

DELIVERING
FOR QUEENSLAND

**LESS LANDFILL,
MORE RECYCLING 2035:
QUEENSLAND WASTE STRATEGY**



Queensland
Government



We are taking bold action to tackle waste and increase recycling. This strategy is focused on making recycling easier for households and businesses, investing in modern infrastructure, building stronger markets for recycled materials and tackling priority wastes.

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Nambour, Sunshine Coast | Material recovery facility (MRF)

Chloe is part of the team who operates the Nambour MRF which processes yellow-lid bin materials. The facility was jointly funded by all levels of government, is owned by the Sunshine Coast Council and operated on their behalf by Re.Group.

MINISTER'S MESSAGE



We want Queenslanders to get 'one more use' out of materials. Like generations before us, we want to reuse and repair materials as much as possible, avoiding waste and reducing the cost of living. And that's what this strategy sets out to achieve.

The Crisafulli Government is committed to protecting our environment and creating a better lifestyle for every Queenslander. That's why we must boost Queensland's recycling rate.

Queensland can do better on waste, and we will. Right now, we're sending too much to landfill and recycling too little. Our plan, Less Landfill, More Recycling 2035: Queensland Waste Strategy, is about changing that. It's practical, ambitious, and built on what Queenslanders told us matters most.

Queensland is the most decentralised state in Australia. That means, this isn't a one-size-fits-all solution. What works in Brisbane won't always work in Mount Isa or Cairns. We've designed this strategy with that in mind.

We're committed to boosting Queensland's recycling rate and making sure every region has the tools to succeed.

This is about more than waste. It's about opportunity.

By building the right infrastructure across Queensland, we can unlock billions in economic potential and create thousands of future jobs—from cutting-edge recycling technologies to local manufacturing using recycled materials. Every region stands to benefit.

Our approach is guided by three priorities:

- **making recycling easy** for Queenslanders in everyday life
- **investing in modern infrastructure** to turn waste into new products
- **establishing strong end markets** where recycled materials are cost-effective and meet performance standards.

From advanced waste technologies that create jobs to locals doing their bit with red-lid, yellow-lid, and green-lid bins, every action counts.

We've identified priority waste streams that need urgent action: organics, plastics, batteries, mattresses, tyres, electronics and textiles. Tackling these will make a real difference.

But here's the truth: the government can't do this alone. Every Queenslander has a role to play.

I look forward to working together as we bring this vision to life.

The Honourable Andrew Powell MP

Minister for the Environment and Tourism
and Minister for Science and Innovation



INTRODUCTION

Queensland is at a crossroads when it comes to waste and recycling. Our recycling rates are among the lowest in Australia (second last nationally) and household waste sent to landfill has increased since 2015.

Household recycling rates have dropped from 32 per cent in 2015 to 28 per cent in 2024-25. Without decisive action, more material will end up in landfill, placing pressure on land availability and increasing environmental impacts.

Queensland is growing rapidly. We need land for homes, businesses, and communities—not for new landfills. Continuing to rely on landfill is neither sustainable nor economically viable. Every hectare used for landfill is land lost for housing and development. Every tonne of waste diverted from landfill represents an opportunity: to recover valuable resources and create jobs in recycling and remanufacturing. For every three jobs in landfill, there are nine in recycling. That's why we're ambitious about building a thriving circular economy that supports future manufacturing jobs across Queensland.

The case for change is clear. If we do nothing, landfill costs will rise, illegal dumping will increase, and Queensland will miss out on billions in economic opportunity. We need a modern, integrated waste and recycling system that supports a circular economy. This means investing in infrastructure, improving recycling rates, and unleashing innovation. It means making recycling easier for households and businesses, and ensuring solutions work for metropolitan, remote and regional communities in Australia's most decentralised state.

This strategy sets out a roadmap for delivering that change, reflecting Queenslanders' desire to do the right thing and listening to industry and local government feedback.

Our goal is simple: boost Queensland's recycling rate every year and reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill.

Queensland's waste levy underpins this strategy and supports a range of programs to boost recycling and reduce waste to landfill. The waste levy settings have been reviewed, taking into account feedback received through the consultation process in 2025.

As required by the *Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011*, this Waste Strategy will be reviewed within five years, by 2030.

WASTE AND RECYCLING IN QUEENSLAND



Queensland's recycling and resource recovery industries are critical to Queensland's economy.

12,000 jobs

supported by the recycling and resource recovery industries.

450 businesses

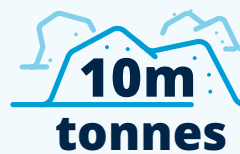
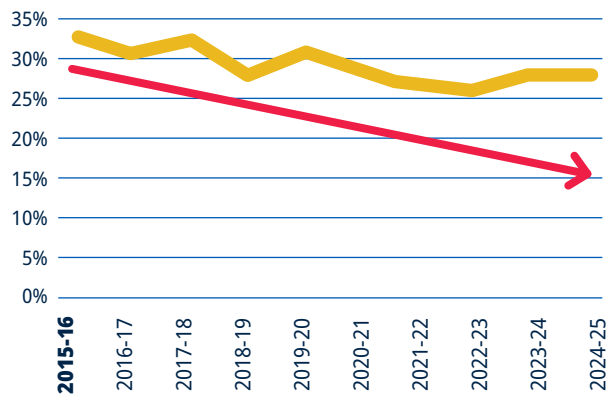
report to Government on waste related services.

These range from large multi-national companies to small family owned and operated businesses.

\$1.5 billion

contributed to the Queensland economy each year.

A decade of decline - households now recycle less than we did in 2015



10m tonnes

of waste generated in Queensland each year.

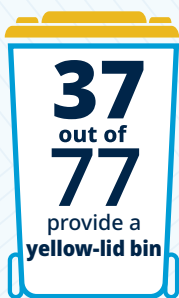
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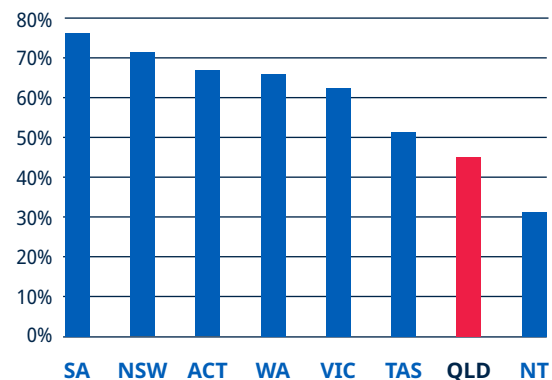
1m


garbage trucks a year.

Bins provided by councils:



We are the country's second worst recyclers





Almost half of what goes into red-lid bins is organic waste. In landfills, this waste breaks down to produce harmful greenhouse gases. By composting organic waste at home, we can reduce waste to landfill and provide food for our gardens.

ROLES IN RECYCLING AND WASTE MANAGEMENT

Each level of government has an important role to play in reducing waste and boosting recycling in Queensland. Industry also provides a critical role in delivering key waste and recycling services and unlocking capital investment.



