



# Recycling Access All Areas

In the year leading to the launch of the *National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme*, and for the fourth in a row, finding responsible recycling options for electronic waste remained the most common question for visitors to Planet Ark's RecyclingNearYou. Encouragingly, enquiries for re-use and alternative waste management activities saw a major growth.

Information gleaned from the site also clearly showed the phenomenal growth of recycling over the past decades, with more than 90% of the population having access to collections for items like aluminium cans, milk cartons and newspapers. RecyclingNearYou does access all areas with enquiries from across the country and covering materials from TVs to textiles.

There were more than **1,588,780** visits to the site in the year from 1st May 2011 to 30th April 2012, representing a **27% increase** over the same period the year before. A further 2,715 enquiries were made through the RecyclingNearYou hotline and 564 enquiries received via e-mail.



## Areas of Interest

### Electronic Waste

Finding accessible and responsible options for the range of electronic waste remains the most common reason for visiting the site.

With 160,779 enquiries the **Computers and Accessories** category was the single biggest enquiry. This total climbs to 208,394 when **Televisions and Electrical Appliances** (21,540 and 6,075 searches respectively) are added. Combined these three categories (which until this year were grouped together as one called **Computers and Electronics**) represent an increase of 39% over the same period last year.

The public is clearly looking for responsible recycling options for their e-waste. The *National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme*, which sees manufacturers and importers cover the cost of recycling, commenced on 1st July 2012. Its growth is designed to slowly spread across the country over the coming months and years. In part, the reason for this staged growth is to give the participants time to develop and implement their collection and recycling systems and to ensure they can deal with the expected influx of old computers and TVs that are stored around the country. In the meantime, residents and small businesses are encouraged to search for local reuse or recycling services, or **store their e-waste in a safe and dry location** while the national scheme is rolled out.

With 82,187 enquiries, **Printer Cartridge** recycling comes in as the second highest e-waste category and the third highest over all. This represents an increase of 52% compared to the previous year. The **'Cartridges 4 Planet Ark'** program, a well-established and easily accessible producer responsibility program, manages the used cartridges of the seven participating manufacturers - **Brother, Canon, Epson, HP, Konica Minolta, Kyocera and Lexmark**. These manufacturers cover the cost of collection, transport and recycling of the cartridges. The resource recovery is undertaken by **Close the Loop**, which has zero waste to landfill certification for its processes. To date, the program has recycled over 18 million printer cartridges with collection points in councils, retail stores and workplaces across the country.

**Batteries** made up the third most commonly searched e-waste category and the fifth over all, with 68,784 enquiries. This represents a decrease of 7% compared to the previous year, most likely because Planet Ark's 2010 National Recycling Week campaign focused on battery recycling thus bumping up visits to the site in that year. Currently, household batteries can be recycled at **Battery World** stores, and through some councils and commercial collection boxes for businesses. **MobileMuster** recycles phone batteries and car batteries can be recycled through the **Century Yuasa** network.

Most Popular Enquiries

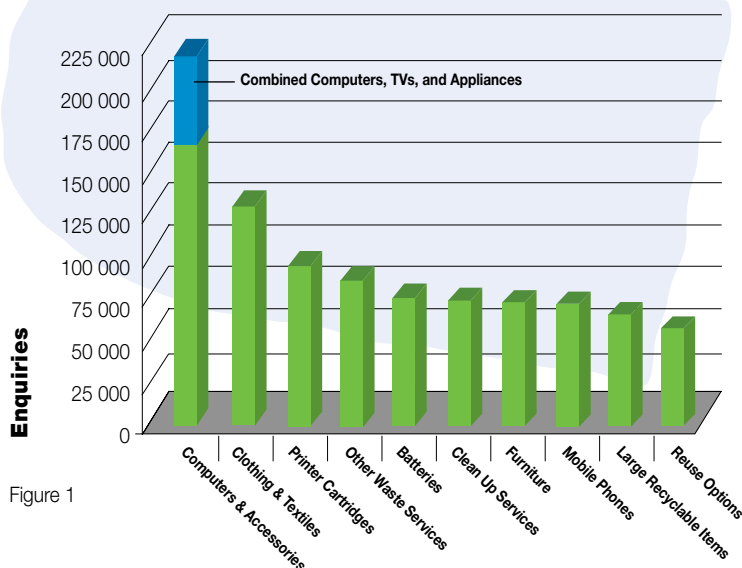


Figure 1

With 57,879 enquiries, the **Mobile Phone** category rounds out the top e-waste enquiries. **MobileMuster**, the Australian mobile phone industry's official product stewardship program, provides a free recycling program that accepts all brands and types of mobile phones, plus their batteries, chargers and accessories. Collection points exist in retail stores, Australia Post outlets and some councils, and workplaces can get free a collection box.

