

# Consistent Communications Collective

## Achieving Consistent Communication for Waste Management in Western Australia



Local and State Government research indicates that the community considers Local Government to be the first point of call for information on waste management. Feedback from the community demonstrates there is a high level of confusion on what materials can be processed through the kerbside collection system. This is, in part, due to the use of different messages to communicate various approaches to processing and recovery. The alignment of messages between Local Government, contractors and other tiers of Government is a practical step that will begin to address confusion on waste management.

### ACHIEVING CONSISTENT COMMUNICATION

To assist with the achievement of consistent communication on waste management, WALGA has established a Consistent Communications Collective (CCC) with representatives from Local Government, State Government, Material Recovery Facility (MRF) operators and other key stakeholders.

The Collective meets 2-3 times a year to discuss and agree on specific waste related campaigns, common responses to community enquiries and how to address contamination in the kerbside collection system. To facilitate the delivery of consistent messages, the Collective has reached agreement on terminology that will be used when undertaking community engagement activities on waste management.

### KERBSIDE COLLECTION SYSTEM

The Collective has formalised a common A-Z List of materials included and excluded from the kerbside collection system for use by waste educators, customer service and public relations staff in responding to detailed community enquiries on a range of waste management issues. The A-Z List is available as a resource for Local Government staff in these areas (on request). **The public version of the A-Z list is available from the [Recycle Right website](#).**

#### Amendment Process

The Collective has agreed that the following process will be used to amend the CCC A-Z List and Waste Management Information Pack. This process will allow for up-to-date information on waste management to be provided to the community:

1. Proposed amendments: will be discussed and agreed on at meetings of the Collective. WALGA will liaise with MRF operators to determine the recyclability of materials on an as needs basis
2. Amendment and distribution: amendments will be made following meetings of the Collective and members will be notified by email once the updated resources are available.

The Collective has agreed that the following overarching messages will inform the A-Z List:

- Flexible plastic – Take back to REDcycle bins at participating supermarkets
- Charity donations – The giv.org.au website will be used as the point of reference for the community in the future
- Commercial waste generators – When responding to enquiries from commercial waste generators on disposal options for various materials, advice can be provided to commercial waste generators where:
  - The Local Government provides a commercial waste service for that material type
  - There is a clear disposal pathway in place, for example Total Green Recycling for e-waste, Paintback for commercial painters and Cleanaway for certain commercial quantities of HHW and problematic waste
  - Promotion of waste management businesses should only occur in situations where there is only one service provider, or a provider has gone through an open tender process such as WALGA's Preferred Suppliers Panels. Such advice should be accompanied by a disclaimer to the effect that other service providers may be available.

### CONTACTS

### **Recycling Kerbside Bin**

In 2018, operators from the Material Recovery Facilities agreed what material should be included or excluded from the kerbside Recycling Bin. Local Governments, MRF operators and WALGA actively promoted this simplified message to the community. This initiative forms the basis for future high level communications on the recyclability of materials processed through the kerbside collection system for both metropolitan and non-metropolitan Local Governments. The terminology that was agreed was:

- Plastic bottles and Containers – clean and empty (lids off)
- Glass bottles and jars – clean and empty
- Cardboard – flattened
- Paper - not shredded
- Aluminium and steel cans – clean and empty

### **Food Organics and Garden Organics Kerbside Bin**

Currently WALGA, Local Governments, Regional Councils, the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation and industry stakeholders are working together to ensure that a consistent approach is taken to progress Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) collection and processing systems in Western Australia.

The simplified message to the community has been agreed as follows:

- Allowed – food scraps, garden organics, food soiled paper and cardboard, shredded paper, paper towels and tissues
- Not Allowed – plastic bags, nappies, glass and ceramics and general waste.

**For more information on the Collective, contact Manager Waste and Recycling, Rebecca Brown on (08) 9213 2063 or email [rbrown@walga.asn.au](mailto:rbrown@walga.asn.au).**