Local governments

- Kerbside collections
- Transfer stations, resource recovery centres, tip shops and landfill
- Enforcement for littering and illegal dumping
- Education and behaviour change programs

Queensland Government

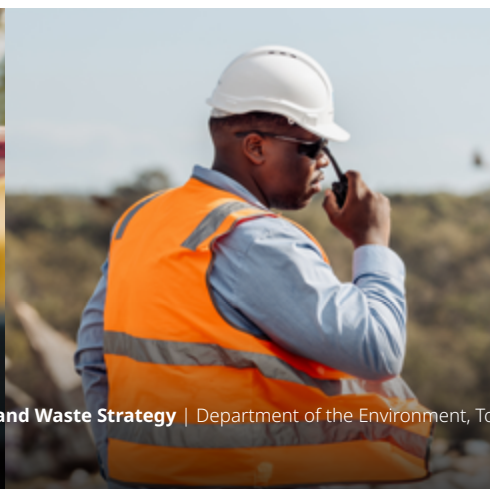
- Queensland's waste legislation, strategy and policy
- Administer Queensland's waste levy
- Regulate waste activities
- Fund waste reduction and recycling programs
- Queensland product stewardship schemes (e.g. container refund scheme)
- Monitor Queensland's progress on waste reduction and recycling commitments and matters

Australian Government

- National leadership and coordination
- Manage waste exports/imports
- Fund waste infrastructure programs
- National product stewardship schemes (e.g. oil, mobile phones, tyres)
- Monitor Australia's progress on waste reduction and recycling commitments and matters

Waste and recycling industry

- Deliver waste and recycling services, on behalf of local government for household waste, or on a commercial basis for other waste streams
- Unlock private investment in infrastructure
- Manufacturing of products from waste materials
- Creating jobs
- Leading innovation in waste technology



BENEFITS OF BOOSTING RECYCLING IN QUEENSLAND

There are a range of benefits for our economy, environment, industries and communities from reducing waste and boosting recycling.



Growing the economy

The development of new products, industries and employment to support the waste and recycling sectors could give an estimated \$210 billion dollar boost to the Australian economy to 2050.¹



Supporting jobs

It is estimated that for every 10,000 tonnes of recycling, more than nine jobs are generated compared to less than three when waste is sent to landfill.²



Reducing cost of living

The average Australian household could save \$2,500 each year by reducing their food waste.³



Reducing environmental impacts

Reducing landfill reduces environmental impacts such as odour, land and groundwater contamination. Reducing, reusing and recycling also minimises use of virgin materials and impacts on our natural environment.



Reducing emissions

Reducing waste going to landfill and investing in technologies such as energy from waste and landfill gas capture cuts greenhouse gas emissions and creates economic opportunities through carbon credits.

1. Source: CSIRO website - *Advancing the Circular Economy- CSIRO*

2. <https://www.dcceew.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/waste-and-recycling-employment.pdf>

3. Source: End Food Waste Australia- *Food Waste in Australia – End Food Waste Australia >>End Food Waste Australia*

STRATEGY SNAPSHOT

Vision: By 2035, there will be less waste to landfill and Queensland's overall recycling rate will be 65%

65 by 35

This strategy is about more than waste, it's about redefining how we manage valuable resources to leave a legacy for generations to come. Through investment, innovation and education we'll deliver real and long-term change that will benefit all Queenslanders.

Priorities



Making recycling easy for Queenslanders in everyday life.



Investing in modern infrastructure to turn waste into new products.



Establishing strong end markets where recycled materials are cost-effective and meet performance standards.



Taking accelerated action on priority wastes - organics, plastics, batteries, mattresses, tyres, e-waste and textiles.

2035 outcomes



Less waste disposed to landfill



Boost in recycling rates



Less litter in our environment



Increased households with yellow-lid and/or green-lid bins



Increased recycling processing capacity

By making recycling easier for Queenslanders in everyday life, we will end up with less waste in landfills. We want to get as much out of the red-lid bin and into the yellow-lid and green-lid bins as possible.



PRIORITIES

1. *Making recycling easy*

We want to make recycling easy for Queenslanders in everyday life. If we want to lift Queensland's recycling rate, we have to make it simple.

Right now, too much recyclable material ends up in landfill. That's wasted opportunity, and it's costing us.

Making recycling easy and accessible for every Queenslanders is the starting point.

When we do that, we don't just help the environment, we create valuable feedstock for new infrastructure and manufacturing right across the state.





When it comes to lifting our recycling rate, every Queenslander has a role to play. From big industry to the family sorting their bins, every action counts.

1.1 Household waste

Queensland households throw away almost 690 kilograms of general waste in their red-lid bins each year. Even more is delivered to council self-haul transfer stations for disposal to landfill.⁴

What's in the red-lid bin?

- Almost half is food and garden waste.
- A significant portion is recyclables: paper, cardboard, glass, metals, and hard plastics.
- The rest includes other materials like textiles and soft plastics.

Too much of what we throw away could be recycled or re-used.

That's why we're focused on getting more out of the red-lid bin and into the yellow-lid and green-lid bins. Every item we divert from landfill saves money, cuts emissions, and creates opportunity.

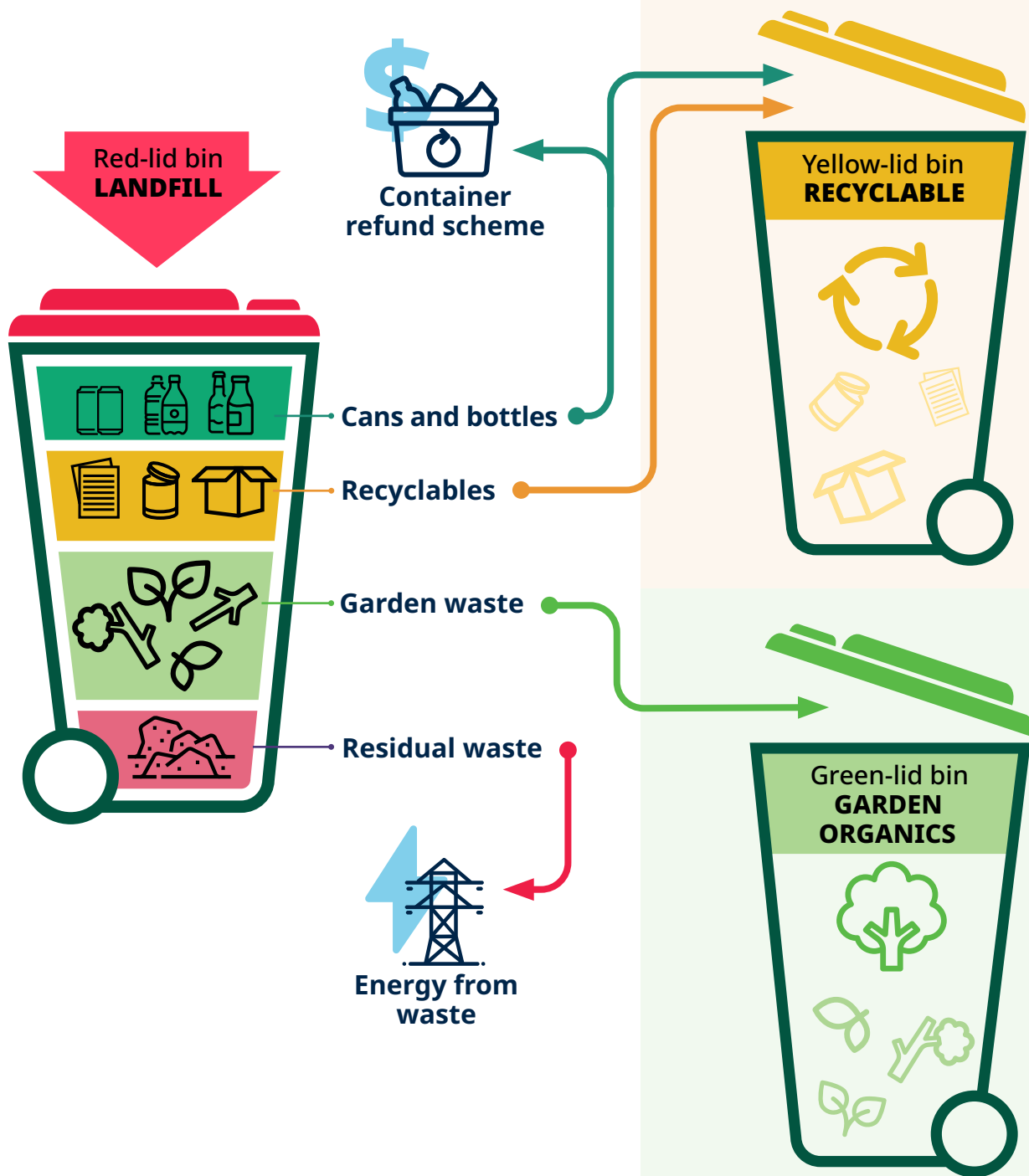
What does success look like in 2035?