## Reuse and Alternative Waste Options

With a total of 120,249 enquiries, **Clothing and Textiles** was the second most searched category. This represents an increase on 13% over the year before. For the most part, visitors to this category are directed to charity shops and collection points that reuse or repurpose textiles into items like rags.

**Other Waste Services** had 74,121 enquiries, representing an increase of 56% over the year before – the largest growth area of the site. Included in this category are activities like waste reduction workshops, special collection and drop off events, and waste avoidance ideas provided by councils.

For the first year, finding **Reuse Options**, facilities and ideas appeared among the top ten most searched categories, with a noteworthy 47,875 enquiries, making up 3% of visitor activity on the site. This section includes links to community reuse initiatives like bicycle repair workshops, book swaps, bag shares and online gifting forums.

It is clear that Australians are using RecyclingNearYou to find reuse and recycling options for materials that are generally not accepted in council kerbside (bin-based) recycling services.

## Access to Recycling Services

Kerbside recycling was introduced to Australia in the early 1990s. Australian Packaging Covenant funded research on the site shows that, for some materials, well over 90% of households now have access to kerbside recycling services.

Of the 560 local councils in Australia, 368 (66%) provide kerbside recycling services that reach a collective total of 21,147,004 people or 93% of the population. A total of 192 councils (34%) provide no kerbside recycling services, limiting the recycling ability of 1,471,290 Australians or 7% of the population. The councils that do not provide recycling services tend to be smaller rural councils with populations under 10,000.

According to the council information on RecyclingNearYou, aluminium cans, glass, newspapers, office paper, milk cartons and steel cans are among the most readily collected materials, both in terms of councils providing collections and the proportion of the population with access to these services. At the other end of the scale, food is the material type with the most limited kerbside service availability. At present only a small minority of councils provide a dedicated food collection



and recycling (composting) service but this number is growing. Figure 2 provides an indication of the percentage of the population with access to kerbside recycling collections for a range of the most common waste materials generated in the home.

## About RecyclingNearYou

RecyclingNearYou, in collaboration with councils, provides Australians with a one-stop-shop for recycling information. It lists the recycling services provided by all councils in Australia, as well as information on 36 specific product categories that councils may not recycle. Councils have access to the back end of the site to edit, add and change their specific listings.

Since their launch in November 2006, the site and hotline have had more than 7.6 million visits and 19,850 phone calls respectively.

Planet Ark established the RecyclingNearYou.com.au website and hotline in conjunction with Foundation Partner Sensis and Major Sponsor The Alcoa Foundation.

## About BusinessRecycling

To help businesses recycle as well as households Planet Ark launched **BusinessRecycling.com.au**. The site lists service providers for 90 materials and contains how to guides, checklists and signage to make recycling easier.



## Further Information

**Brad Gray, Head of Campaigns**  
**Planet Ark Environmental Foundation**  
**Level 3, 15-17 Young Street, Sydney**  
**02 8484 7206**

Population With Recycling Service By Popular Materials

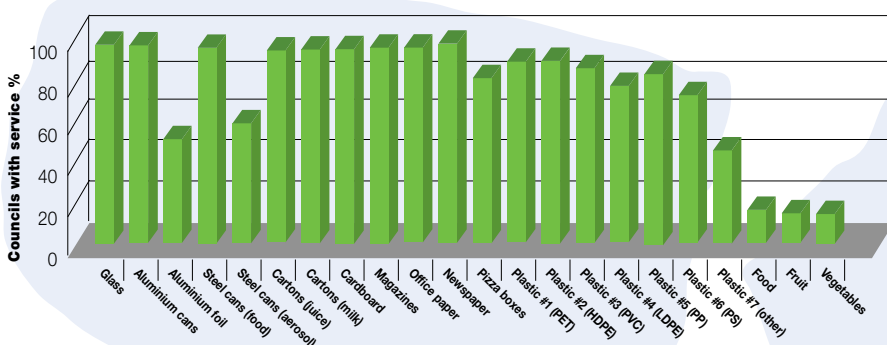


Figure 2: Percentage of population with access to a collection service for a number of specific materials\*. \* Kerbside service information relates only to plastic containers (not flexible plastic formats) for each plastic type.

## Our Partners

Planet Ark's RecyclingNearYou website and hotline are made possible through the support of our Foundation Partner, Sensis, our Major Partner, the Alcoa Foundation, and our Category Partners.

