

## Introduction

The City of Moreton Bay 'Sustainability Champions' Program is an annual award program for schools and early learning centres that are working hard towards implementing sustainable activities to reduce waste and save material resources.

The program provides an opportunity for your school / centre to improve or showcase the essential activities undertaken that:

- minimise waste to landfill;
- divert resources from landfill through recycling or recovery systems;
- practice reuse and reduction strategies to minimise material consumption/disposal;
- and engage the entire school / centre community (and broader community) in participating and practicing the above activities.

With increased awareness regarding material purchasing, consumption, and disposal, our current culture of waste management is being positively challenged.

There are several schools and early learning centres across Council implementing more sustainable practices and behaviours to reduce their environmental footprint. In order to recognise these best practices, Council has developed the Sustainability Champions Program to identify, acknowledge, and celebrate the organisations involved.

Through this program Council is aiming to discover the sustainability champions in our community, and share, promote and award their contributions to a sustainable future for the City of Moreton Bay.

For further information, please contact:

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## The Problem with Waste

Australia is one of the highest waste producers in the world on a per person basis; ranked within the top five waste producing nations. On average, Australians produce 78 million tonnes of waste per year.<sup>1</sup> During the financial year of 2019/20 alone, approximately 11 million tonnes of waste were produced in Queensland.<sup>2</sup>

The more we consume, the more waste we generate, and the more we need to dispose of it safely and securely. There are environmental limitations for storing waste in landfills or reducing volumes through incineration. By avoiding unnecessary consumption and waste generation through the adoption of innovative resource recovery approaches, we can manage our lifestyle and preserve the environment.

Explore the Story of Stuff Project website for more information on the stuff we consume, and its impact on the environment: <http://storyofstuff.org/movies/>.

The problem of waste is everyone's business. We are all responsible for generating it and we all make decisions about how it is managed. Therefore, we all need to participate actively in solutions to minimise its impacts.

### Current Waste Management Strategies:

1. The Australian Government *National Waste Policy* - <https://environment.gov.au/protection/national-waste-policy> - to guide a coherent, efficient and environmentally responsible approach to waste management in Australia. It sets Australia's waste management and resource recovery direction to 2030.
2. The Queensland Government has developed a *Waste Avoidance and Resource Productivity Strategy (2014-2024)* - <http://www.ehp.qld.gov.au/waste/qld-waste-strategy.html> - that provides direction for the next 10 years for waste management and resource recovery on Queensland.
3. City of Moreton Bay's *Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan 2016-2026* guides Council's waste management program and initiatives tackling increasing waste in this local Government area.

<sup>1</sup> Australian National Waste Report 2016, REC prepared for Australian Govt Dept of the Environment and Energy (Pg vi)

<sup>2</sup> Recycling and Waste in Queensland 2017, QLD Govt (Pg 5)

## Managing Waste Sustainably

Management of waste is underpinned globally by the **waste hierarchy** – a national and international guide for prioritising waste management practices. The waste hierarchy places managing waste in order of preference, with disposal as the least preferred option, and avoidance and reduction as the most preferred action.

### **Avoidance and minimisation**

**(reduction)** approaches prevent or reduce waste from being generated initially. Choosing not to purchase new materials, choosing products without packaging, purchasing items for the long-term (repairable).

**Reuse** refers to using an item more than once. This can be for its original purpose, or perhaps transforming it for a new purpose (also called repurposing, or upcycling).

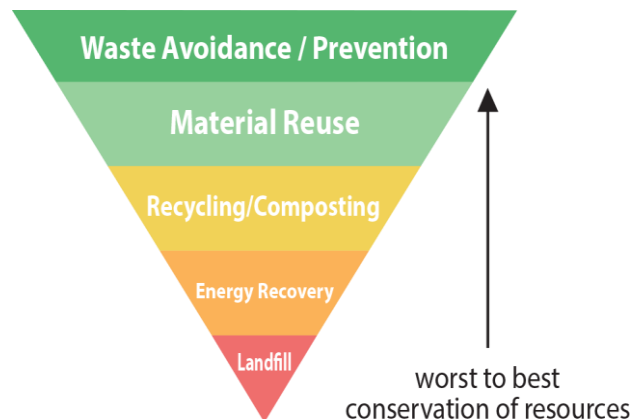
**Recycling** occurs when materials from waste streams are collected, sorted, and reprocessed into the same or new product. **Composting** fits into this category because organic wastes from food or the garden can be collected and transformed into useful soil or mulch.

