

The Waste Hierarchy

The Waste Hierarchy is an action framework used globally, nationally, locally, and by individuals. The framework provides actions in order of preference to assist in reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill.

The idea of the Waste Hierarchy is to reach as high as possible. The most preferred action is to AVOID: Can you avoid creating certain waste in the first place? If not, can you REDUCE the waste created? Then, can you REUSE to extend an item's lifespan? Can you RECYCLE it to give it another life? The least preferred option is DISPOSE.

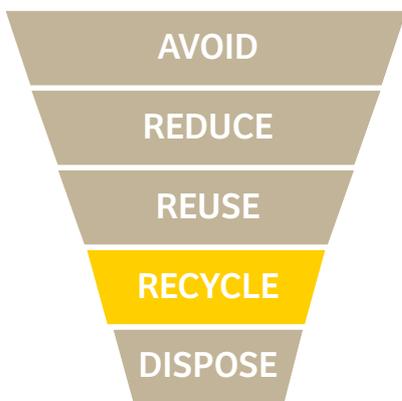
The Waste Hierarchy is used in businesses to reduce waste and associated costs.



Where does waste go?



- Everything put in general waste bins is buried in landfill.
- In Moreton Bay, there are three active landfills at Caboolture, Dakabin and Bunya.
- Landfills generate pollutants which have to be carefully managed to reduce potential issues.
- Leachate is a liquid made from decomposing waste and rain water seepage.
- Methane is a greenhouse gas produced from the anaerobic decomposition of organic material.

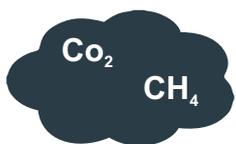


- Materials placed into yellow-lidded recycling bins are taken to the Materials Recovery Facility, also known as the MRF (pronounced 'murf').
- Materials are sorted based on material properties and only certain materials and items can be sorted through the MRF.
- Bales are sent off to be reprocessed into new materials.
- Items should be clean, dry and placed loose in your bin.
- Items that are not accepted in the recycling bins could be hazardous to the workers and potentially damage expensive equipment.



Recycling is low on the waste hierarchy as reprocessing requires a lot of resources, time and energy.

Benefits of reducing waste



Reduces greenhouse gas emissions



Reduces pollution



Saves valuable land space



Reduces energy and water usage

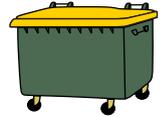


Reduces waste collection costs

What can you do?

RECYCLE

- Organise a recycling service if you haven't already.
- Display clear signage on bins to improve recycling practices.
- Place recycling bins next to all general waste bins
- Investigate alternative recycling options, such as collections or drop-off points for soft plastics, cooking oils, office paper, food waste, electronics and more. Use Council's search function at www.mbrc.qld.gov.au/waste or Planet Ark's recycling search tool at www.recyclingnearyou.com.au
- Buy products made of recycled materials to support the recycling manufacturers in Australia.
- Prioritise avoid, reduce and reuse before relying on recycling to manage waste in your business.



REUSE

- Provide reusable items such as napkins, dishes, cups, and cutlery.
- Encourage reuse of stationery items such as binders, folders, and clips.
- Buy second-hand for items such as furniture.
- Provide durable, washable cloths instead of disposable paper towels.
- Encourage single-sided printing to be re-used for drafts or notetaking.
- Buy 'recycled' cartridges of printer toner and return when empty.
- Use refillable, washable containers.
- Divert organic material through composting and worm farming.



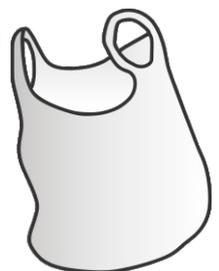
REDUCE

- Buy in bulk rather than individual packets (e.g. coffee, sugar, soap).
- Provide single-use items only when requested (e.g. straws, napkins, forks).
- Ask customers if they 'need' a carry bag, rather than providing by default.
- Change your printer settings to print double-sided by default.
- Use items fully before throwing them away.
- Reduce layers of packaging and match packaging size to the item.
- Review your menu, review your stock order and label food to ensure you use old food before new.



AVOID

- Go paperless wherever possible (e.g. advertising, receipts, filing, payslips).
- Provide air-dryers rather than disposable paper towel in bathrooms.
- Carefully manage stock to avoid oversupply, such as food or stationery.
- Encourage customers to bring reusable items such as cups and bags.
- Cut out single-use items such as straws, cutlery, paper towel.
- Donate to a food rescue charity rather than sending leftover food to landfill.
- If food is consistently left uneaten, consider adjusting portion sizes.
- Be aware of government [bans and targets](#) eg. [plastic shopping bags](#) and [single use plastic products](#).



TIP: Look along your supply chain for more opportunities to reduce waste!