- **Reduced waste from households** – less household waste disposed to landfill for a sustainable Queensland.
- **Smarter recycling habits** – more in the yellow-lid and green-lid bins or other recycling pathways, less in landfill.

Initiatives:

- 1.1.1 Continue to work with local governments to boost kerbside recycling bins for households across Queensland (i.e., yellow-lid and green-lid bins).
- 1.1.2 Support a range of programs to help households avoid and reduce waste (e.g. food waste avoidance, promoting re-use/repair, home composting etc).
- 1.1.3 Support bin lid harmonisation across Queensland to ensure consistent messaging to communities about correct disposal in the right bins.
- 1.1.4 As an outcome of the review of the waste levy settings, implement the necessary legislative changes to levy rates and annual payments, reflecting the new targets in this strategy.

4. <https://www.qld.gov.au/environment/circular-economy-waste-reduction/data-reports/recycling-waste>



Construction and demolition waste

Construction is one of Queensland's economic powerhouses: the fourth largest industry, the third biggest employer, and a leader in recycling.

In 2024–25, 85% of construction and demolition waste was kept out of landfill. That's 2.91 million tonnes of valuable material re-used or recycled.⁵

Commercial construction and demolition waste includes materials such as plasterboard, brick, timber, concrete, and steel.

Our plan is clear: maximise recycling in construction and demolition. That means cutting costs for builders, backing the recycling sector, and ensuring recycled materials are used in future projects.

If we get this right, we'll create jobs, drive innovation, and strengthen Queensland's economy, while reducing waste and protecting our environment.

What does success look like in 2035?

- **Construction waste is an opportunity** – with more construction waste being recycled into new products.
- **Businesses are empowered with smarter solutions** – with construction businesses accessing cost effective recycling options that support both profitability and environmental stewardship.

Initiatives:

- 1.2.1 Provide targeted education materials specific to the construction sector on improved waste and recycling practices.
- 1.2.2 Work with the construction industry to identify and overcome specific barriers to sorting, collecting and transporting wastes to increase recycling.
- 1.2.3 Work with the construction industry to develop industry best practice guidelines to increase diversion and recycling of construction and demolition waste.

⁵<https://www.qld.gov.au/environment/circular-economy-waste-reduction/data-reports/recycling-waste>



Hemmant, Brisbane | Construction and demolition waste processing

Te is part of the award-winning ResourceCo team at Hemmant, who are diverting construction and demolition waste like asphalt, concrete, timber and textiles from landfill. The waste is inspected with recyclables separated and then remaining materials are sorted, shredded and compacted into massive one-tonne cubes of 'processed fuel', which is used as a fossil fuel replacement in kilns, paper mills, industrial boilers and power generators.

Commercial and industrial waste

Queensland's commercial and industrial sector is diverse, encompassing schools, restaurants, offices, retail, and manufacturing. All of which contribute to our thriving economy. Yet, in mixed-use buildings and large shopping complexes, recycling often falls short.

The solution isn't one-size-fits-all—it's collaboration and innovation. By partnering with businesses, we can co-create practical solutions that make recycling simple and effective.

From smart technologies and modular systems to shared recycling hubs and data-driven insights, innovation can transform waste management without adding complexity or cost.

What does success look like in 2035?

- **Waste becomes a resource** – with more commercial and industrial waste being recycled.
- **Recycling works for business** – with businesses accessing convenient, efficient, and cost-effective recycling options.

Initiatives:

- 1.3.1 Complete a trial across Queensland of recycling projects in retail precincts.
- 1.3.2 Collaborate with the retail sector to develop clear and simple guidance material to support purchasing and disposal decisions that produce less waste and increase recycling.
- 1.3.3 Work with councils and businesses to explore options to improve commercial and industrial waste collection, separation of waste streams and reporting on recycling and disposal rates.
- 1.3.4 Work with the Department of Housing and Public Works, Queensland Building and Construction Commission, and construction industry associations to develop best practice guidance on cost-effective design that can enable better recycling infrastructure (e.g., recycling chutes and basement space for separation of wastes).



Victoria Point, Redland City | Shopping centre complex

We are partnering with businesses and retailers to identify practical solutions that make recycling simple and effective.

Education and awareness

Queenslanders want to do the right thing and we're making it easier than ever.

When recycling is simple and clear, everyone benefits: less waste, cleaner communities, and a stronger environment for future generations.

Queensland is a large, decentralised state, and every community is unique. That's why we'll work closely with councils (including First Nations Councils), businesses, and local groups to ensure solutions are practical and locally relevant no matter where you live.

We want this to be more than just a program. We want to build a legacy. Similar to how the iconic "Do the right thing and put it in the bin" shaped behaviour for a generation, we'll create a statewide movement that makes recycling second nature. A clear, memorable message that sticks—and inspires action for years to come.

We'll make it easier for Queenslanders to understand what goes where, why it matters, and how their everyday actions can help boost the recycling rate.

What does success look like in 2035?

- **Queenslanders understand recyclables** – our education and awareness activities will deliver simple, consistent messaging so everyone knows what belongs in each bin.
- **Cleaner waste streams** – by reducing confusion and contamination, we'll make sure materials can be recycled and repurposed effectively.

