

# Recycling

## Computers and Council Services

Locating recycling options for computers and other electronic items remains the number one priority for visitors to Planet Ark's RecyclingNearYou.com.au site, with more than 30% of enquiries falling under the broad category of electronic waste. For the first year, trends in enquiries about local services have been assessed separately, with these pages being extremely popular with site visitors.

There were **1,710,904** visits to the site in the year from 1st May 2012 to 30th April 2013, representing a **7.7% increase** compared to the previous year. A further 3,713 enquiries were made though the hotline and via e-mail.

Since its launch in November 2006, RecyclingNearYou has had more than 9.3 million visits and 28,086 hotline and email enquiries.

### Most Popular Material Enquiries

Locating responsible and accessible recycling options for electronic items remains the most popular reason for visiting RecyclingNearYou.

### Electronic Items

The Computers & Accessories category once again received the most traffic within the site, with 157,697 enquiries. When combined with TVs (41,577) and Electrical Appliances (2,603), these materials made up 11.8% of the 2012/13 RecyclingNearYou enquiries: an increase of 7% on the previous year.

In May 2012, the first drop off points were established under the National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme (the Scheme), and in the year to April 2013, hundreds of new recycling locations were rolled out nationally. Under the Scheme, manufacturers and importers of TVs and computers are required to establish free and accessible collection sites, like those set up by **TechCollect**, to help consumers easily recycle their old items.

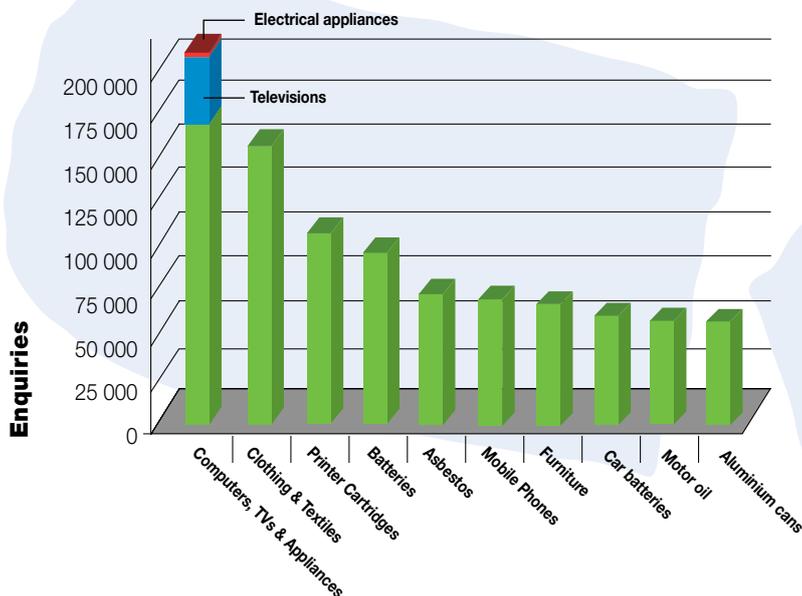
RecyclingNearYou underwent significant development to highlight these free, industry supported collection points.

Printer cartridges were the second highest e-waste category, and third highest overall,

with 97,636 enquiries: an increase of 19% on the year before. **'Cartridges 4 Planet Ark'** was a pioneer in extended producer responsibility in Australia. The six participating manufacturers – **Brother, Canon, Epson, HP, Konica Minolta and Kyocera** in association with recycling partner **Close the Loop** – have covered the cost of collection, transport, and recycling of their cartridges for well over ten years. To date, the program has recycled over 21 million printer cartridges via collection points in councils, retail outlets and workplaces.

Other electronic items featured in the top ten list, including **batteries** with 89,439 enquiries, **mobile phones** with 54,287 enquiries, and **car batteries** with 49,021 enquiries. **ALDI Supermarkets, MobileMuster** collection points and the **Century Yuasa** car battery network make it easy for people to recycle these items. Overall, enquiries relating to electronic items made up over 30% of the online traffic to RecyclingNearYou in 2012/13.

Figure 1: Most popular material enquiries.



## Other Items

With a total of 148,902 enquiries, **Clothing and Textiles** was the second most searched category. This represents an increase of 24% over the previous year, and shows that Australians are willing to locate appropriate charity shops and collection points to keep their good quality clothing out of landfill.

Finding safe disposal options for **Asbestos** was also a popular reason for visiting RecyclingNearYou in 2012/13. During this period, the site received 55,976 enquiries relating to asbestos management.

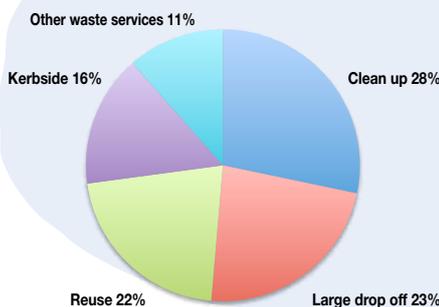
## Council Services

Many RecyclingNearYou visitors use the site to find out about the broader waste services offered by their council.

Overall, the **Council Services** pages were the single most frequented section of RecyclingNearYou, attracting 221,326 enquiries or 12.9% of the site's traffic. These pages represent the 'jumping off point' for information about council-provided services.

Within the council services section, the most popular enquiries related to: **clean up** or hard rubbish services (68,864 enquiries); facilities where **large items** can be taken e.g. transfer facilities and landfill sites (56,084 enquiries); **local reuse** organisations or facilities e.g. charity shops, clothing banks, and tip shops (52,265 enquiries); **kerbside services** and the list of accepted and non-accepted items (38,116 enquiries); **other waste services** provided by councils e.g. composting workshops, mulching days (27,916 enquiries).

Figure 2: Most popular service enquiries.



RecyclingNearYou is clearly a popular site for people seeking information about their council's services. To help councils to keep this information current, Planet Ark provides them with a dedicated login and password to enable direct editing, and provides technical support via email (rny@planetark.org) and phone (1300 733 712).

RecyclingNearYou is the only national repository of council and commercial recycling services for households. As such, councils, governments and waste management organisations refer users to it, and often use it to source information for policy development.

## Trends in Packaging Recycling

Packaging forms the basis of most council-provided kerbside recycling services for households, with over 90% of the population able to recycle containers and paper/cardboard at home. According to Australian Packaging Covenant data, Australia has dramatically reduced the amount of packaging sent to landfill over the last decade, with councils playing a very significant role. In 2012, Australia's overall recycling rate for packaging climbed to 63.8% (from 39.2% in 2003) with Australians recycling 2,811,838 tonnes of packaging (a 71.9% increase on 2003 figures).

Under the *National Waste Policy: Less Waste, More Resources*, the impact of packaging is identified as an area for improvement, particularly around increasing resource

recovery rates and decreasing litter. Numerous measures have been proposed to address the issue at a national level, however the final outcome of the decision-making process has yet to be announced. Importantly, packaging has been listed on the 2013/14 priority products list under the *Product Stewardship Act 2011*.

Changes to packaging recovery systems in Australia are often reflected in changes to visitor enquiries on RecyclingNearYou. For example, following the recent introduction of a container deposit scheme in NT, the site's aluminium can recycling enquiries for the Darwin area increased by 326% over the year before.

## Recycling Information

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.

Businesses can also find recycling information through Planet Ark's BusinessRecycling.com.au website. The site lists service providers for 90 materials and contains how to guides, checklists and signage to make recycling easier.



## Our Partners

Planet Ark's RecyclingNearYou website and hotline are made possible through the support of our Foundation Sponsor, Sensis, our Major Sponsor, the Alcoa Foundation, and our Page Sponsors