**Energy Recovery** involves turning waste into a source of electricity. This may come from landfill gas extraction or gasification processes. Although some energy can be recovered as a by-product of these processes, it also inadvertently encourages resource consumption and waste generation. Therefore, energy recovery from waste is not the most desirable practice.

**Disposal** is the most common destination for many forms of waste and is the least preferred option. Disposal is the discharge of waste into the environment; mainly through landfill.

The waste hierarchy is used in waste management plans and strategies around the world. This includes all levels of government, businesses, and multi-national corporations.

Use the waste hierarchy to develop a waste management plan and policy for your school or early learning centre. Waste reduction in your school / centre makes good environmental and economic sense. You will find the less waste you produce and dispose of, the more money your school / centre will save.



## Getting Started

Webpage: [Sustainability Champions awards - City of Moreton Bay](#)

### Due dates:

**Friday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2024**

**Register** your site online to be involved in this year's 'Sustainability Champions' recognition program for waste minimisation in schools and early learning centres in the City of Moreton Bay.

**Friday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2024**

Complete the online **Champion Site Report 1**.

Your pre-implementation information provides a snapshot of your current waste management practices and behaviours. Areas for improvement will become the focus of your actions as you build evidence for your final Champion Site Report 2.

**Friday 29<sup>th</sup> Nov 2024**

Complete and submit the online **Champion Site Report 2**.

This final report should demonstrate and showcase your overall waste minimisation and resource recovery practices and achievements with the various disposed and recycled/recovered measurements and bin capacity details.

## Developing Your 'Champion Site Report'

During Term 2 and 3, plan and implement new or improved waste minimisation practices at your site. Measure and record these improvements to generate evidence for your final Champion Site Report 2 submission to demonstrate how your school or early learning centre is championing resource recovery and waste minimisation. This can be in the form of volumes / weights of materials, photos, graphs, tables, newsletters, media clippings, audit data, etc.

*Achievements and strategies to show-case include:*

- The reduction of waste to landfill (waste disposed into general waste bins)
- The diversion of valuable materials for recycling and resource recovery
- The reuse and reduction of materials used onsite
- The engagement of entire school / centre participation in these practices and behaviours

### Final Champion Site Report 2 requirements and submission:

1. Complete the post-implementation section of the Champion Site Report for your school / centre.
2. Incorporate evidence into your final Champion Site Report submission.
3. Include attachments that may serve as evidence.
  - a. Evidence presented as a document / poster / flier are restricted to 2 pages;

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Continued **Final Champion Site Report 2 requirements and submission:**

- b. Evidence presented with PowerPoint are restricted to 4 slides;
- c. Evidence presented as videos are restricted to 2 minutes, and the weblink to the YouTube channel must be provided.
4. Submit your final Champion Site Report, with supporting evidence attached.
5. Final Champions Site Report submissions are due by **Friday 29<sup>th</sup> Nov 2024**.

## Increasing Your 'Sustainability Champion' Potential

Each year the City of Moreton Bay holds the 'Moreton Bay Recycler Competition', where schools and early learning centres showcase how they are reducing resource consumption and waste generation according to a chosen theme. Participating in the 'Moreton Bay Recycler Competition' as part of your Sustainability Champions efforts is a great idea, as it will target your actions towards a specific waste reduction solution. The outcomes can then be utilised as part of your final Champion Site Report 2 submission.

Further details on the Moreton Bay Recycler Competition will be forwarded to you when the information is released. Take a look at the following website for a guide on the current theme: <https://www.moretonbay.qld.gov.au/Services/Waste-Recycling/Education/Competitions-and-Awards>.