Initiatives:

- 1.4.1 Deliver a state-wide education and awareness program that is linked to local service availability and infrastructure to give communities confidence around recycling and reducing waste.
- 1.4.2 Continue to partner with councils (including First Nations Councils) to roll out education and behaviour change interventions at the local level and ensure they have access to the tools and resources needed.
- 1.4.3 Establish a behavioural framework tool aligned to the waste hierarchy to help partners work together to promote behaviours that reduce waste and contamination and increase recovery and recycling.
- 1.4.4 Identify priority groups and waste behaviours backed by data (with a focus on households and kerbside collection systems), targeting action where it delivers the most impact and informs tailored engagement and investment.
- 1.4.5 Continue to deliver targeted education programs as needed on priority wastes (e.g. Don't bin your batteries).



South-east Queensland | Education centre

We're making it easier for Queenslanders to understand what goes where, why it matters, and how their everyday actions can help boost the recycling rate.

Reducing litter and illegal dumping

By making recycling easier and clearer, we aim to reduce litter and illegal dumping across Queensland.

Every item recycled properly is one less piece of waste polluting our environment. This matters because litter doesn't just look bad, it harms ecosystems, wildlife, and waterways, and threatens the natural beauty that makes Queensland unique.

Protecting our beaches, national parks, and iconic landscapes isn't just a matter of pride, it's about safeguarding the places that attract visitors from around the world.

In 2024-25, local governments cleaned up 13,107 tonnes of litter and illegally dumped waste at an estimated cost of \$20 million. By preventing waste from ending up in the wrong place, we can cut these costs which will enable reinvestment in better services for Queenslanders.

What does success look like in 2035?

- **Pristine natural environments** – with less litter in our parks, waterways and natural spaces.
- **Zero tolerance for illegal dumping** – through strong action to deter and address illegal dumping.


Initiatives:

- 1.5.1 Implement the Zero Litter to the Bay by 2030 program, to upgrade the stormwater network through the installation and maintenance of specialist filtration devices that prevent plastics from entering Moreton Bay.
- 1.5.2 Provide support to deliver localised litter and illegal dumping interventions for location hotspots and problem wastes.
- 1.5.3 Provide funding to local governments to fight illegal dumping, including for compliance officers, targeted compliance activities and operating costs.
- 1.5.4 Deliver targeted waste intervention pilots on priority wastes to provide evidence-based outcomes that assist in the development of tools and resources for best practice management.

Working with councils to fight illegal dumping

Queensland provides support to councils to help fight litter and illegal dumping at the local level.

This has allowed councils to employ 41 illegal dumping compliance officers who have investigated over 42,000 cases, issued more than 2,500 fines valued at \$4.5 million, and cleaned up more than 80 million litres of waste.

An aerial photograph of two kayakers on a river. The kayakers are in the center of the frame, moving away from the viewer. The river is a mix of light brown and blue water. To the right, there is a dense forest of green trees. The top left corner of the image has a blue background with white diagonal lines. A dark blue rectangular box is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing white text.

The Zero Litter to the Bay by 2030 program supports installation of filtration devices to capture plastics. This will prevent them littering our beautiful Moreton Bay.

Image: Courtesy of Tourism and Events Queensland

Queensland's container refund scheme

Queensland's container refund scheme makes recycling easy and rewarding. It gives Queenslanders a 10-cent refund for every eligible drink container returned, helping reduce litter, increase recycling, and put money back in people's pockets.

The scheme was established under the Waste Reduction and Recycling (Container Refund Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2018, which came into effect on 1 November 2018.

We are committed to the long-term success of the container refund scheme. That is why, on the 20 February 2025, a Parliamentary Inquiry was launched, 'Improving Queensland's Container Refund Scheme'.

The Inquiry findings were presented to the Queensland Parliament in October 2025, with several recommendations made to enhance the scheme's governance and operations.

The Queensland Government tabled its response to the Inquiry report which supported the majority of the 21 recommendations, with the exception of recommendation 11 which suggested considering an increase to the refund amount.

The Queensland Government ruled out increasing the refund amount given that these costs are likely to be passed onto Queenslanders.

What does success look like in 2035?

- **Queensland leads container recovery** – by incorporating key recommendations to improve the container refund scheme and supporting Queensland to lead the nation in containers recovered.
- **Queenslanders are rewarded for doing the right thing** – with more money back in the pocket of individuals and communities that actively participate.
- **Local solutions are prioritised** - less materials recovered through the scheme are sold overseas for recycling with local recycling opportunities prioritised.

Initiatives:

- 1.6.1 Continue to support Queensland's container refund scheme.
- 1.6.2 Implement the Government's response to the container refund scheme Parliamentary Inquiry to maximise recycling of containers and reduce landfill.
- 1.6.3 Consider aligning Queensland's scheme with national approaches to improve efficiency and boost recycling rates.

10c REFUNDABLES

We're committed to ensuring the long-term success of Queensland's container refund scheme.



PRIORITIES

2. *Investing in modern infrastructure*

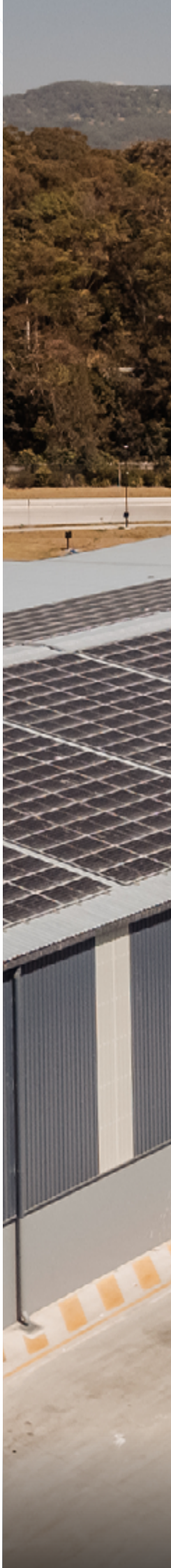
We want to invest in modern infrastructure to turn waste into new products. Targeted investment in recycling infrastructure isn't only about managing waste, it's about creating economic opportunity.

Queensland needs greater capacity to process waste materials locally. This means more recycling, more remanufacturing, and more Queensland-made products - creating jobs and driving regional economies. Every new facility is an opportunity for skilled employment, new technologies, and stronger supply chains.

To address these challenges, we'll work with local governments and industry to develop a statewide recycling infrastructure plan, mapping waste flows, identifying optimal facility locations, unlocking market demand and, creating an investment prospectus for Queensland.

Cutting-edge technologies, innovative approaches, and flexible mobile solutions will be promoted to fill gaps in recycling and minimise environmental impact across Queensland.

We also recognise that the development of energy-from-waste facilities will be a critical component of Queensland's waste management strategy over the next decade.





We are working with local governments and industry to deliver modern recycling infrastructure that creates jobs, drives regional economies and strengthens supply chains.

2.1

Developing Queensland's infrastructure roadmap

We want to develop Queensland's recycling and waste infrastructure roadmap. Queensland has made significant progress in planning for recycling and waste infrastructure.

Regional waste management plans developed with groups of councils provide a strong foundation for investment. However, to maximise economic potential and boost Queensland's recycling rates, we need to ensure infrastructure comes online over the next decade.

Through consultation, we heard that there has not been a coordinated approach to planning and implementing infrastructure throughout Queensland. Instead regional waste management plans were separately created, with little focus on implementation to date.

