste minimisation, which sits at the top of the waste management hierarchy, is particularly important in the case of Household Hazardous Waste and should be given priority as a message in education campaigns and in negotiation with the manufacturers of Household Hazardous Waste. 2. Primacy of Safety The safety of staff and the public shall be given priority in the design, operation and improvement of facilities and processes for the management of Household Hazardous Waste. 3. Application of Extended Producer Responsibility The principle of Extended Producer Responsibility has been previously endorsed by Local Government in relation to waste management and this endorsement broadly extends to the issue of Household Hazardous Waste. Local Government recognises that the suitability of Extended Producer Responsibility systems in the area of Household Hazardous Waste management will depend upon a case by case analysis which takes account of, among other things: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The risks associated with a particular waste type; • The logistics associated with the distribution, volume and regularity of the waste type; • The opportunities for industry initiatives which reduce harmful effects; increase public knowledge; reduce usage or wastage; • The extent to which the materials in question pose a problem to collection or processing systems operated by local governments. <p>Furthermore, Local Government anticipates that Extended Producer Responsibility provisions will increasingly come to bear on the management of Household Hazardous Waste, nevertheless immediate actions should not be stalled given the importance for environmental and public health of this component of the waste stream.</p> 4. Local Government Responsibilities Local government accepts responsibility for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating drop-off centres to accept the Household Hazardous Waste of local residents in the spirit of roles and responsibilities outlined in "The Management Plan for Moderate Risk Wastes in WA" (Department of Environmental Protection, 13 September 1996); • Developing systems within existing and future municipal solid waste treatment systems to separate Household Hazardous Waste from the waste stream; • Complying with any regulatory guidelines stipulating the appropriate procedures for handling Household Hazardous Waste; • Collecting data on the Household Hazardous Waste collected and stockpiled at drop-off centres and waste-treatment facilities;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing and executing education and awareness campaigns for the purpose of supporting the Household Hazardous Waste collection activities of Local Government (local focus); • Maintaining the security of Household Hazardous Waste collection facilities. <p>5. Matters Outside Local Government Responsibility Local government does <u>not</u> accept responsibility for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resourcing minimisation and disposal programs at a state and local level; • Developing and executing education and awareness campaigns for the purpose of changing consumer and producer behaviours (state focus); • Resourcing education and awareness campaigns at a state and local level; • Building or operating disposal or treatment facilities for Household Hazardous Waste; • Developing guidelines on the appropriate procedures for handling Household Hazardous Waste; • Environmental damage which results from activities which comply with regulatory guidelines for the management of Household Hazardous Waste; <p>6. Basis for Aggregation Local Government acknowledges that the aggregation of Household Hazardous Waste through drop-off centres and separation from the general waste stream may increase certain hazards. Furthermore, Local Government acknowledges that, at the present time, the risks associated with allowing the Household Hazardous Waste component of the waste-stream to pass directly to a properly managed landfill are unproven. However Local Government endorses the approach of aggregation on the basis that...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It addresses public perception concerns • Accords with state government policy in the area • Other parties will take responsibility for mitigating these hazards by ensuring that viable disposal routes exist for Local Government to responsibly dissipate stockpiles. <p>7. Siting Local Government endorses the principle that all members of the community must accept a shared responsibility for the safe collection and disposal of Household Hazardous Waste. Facilities for the collection, aggregation and handling of Household Hazardous Waste must be sited with the above in mind and taking into consideration all relevant factors, including safety, convenience and environmental criteria.</p>
Date of Adoption	2003
Associated Policies:	
Background:	<p>Household Hazardous Waste is a small but significant component of the waste stream which requires specialised strategies to manage responsibly.</p> <p>Products brought into the home will ultimately need to be removed and Local Government already manages the infrastructure for the collection of other components of the municipal solid waste stream under existing legislation. Thus Local Government has a role in the management of HHW, but this role is limited to specific fields of activity.</p>

	<p>The rationale for assuming some responsibility in managing Household Hazardous Waste stems from provisions in the Health Act 1911 and is multi-faceted and includes the potential for Household Hazardous Waste to become a larger component of waste going to landfill due to increasing diversion of other wastes by recycling and resource recovery.</p> <p>Moreover, the network of collection stores operated by councils for the purpose of aggregating Household Hazardous Waste was a response to an agreement with State Government that it would assume responsibility for providing disposal routes for materials collected at these depots.</p> <p>Thus there is perhaps an expectation of quid pro quo on the part of Local Government in accepting some role in managing Household Hazardous Waste.</p> <p>Local Government is committed to being a responsible link in the management chain for Household Hazardous Waste. However, as in other areas of waste management, Local Government is keen to emphasise that it can exert very little control over the nature of the waste stream. Therefore, the involvement of industry and other levels of government is critical to achieving a sustainable system for managing the problem of Household Hazardous Waste.</p> <p>Furthermore, the principle of Extended Producer Responsibility must be recognised as having particular relevance in relation to this component of the waste stream.</p>
Definitions:	<p><u>Household Hazardous Waste:</u> Hazardous waste is anything that is labelled toxic, flammable, corrosive, reactive, infectious or radioactive can threaten personal health and safety if used improperly or disposed of improperly. Household hazardous waste is distinguished by the characteristics of being likely to be found on residential premises and likely to find its way into the municipal solid waste stream. Examples of hazardous products are cleaners, hydrocarbons, motor oil, paint, solvents, swimming pool chemicals, pesticides and the packaging that these products come in.</p> <p><u>Extended Producer Responsibility:</u> The financial and/or physical co-responsibility of those marketing a certain product for the management and disposal of that product at the waste phase.</p>
END OF POLICY STATEMENT	