

1 Waste in catering

Why bother to reduce waste?

Reducing waste across business is becoming an important priority for a growing number of reasons.

Being Waste Wise can reduce your costs

Do you monitor your waste removal costs? Waste management is often overlooked, or thought of as “not the responsibility of the caterer”.

Waste is costing you money one way or another – consider what the labour and raw material costs required to gather and remove waste is costing your business right now.

Australia is one of the most prolific garbage producers, per person, in the world.

food for thought

Cost reductions can be achieved through:

- Increased awareness of how waste is being generated and managed
- More strategic purchasing
- Better use of suppliers and material
- Reduced waste disposal

It makes dollars and cents

During 2003-04, Victorians produced over 9.6 million tonnes of solid waste, of which just under half was sent to landfill. That much solid waste is 50 times the size of the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

Two-thirds of this waste was generated by industry, costing businesses millions of dollars a year.

There is also an increasing awareness of the need to preserve valuable resources to ensure future prosperity.

Everything used in a business that does not generate a benefit to the business is waste. Even businesses with a tight focus on generating revenue are often unwittingly losing money on the disposal of waste that need not have been generated in the first place.

Your customers are asking for it

Just as most Victorians now recycle at home, they also now expect recycling to be commonplace in all the places they work and visit. Our research shows that 87% of people support the introduction of recycling at public events, and in 2004 there was a 60% increase in Waste Wise events.

Organisers of large events, such as the Commonwealth Games, are making commitments to waste reduction and are requesting caterers to assist in meeting these commitments.

In the private sector, businesses are becoming smarter and more responsible about their waste and are requesting their contractors (including caterers) to improve their waste management practices.

It will contribute to a good working environment

Being Waste Wise at home has become a routine part of many people's lives, so staff often feel guilty or uncomfortable when there is wasteful behaviour in the workplace.

Waste Wise Catering creates the opportunity for staff to work together to reduce waste through practical tips and activities that they can easily use in their everyday work practices.

food for thought

What is waste? “..a material or item we no longer have a use for” OR, as a noted environmentalist once stated, “stuff we are too stupid to use”?

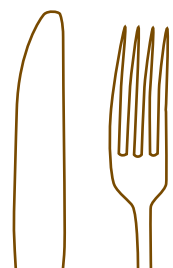
It will protect our environment and reduce the pressure on our natural resources

Australians generate more waste per person than almost any other Western country. Almost 1 tonne of waste per person goes to landfill each year.

Despite an increase in recycling over the last 10 years, Victorians are generating more waste, and still sending significant amounts to landfill.

A large percentage of everything we purchase ends up in the bin, disposed of without any thought of recovering and reusing the valuable resources it contains.

By reducing the amount of waste we generate, we also reduce many of the environmental impacts of the waste we dispose of so thoughtlessly – such as greenhouse gases emitted from landfills, the impact of heavy vehicles transporting waste through our cities, and pollution caused by litter and spills.



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What is 'waste'?

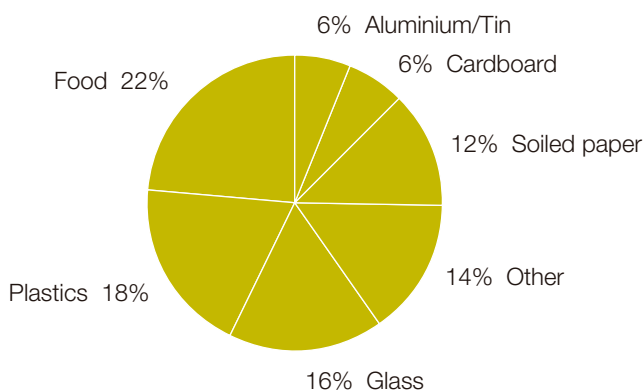
In a commercial kitchen and bar, waste is something that is left over or no longer needed. This includes excess food, packaging, broken items, leftovers and waste from food preparation.

Often waste is unnecessarily generated through:

- Incorrect storage and handling
- Preparing too much food
- Inefficient service delivery practices
- Poor recycling practices

Do you know what you are throwing away?