To address this, we will deliver a statewide recycling and waste infrastructure roadmap that considers:

- material volumes and waste flows across Queensland
- locations of key processing facilities and where gaps exist
- transport options for remote and regional communities to move waste from where it's generated to strategic hubs
- local-scale processing solutions for regional communities
- energy from waste opportunities to manage residual waste sustainably.

While planning is essential, our focus remains on delivering tangible, on-the-ground infrastructure. The facilities and technologies that turn waste into valuable resources, create jobs for Queenslanders, and drive innovation.

We will work with all stakeholders to unlock investment which will deliver strategically placed and modern infrastructure across Queensland.

What does success look like in 2035?

- **A clear roadmap for progress** – with a comprehensive understanding of state-wide infrastructure needs to support investment certainty.
- **Impact through smart investments** – by directing resources to the areas that will drive the greatest progress towards Queensland's ambitious recycling targets.
- **Sustainable infrastructure** – ensuring all new developments carefully consider environmental impacts and protect sensitive areas and communities.

Initiatives:

- 2.1.1 Develop a state-wide recycling infrastructure plan that identifies material flows, key infrastructure needs and transport options to guide future investment.
- 2.1.2 Increase Queensland's capacity to recycle different waste streams through targeted investment in recycling infrastructure.
- 2.1.3 Streamline approval processes for new recycling and waste diversion infrastructure.
- 2.1.4 Ensure that planning for any new infrastructure considers appropriate locations that are sensitive to impacts on surrounding community (e.g. odour, noise etc).



Our statewide infrastructure roadmap will identify the recycling infrastructure needed for the future.

Delivering legacy infrastructure

We need to work together to deliver legacy infrastructure. Queensland is open for business and that means turning waste into opportunity.

We're not only building recycling infrastructure; we're building careers and creating the next generation of manufacturing jobs right here in Queensland.

To cut landfill and boost recycling, the right infrastructure is critical. Our success depends on strong partnerships across all levels of government and industry.

As Australia's most decentralised state, we understand the unique challenges faced by regional communities. Local governments are on the front line of household waste management, and we're backing them with funding for infrastructure that helps meet recycling targets and reduces waste levy costs. Regional and remote communities, including First Nations communities will have the opportunity to apply for support and will benefit from the initiatives targeted at improving recycling in regional and remote areas.

Queensland's diversity demands a flexible approach. We'll support small-scale projects that meet local needs and invest in major infrastructure that addresses regional and statewide priorities. We'll also create the right conditions for councils and industry to collaborate on solutions that deliver real results.

We're also thinking big. Transformational projects that harness advanced technologies and drive lasting change will be a priority because this is about building infrastructure that works for today and sets Queensland up for tomorrow.

What does success look like in 2035?

- **World-class recycling infrastructure** – which leads to increased processing capacity in Queensland.
- **A thriving waste and recycling industry** – with more waste being recycled into new products.
- **A strong and dynamic workforce** – with more jobs created in the waste and recycling sector.

Initiatives:

- 2.2.1 Consider additional funding programs to support industry infrastructure and development.
- 2.2.2 Support councils to build the infrastructure needed to reduce waste to landfill, including through the Resource Recovery Boost Fund.
- 2.2.3 Invest in innovative transport solutions and provide targeted transport subsidies to incentivise establishment of new infrastructure in regional and rural Queensland.
- 2.2.4 Support the roll-out of additional kerbside recycling collection services through funding for new bin infrastructure.



Building new recycling infrastructure will mean we're also building new careers and creating the next generation of manufacturing jobs.

Unleashing innovation

Queenslanders are innovators.

We support cutting edge technologies and innovation that will reduce waste and minimise the impact on Queensland's environment.

Achieving the targets in the Less Landfill, More Recycling 2035: Queensland Waste Strategy will require different ways of thinking and new technologies to sort, process and manufacture materials.

Industry is already leading the way in the use and development of new technologies, from automated processing of construction and demolition waste, to innovative energy from waste projects like gasification and anaerobic digestion, to development of new products and processes.

We will back the development of cutting edge technologies and advanced manufacturing processes that transform waste into valuable resources.

What does success look like in 2035?

- **Queensland is a hub for cutting edge waste solutions** – where new waste technologies are identified and tested.
- **A thriving manufacturing and recycling sector** – with new technologies driving job creation and economic opportunities across the state.

Initiatives:

- 2.3.1 Provide funding to trial the use of innovative new waste technologies and approaches, particularly addressing priority wastes.

Cutting edge waste technologies helping recycle textiles

Carole Park, Brisbane | Project Boomerang

Queensland is at the forefront of innovative technologies helping improve re-use and recycling of textiles.

We have supported Salvation Army stores (Salvos Stores) to establish a cutting edge circular economy textile hub in Brisbane. Through Project Boomerang Salvos Stores has installed Australia's first automated textile sorting and decontamination solution. The facility has the ability to sort donated textiles into material types and remove buttons and zippers, allowing for further recycling and re-use.



2.4 **Energy from waste**

Our priority will always be to reduce, re-use, and recycle as much as possible. However, there will always be some materials left over. Generating energy from residual waste provides a practical, proven solution, converting those residual materials into electricity, heat, or fuel.

Queensland already uses forms of energy from waste, such as landfill gas capture and biogas from organic waste. These technologies demonstrate what's possible, but we need to go further.

Other global cities (including recent Olympic and Paralympic host cities like Paris, Tokyo, and London) have successfully integrated energy from waste into their infrastructure strategies to reduce landfill and generate clean energy.

Queensland can learn from these examples and adapt solutions that suit our unique needs. Like other private infrastructure proposals, we will work with councils and the private sector to assess projects that are submitted for assessment. The Queensland Government has nation-leading energy from waste policies providing clear guidance and certainty for proponents and communities.

We will ensure we create the right enabling environment to help facilitate council and private sector investment in these facilities, but won't have a direct ownership role.

What does success look like in 2035?

- **Sustainable energy solutions** – with residual waste transformed into a valuable energy source, reducing landfill and supporting Queensland's energy needs.
- **Integrated energy recovery infrastructure** – that is well planned and embraced by the community as part of a sustainable future.

Initiatives:

- 2.4.1 Develop a regional energy from waste plan to identify appropriate locations for energy recovery solutions, including mobile and small-scale alternatives.
- 2.4.2 Explore options for Queensland Government support for major energy from waste projects.
- 2.4.3 Work with industry to develop an End of Waste Code for incinerator bottom ash to encourage re-use of by-products from energy from waste facilities that use incineration.

Methane gas capture in Queensland landfills

Many Queensland landfills capture methane from waste breakdown to generate energy for the electricity grid. At Brisbane's Rochedale landfill, 75% of methane emissions are converted into power, producing 63,000 megawatt hours annually. This is enough to power 11,140 homes and cut CO₂ emissions equivalent to 475,200 tonnes which is like removing over 100,000 cars from the road.



Turning waste into fuel

Industries are seeking fossil fuel alternatives to cut greenhouse gas emissions. Resource Co's Hemmant plant diverts 250,000 tonnes of waste annually, recycling materials and creating fuel to replace coal in cement manufacturing. Diverting waste from landfill lowers carbon emissions by reducing methane at landfills and replacing fossil fuels with a renewable fuel source.