Council's **Waste Education Program** is another tool that can support you on your Sustainability Champions journey during Term 2 and Term 3.

### **Waste Education Program:**

<https://www.moretonbay.qld.gov.au/Services/Waste-Recycling/Rethink-Waste/Education>

The **Tangalooma Ecomarines Program** is another fabulous tool to support your Sustainability Champion Program activities and efforts during Term 2 and Term 3. Please follow the link below:

<https://ecomarines.org/>

## Determining Our 'Champion' Sites

All final Champion Site Report submissions will be evaluated against Sustainability Champions standard evaluation criteria. You will receive a report card following this evaluation that provides your school or early learning centre with valuable feedback. This information will help progress your goals and efforts towards meeting the Sustainability Champions evaluation criteria in the future.

If the Council assessment team deems your submission to be a potential 'champion' candidate, you will be contacted for a site visit and an inspection. This will be an opportunity for you to take Council's Waste Education team around your school or early learning centre to demonstrate your sustainable practices and behaviours in action.

## Awarding Our 'Sustainability Champions'

The City of Moreton Bay 'Sustainability Champion' sites will be presented with an award trophy and certificate to be displayed at your school / centre and proudly promoted through electronic and printed newsletters, emails and Council's social media.



## Sustainability Champions Evaluation Criteria

### General Waste Management

- Sustainable general waste management practices and behaviours require:
  - clearly labelled and colour coded collection bins
  - a selection of bins are available at convenient points throughout the site (internal and external);
  - regular monitoring of waste/recycling/composting practices; and
  - student involvement.

### Hazardous & Problem Waste Management

- Hazardous/problem waste items are recognised and are appropriately collected and disposed (*e.g. machine or cooking oil, chemicals, paint, vehicle batteries, tyres, gas cylinders, smoke alarms, fire extinguishers, medical waste, electronic waste, and asbestos containing materials*).

### Recycling Diversion

- Sustainable recycling practices/behaviours are established.
- There are recycling collection services for the site.
- All mixed and paper/cardboard recycling collection bins are labelled and colour-coded accordingly (*e.g. 'yellow' and 'blue' respectively*).
- Collection bin size is appropriate for the volume generated at the site (*bin content should be 75% - 100% full for service day*).
- Other resource recovery practices are established for single material streams (*e.g. print cartridges, mobile phones, batteries, soft plastics, office furniture, timber, steel, etc.*).
- Containers are collected for Containers for Change program.

### Organics Diversion

- Organic materials (food/garden waste) are being composted on or off site.
- All organics collection bins are labelled and colour coded accordingly (*e.g. lime green*).

### Reuse Initiatives

- Reuse practices and behaviours are established for materials (*e.g. single-side paper reuse, double-sided printing default, purchasing used items, office furniture donation to charities, etc.*).

### Reduction Initiatives

- Reduction practices and behaviours are established by the site (*e.g. paper and stationery reduction strategies, electronic communication / presentations / meetings, single-use packaging and product reduction strategies for administration / staffroom / tuckshop, nude food lunch strategies, growing produce for use in tuckshop / staffroom / classrooms, etc.*).

### Strategic Communications and Data Management

- A simple waste assessment is completed to identify what waste is being generated at the school/centre.
- Data is regularly collected for waste, recycling, and resource recovery volumes generated by the school/centre.
- Site assessment data is used to set targets for waste reduction and promote waste reduction achievements.
- A waste management plan or policy has been developed using the principles of the waste hierarchy (*e.g. avoid, reduce, reuse, recycle, dispose*).
- Key stakeholders and staff from within the site community are engaged and assist with setting goals, planning, and implementation of key initiatives.
- Students are engaged in the waste management program on site. They design, implement and coordinate education and training processes for their peers and the school/centre community. They monitor, maintain, and report on systems and how users are engaging with them.

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Continued ***Strategic Communications and Data Management***

- Council's Moreton Bay Recycler Competition and / or Tangalooma Ecomarines Program are utilised as education and engagement tools.
- The wider community is engaged with waste management practices on site (*e.g. parents, local business, organisations, etc.*)

**For more information**

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