The following diagram is based on waste audits from restaurants and caterers. It shows that most of the items going into landfill bins and skips can often be recycled, eg aluminium/tin, cardboard, plastic, glass and even food and soiled paper.



Source: Eating into Waste: Tourism Training NSW

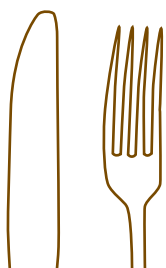
did you know?

90% of the 'waste' in caterers' and restaurant bins is potentially recyclable, reusable or compostable.

What can be done to reduce waste in catering facilities?

Reduce, Reuse and Recycle

- First, reduce your use of materials and avoid the generation of waste in the first place. Apart from anything else, you'll save money straight away!
- Second, reuse materials. This will save you more money.
- Third, send materials off to be recycled. This will help to preserve scarce resources that you may be needing in the not too distant future.
- Resolve to send waste to landfill only as your last resort, after you have applied all of your Waste Wise options.





towards zero waste

food for thought

Effective waste reduction is most easily achieved by preventing the creation of unnecessary waste in the first place.

The hidden cost of waste

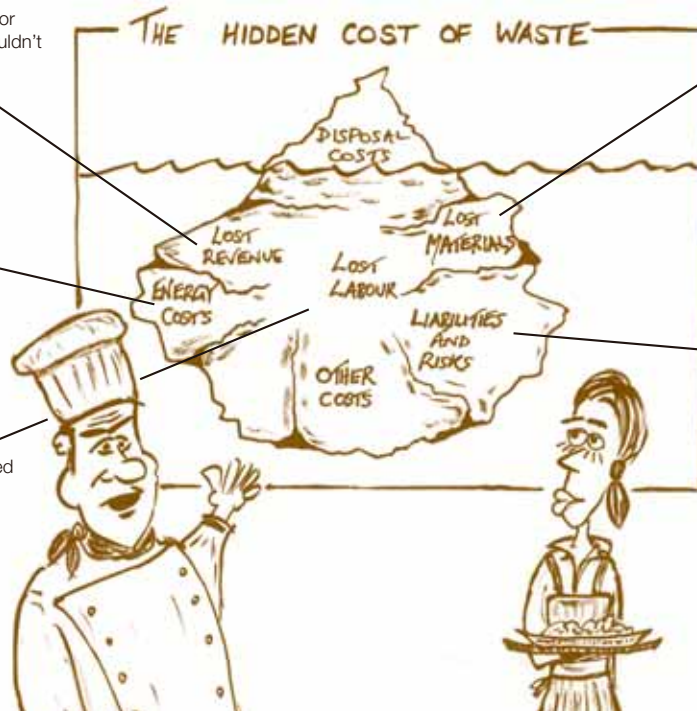
The hidden costs of waste include staff time from unproductive waste management work, storage, and cleaning up costs, as well as the materials bought that are written off as waste. Putting a dollar value to these costs can often produce quite surprising figures. Research indicates that waste disposal commonly only represents 10% of the total cost of producing waste when all these extra 'hidden' costs are included.

Lost Revenue: Items purchased or prepared, but for some reason couldn't be sold, eg:

- Items damaged.
- Stock went out of date.
- Wrong order made up etc.

Energy Cost: The energy used to purchase transport, store and make items is wasted if the items are thrown out without being fully used.

Lost Labour: Effort is used on value adding to materials (eg. making meals). This effort is wasted if the products made are not fully used.



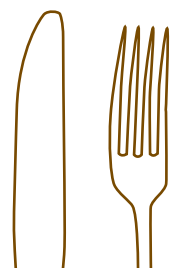
Lost Materials, eg:

- Items being thrown out by staff because of inefficient work practices.
- Off-cuts which could have been reused.
- Disposable items used instead of reusable items.

Liabilities & Risks: The cost of not managing waste properly, eg:

- Leakage of liquids into stormwater drains.
- Not checking whether your waste service provider is licensed and disposing of your waste properly.

Diagram adapted from Resource NSW, courtesy of the Department of Environment and Conservation NSW



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Where is waste created?