PRIORITIES

3. *Establishing strong end markets*

We want to establish strong end markets where recycled materials are cost-effective and meet performance standards.

Queensland's recycling future depends on more than collecting and processing materials, it requires strong, sustainable markets for recycled products.

Growth in these markets will help build new industries and create meaningful jobs for Queenslanders.

Infrastructure alone isn't enough to divert more waste from landfill. There must also be demand for recycled content in construction and manufacturing.

Globally, recycled materials are already widely used in roads, concrete, and civil works, with proven performance and reliable outcomes. For example:

- recycled glass is used in road base and asphalt mixes
- crushed concrete replaces virgin aggregate in civil construction.

Creating strong end markets is a shared responsibility. Industry will need to work with all levels of government and contractors to drive uptake, innovate new products, and ensure recycled materials become a mainstream choice.

What does success look like in 2035?

- **A thriving market for recycled products** - with an increase in the use of recycled products for major infrastructure developments.
- **Affordable and accessible recycled materials** available for construction businesses.
- **Cost-neutral sustainable materials** – are integrated into major projects without increasing costs, supporting both economic and environmental goals.



Creating strong end markets for recycled materials will help sustain recycling businesses long term. We want to make the purchase of recycled content the mainstream choice, helping drive demand and supporting new jobs for Queenslanders while still being cost-effective.

Initiatives:

- 3.0.1 Develop a 'policy impacting procurement' under the Queensland Procurement Policy encouraging the use of recycled content where it meets specifications and does not increase costs.
- 3.0.2 Lead the development of a list of suppliers of recycled materials that could be identified on the Queensland Procurement Solution platform, to help inform sustainable purchasing decisions.
- 3.0.3 Accelerate development of markets for recycled content, including through:
 - trials and research to demonstrate the technical performance of recycled products and materials in construction, roads and other infrastructure
 - tools and resources that support supply chain connectivity and development of end markets for recycled materials, including in regional contexts
 - work across industries to help stimulate markets (e.g. connecting the agricultural sector with the organics processing sector).
- 3.0.4 Investigate alternative investment-model options to support new and emerging products and innovative technologies, particularly for priority waste materials.
- 3.0.5 Review the list of prescribed recycling activities that can apply for a waste levy discount to make it more flexible, helping establish and sustain recycling businesses in Queensland.
- 3.0.6 Identify regulatory reforms to remove barriers to re-use, recovery and recycling, including implementing legislative changes to improve the end of waste framework.

PRIORITIES

4. Accelerated action on priority wastes

Not every waste type is the same. Some are easier to collect or recycle than others. Some have potentially significant impacts, like fire risks from inappropriate disposal – for example batteries.

Identifying priority wastes helps us focus our efforts and take accelerated action on those wastes that are particularly problematic. Our stakeholders have identified the top three priority wastes as organics, plastics and batteries. Mattresses and tyres are also a priority in regional areas.

Initiatives are provided for the following priority wastes:

- organics
- plastics
- batteries
- mattresses
- tyres
- electronic wastes
- textiles.

Initiatives:

The following initiatives apply across all priority wastes:

- 4.0.1 Advocate for national leadership and direction on product stewardship schemes, particularly for batteries, solar panels and packaging.
- 4.0.2 Investigate state-based product stewardship schemes if national schemes are not supported.



Leyburn, Southern Downs | Organics recycling

Pure Environmental's Leyburn facility transforms organic waste into valuable resources through sustainable composting practices.

4.1 Organics

Organic waste is one of the largest contributors to landfill in Queensland.

Food and garden organics make up nearly half of what goes into red-lid bins each year. This puts pressure on landfill capacity and drives the need for new disposal sites unless targeted action is taken.

Organic waste refers to any biodegradable material from plants, animals, or other natural sources that can decompose naturally. Common examples include food and garden waste, biosolids, and animal waste, including manure and other by-products.

When organic waste decomposes in landfill, it produces methane, a greenhouse gas around 25 times more potent than carbon dioxide. Beyond environmental and health impacts, sending organics to landfill means losing valuable resources that could be turned into compost, biogas, or bioenergy.

This is not a new challenge and the solutions are proven. Across Australia and globally, organics are being transformed into soil conditioners, renewable energy, and other products that return nutrients to the land and reduce emissions.

By leveraging proven technologies and innovation, Queensland can build a thriving compost industry with diverse products - creating jobs and cutting emissions.

Initiatives:

- 4.1.1 Provide additional funding opportunities to support new organics processing infrastructure (including for example new kerbside organics recycling bins).
- 4.1.2 Provide more flexibility in existing funding to provide support for other organic diversion activities such as home composting and community composting.
- 4.1.3 Provide regulatory certainty and rebuild confidence in the organics industry to continue to supply safe and sustainable compost products, including by working with industry to develop guidance on dealing with contaminants like PFAS, plastics and other emerging materials.
- 4.1.4 Deliver a trial of food organics diversion in multi-unit dwellings and mixed use developments to identify initiatives to increase recycling from these settings.
- 4.1.5 Support businesses in Queensland's food supply chain to reduce organic waste and find new ways to create value-added products.
- 4.1.6 Work with rural, remote and First Nations councils to investigate cost-effective alternative green waste disposal options.
- 4.1.7 Work to establish limits on types and volumes of materials (including green waste) that can be used for operational purposes at landfills (and exempt from the waste levy by application for onsite operational purposes).



Investing in organics collection and processing capacity

We will continue to support councils in the roll-out of green-lid bins to help divert organic waste from landfill. As of June 2026, we have supported the roll out of almost half a million new green-lid bins, expected to divert more than 100,000 tonnes of organics from landfill. We are also continuing to work in partnership with the Australian Government and South-east Queensland (SEQ) Councils to increase organics processing capacity through the SEQ City Deal.

4.2 **Plastics**

Plastic waste is a significant issue due to its increasing use and widespread environmental, social and economic impact. Plastic often ends up in our natural environment and can take hundreds to thousands of years to break down, persisting in the environment and accumulating over time.

Plastic waste includes a wide range of items made from synthetic or semi-synthetic polymers, such as:

- single-use plastics from packaging and drink bottles
- durable plastics used in toys, furniture and electronic casings
- industrial plastics used in construction, agricultural and manufacturing.

Currently, only a small portion of plastic waste is recycled because of the challenges from contamination, lack of infrastructure, and the complexity of sorting different types of plastics. With targeted action, this valuable material can be recycled into new products, reducing a reliance on virgin materials.

Initiatives:

- 4.2.1 Complete a soft plastics recycling trial in Queensland.
- 4.2.2 Advocate to the Australian Government the establishment of a national stewardship scheme for plastics that does not add costs to Queenslanders.
- 4.2.3 Support investment in plastics recycling capacity across Queensland, including in regional areas.
- 4.2.4 Advocate for national packaging reforms to ensure:
 - packaging is designed to be recyclable and problem chemicals are phased out and
 - producers of packaging material take responsibility for their products after households and businesses have finished using them.
- 4.2.5 Support innovative technologies and solutions to encourage better design and recyclability of plastics.
- 4.2.6 Assess the regulatory environment for material handling and stockpile management to provide clarity to the plastics recycling industry.



We're accelerating the way we recover and recycle plastics. With targeted action, this valuable material can be recycled into new products in Queensland.

4.3 Batteries

Batteries are powering the way we live: our phones, laptops, power tools, electric vehicles, and even renewable energy systems. As technology advances, the volume of batteries being disposed of is projected to surge over the next decade, creating both an opportunity and a serious challenge for Queensland.

Batteries come in many forms:

- single-use alkaline or zinc-carbon batteries in household items like remotes and toys
- rechargeable lithium-ion, nickel-cadmium, or nickel-metal hydride batteries in laptops, mobile phones, vapes, e-scooters, and bikes
- industrial and automotive batteries, such as lead-acid batteries in vehicles and large-scale energy storage systems.

While some recycling pathways exist, incorrect disposal (especially of lithium-ion batteries) is a growing hazard. When compacted or punctured in waste trucks or recycling facilities, batteries can overheat, catch fire, or explode.

The consequences are real and escalating:

- in 2024–25, Queensland recorded more than 200 battery-related fires, including in waste trucks and recycling centres
- these fires put workers and the public at serious risk, disrupt essential waste services, and threaten recycling infrastructure.

If facilities are destroyed, Queensland's ability to recycle other resources is compromised, undermining our circular economy goals.

Initiatives:

- 4.3.1 Provide support to councils to expand battery collection points at convenient locations, including for problem batteries like those found in vapes and e-scooters.
- 4.3.2 Work closely with the waste industry on practical ways to reduce fire risks to protect workers and essential waste services.
- 4.3.3 Equip Queenslanders with information to make informed decisions about safe battery disposal through education and awareness initiatives.
- 4.3.4 Support investment in increased battery recycling capacity in Queensland.
- 4.3.5 Advocate to the Australian Government to establish a national battery stewardship scheme.
- 4.3.6 Undertake a review of the regulatory classification of batteries to provide clear guidance on collection pathways, traceability, waste tracking obligations, and collection point licensing requirements.



Batteries do not belong in bins. They cause fires, put waste services workers at serious risk and destroy infrastructure. We are expanding battery collection points, delivering education programs and supporting investment to safely recover batteries, reducing fire risks.

4.4 Mattresses

Discarded mattresses that are no longer usable or wanted by households, businesses or institutions are a significant challenge and often end up in the environment illegally dumped.

An estimated 300,000 mattresses are disposed in Queensland's landfills each year.⁷

Old mattresses present significant environmental, logistical and economic challenges due to their size and the different materials they are made of. The mix of materials include steel, foam, and fabric. Although these materials can separately be recycled, without proper dismantling to separate them they are often rejected for recycling and considered a contamination to one material type or another.

Mattresses are bulky and take up space in landfill. This coupled with their slow decomposition contributes to the growing issue of landfill availability. Queensland's regional areas in particular have difficulty managing disposed mattresses due to limitations in existing recycling supply chains.

For consumers, mattresses are large, heavy and awkward to transport, making collection and disposal logistically challenging and costly.

Initiatives:

- 4.4.1 Establish a joint working group with representatives across the mattress supply chain to identify sustainable solutions that increase the re-use and recycling of mattresses.
- 4.4.2 Conduct audits of mattress waste and project future waste mattress volumes.
- 4.4.3 Support investment in increased mattress dismantling infrastructure to divert steel and foam to remanufacturing in locations with high volumes of mattress waste.
- 4.4.4 Pilot mobile solutions for regional mattress collection and processing to understand longer-term solutions to address distance and low-density challenges.

7. Australian Bedding Stewardship Council (ABSC) submission sourced from Resource Hub + ABSC operational data and council estimates.



An estimated 300,000 mattresses are disposed in Queensland's landfills each year. Mattresses are bulky and take up space in landfill. Our initiatives will identify solutions to address this bulky and challenging type of waste.

4.5 Tyres

Tyre waste refers to discarded or end-of-life tyres that are no longer suitable for their original purpose due to wear, damage or becoming obsolete. This includes tyres from vehicles such as cars, buses, trucks, motorcycles and bicycles, as well industrial machinery (conveyor belts) and tyres from the mining and agricultural sectors.

End-of-life tyres present significant environmental, health, and economic challenges when not properly managed. Tyres that are improperly stored or dumped can collect water, creating ideal breeding grounds for mosquitos and other disease-carrying pests. Stockpiles of tyres are also highly flammable and difficult to extinguish once ignited.

87 per cent⁸ of Australia's used passenger, bus and truck tyres have been recovered through the voluntary national tyre product stewardship scheme. However, this waste stream remains a priority due to the impact of illegally dumped tyres, and limited domestic market for recycled tyre products.

Initiatives:

- 4.5.1 Support investment in increased tyre recycling and recovery infrastructure, including small-scale, mobile or modular solutions for remote settings.
- 4.5.2 Undertake targeted compliance operations, in collaboration with local government, to address tyres being illegal dumped in the environment.
- 4.5.3 Review Queensland's waste tracking data and legislation to strengthen compliance capabilities with regards to illegal dumping of tyres.
- 4.5.4 Ensure illegally dumped tyres are recycled wherever possible.

8. Based on 2023/24 data Tyre Stewardship Australia <https://www.tyrestewardship.org.au/>.



When dumped into our environment, tyres present significant environmental, health and economic challenges. We are supporting increased investment in tyre recycling, initiatives increasing their recovery and boosting compliance on illegal dumping.


4.6 **Electronics**

Electronic waste, commonly referred to as e-waste, covers any discarded electronic product that needs electricity or a battery to work. Electronic products are increasingly becoming a part of everyday modern life. Their recovery is made more difficult by the vast forms it can take, from mobile phones and small light up children's toys to solar panels and large white goods such as fridges and washing machines.

It is also a common waste type generated in office settings through the form of items such as computers, printers, and headphones. The volume and variety of e-waste products can present challenges for collection and recovery of materials from this waste stream. However, electronic waste can contain valuable and finite critical minerals including copper, silver and gold as well as other recoverable and recyclable materials.

Initiatives:

- 4.6.1 Provide learnings from a Queensland solar panel recycling pilot to support the Australian Government to implement a national solar panel product stewardship scheme.
- 4.6.2 Through a range of funding programs, invest in increased e-waste recycling infrastructure in Queensland.
- 4.6.3 Work across Queensland Government agencies to review and balance product safety requirements with opportunities to enable repair where appropriate.



Electronic waste is a reality of modern life. When handled well it is a source of valuable and finite critical minerals and other recoverable and recyclable materials.

4.7 Textiles

Textile waste refers to any material made from fibres, fabrics or clothing that is discarded or no longer usable. This waste stream encompasses a wide range of materials including clothing, carpets, curtains, upholstery, and industrial textiles. It poses significant environmental, social and economic challenges, which are becoming increasingly urgent as fast fashion and the consumption of clothing and textiles rise.

Textile waste can also originate from various stages of the supply chain, including offcuts, scraps and defective materials generated during the manufacturing process. The production of textiles requires significant natural resources such as water, energy and raw materials. As a large proportion of textile waste currently ends up in landfill, these resources become wasted, and some synthetic fibres like polyester can take hundreds of years to decompose.

Although there are some available avenues for textiles recycling in Queensland, this infrastructure is limited and often hampered by the complexity of the materials which can be made from blended fibres that are difficult to separate and recycle effectively and cost-efficiently.

Initiatives:

- 4.7.1 Improve our understanding of textile waste by gathering and publishing data and information on textile products and fibre types disposed of by businesses and households.
- 4.7.2 Through a range of funding programs, invest in textile recycling capacity and capability and support innovative waste technology solutions.



Reclaiming resources for the maker community

The Nest Community in Brendale is an excellent example of a charity that is giving a second life to textiles and craft supplies while promoting sustainable living practices and connecting women through skills sharing. The Nest Textile Recovery Centre and Nest Haberdashery recovers textiles and craft supplies that would otherwise go to landfill, processes them and sells them at a low cost to the Brisbane community. Nest is a member of Seamless, the Australian Clothing Stewardship organisation which received some funding from the Queensland Government. In recognition of the important role of charities in reducing waste to landfill, waste that has been donated to a charitable recycling entity and cannot practicably be re-used, recycled or sold is eligible for approval as exempt from the waste levy.

TARGETS TO MEASURE SUCCESS

By the time this strategy is delivered, more Queenslanders will be recycling more often.

To track our progress, we have set a range of targets to ensure we achieve the goals of our new strategy.

While there has been positive progress in some areas, there is a need to accelerate progress in others. This includes household recycling rates, which have declined during the past decade from 32 per cent in 2015 to 28 per cent in 2024-25, and make up the bulk of landfill.



The targets recognise:

- We want **less materials sent to landfill** and **more recycling**.
- We want to get **household recycling rates back to where they were in 2015** and continue to improve from there.
- We need to take action across the different waste types, including **household waste, construction and demolition waste** and **commercial and industrial waste**.
- We need **separate waste reduction targets for metropolitan and regional areas** that recognise the size and diversity of our state.
- We also need other targets to measure contamination in **household bins, re-use behaviours** and how much **energy we are recovering from waste**.
- We will **track our progress through our annual reporting** on waste in Queensland.

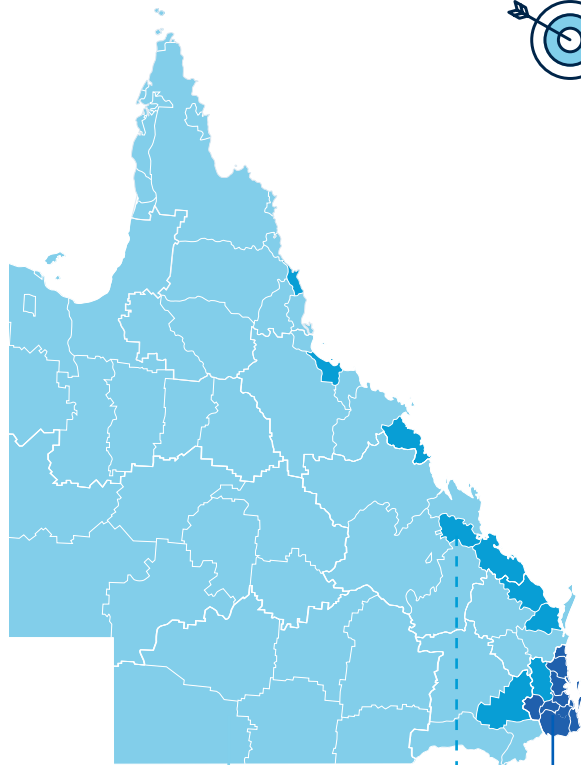


The new targets for Queensland's waste strategy are practical and achievable and focused on less waste to landfill and more recycling.

Less landfill



2035 Targets



State wide: waste to landfill

65% reduction*

This is a reduction of **2.6 million tonnes** over the next decade.

| | |
|-----------|--------------------|
| Current** | 4.3 million tonnes |
| 2015-16 | 5.1 million tonnes |

Regional: waste to landfill

South-east Queensland

70% reduction*

This is a reduction of **2 million tonnes** over the next decade.

| | |
|-----------|------------------|
| Current** | 3 million tonnes |
|-----------|------------------|

Major regional communities

Cairns, Townsville, Mackay, Rockhampton, Gladstone, Bundaberg, Fraser Coast, Toowoomba and Somerset

50% reduction*

This is a reduction of **0.32 million tonnes** over the next decade.

| | |
|-----------|---------------------|
| Current** | 0.65 million tonnes |
|-----------|---------------------|

Regional, rural and remote communities

No increase

This is maintaining the current amount disposed to landfill

| | |
|-----------|--------------------|
| Current** | 0.7 million tonnes |
|-----------|--------------------|

* Compared to the 2019-20 baseline

** Current is based on 2024-25 data

More recycling

2035 Targets



Overall
65%

| | |
|-----------|-----|
| Current** | 58% |
| 2015-16 | 44% |



Construction and demolition
88%

| | |
|-----------|-----|
| Current** | 85% |
| 2015-16 | 49% |



Household waste
60%

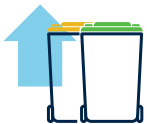
| | |
|-----------|-----|
| Current** | 28% |
| 2015-16 | 32% |



Commercial and industrial
60%

| | |
|-----------|-----|
| Current** | 56% |
| 2015-16 | 47% |

By 2035:



Increase number of **households with yellow-lid and/or green-lid bins**



Amount of waste reused (e.g. charitable donations, tip shops) is **increased by 50%**



Increased **energy from waste**



Increase the **use of recycled content**



Minimise **contamination in recycling:**



Less than 10% contamination rate in yellow-lid bins



Less than 2% contamination rate in green-lid bins

CONSULTATION SUMMARY

The consultation process on the draft strategy was undertaken in May and June 2025.

- Surveys: 193 responses.
- Written submissions: 130 submissions.
- Workshops and online information sessions: more than 15 workshops and seminars were attended by more than 200 participants across Queensland.
- Retailer engagement: the Australian Retail Council consulted more than 300 small to medium enterprises (SMEs).
- Public awareness activities: achieved more than 542,000 impressions through social media, newsletters and stakeholder networks.

The key feedback we heard during the consultation process:

The need for regionally specific **targets and measures** like avoidance, re-use and contamination rates.

Targeted **investment in infrastructure** guided by a statewide infrastructure plan.

Regional and remote challenges, particularly around transport and economies of scale.

Increased emphasis on the need for **energy from waste** to be part of the solution.

Making sure the **waste levy settings** are right and funds are reinvested in the right things.

The importance of sustained, statewide **education campaigns and behavioural change** initiatives to promote waste avoidance, recycling, and reduce contamination.

Supporting **end markets and purchase of recycled content** to help sustain recycling businesses.

Focusing on priority wastes, with organics, plastics, batteries, mattresses, and tyres identified as the highest priorities.



When recycling is simple and clear, everyone benefits - less waste, economic opportunities, cleaner communities and a stronger environment for future generations.







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