

Green Bins

Facts, FAQs and better solutions



Many other councils provide a green bin service as part of their waste management strategy.

While the green bin may be convenient for residents, **the purpose is to reduce the amount of household waste going to landfill.** Additional bin space attracts further waste, which is a problematic system, if the aim is to avoid or minimise waste going to landfill.

What does the green bin achieve?

- A separate bin for garden organics and in some cases for food organics.
- Diverts organic material that may go into the red bin away from landfill.
- Produces a compost like product that can be applied to land.



What are the downsides of the green bin?

- No reduction in total waste generation.
- The additional bin capacity attracts waste.
- Plastics in the green bin degrade the quality of the final compost product.
- Additional collection trucks on the road add to greenhouse gas emissions.

There has been much discussion in the community about the pros and cons of having a green bin collection service.

Shoalhaven City Council's (SCC) policy is to continue providing a two bin system consisting of the garbage bin (red-lid) and the recycling bin (yellow-lid) at the kerbside. Plus, convenient drop off of garden waste at any of the [10 Recycling and Waste Depots](#) around the local government area and an [on-call garden waste collection service](#).

Council's priority in Waste Management is to reduce landfill in the most environmentally and economically sustainable way possible.

A green bin service falls short on an holistic approach to best practice for the environment and is not value for money for Shoalhaven ratepayers.



Some Councils provide a free green bin collection service. Why doesn't SCC?

Nothing is for free!

Councils who provide a green bin service have built the cost of this service into their annual domestic waste management charge, which forms part of the rates.

SCC has adopted a fairer user-pays system as many ratepayers don't need a green bin service. They are producing little to no green waste, due to either having small gardens or managing their green waste diligently at home.

A green bin collection service would satisfy some residents but unfairly financially disadvantage others, and would have little additional environmental benefit over how green waste is currently managed.

Preliminary estimates are that a green waste bin will cost the average Shoalhaven ratepayer an additional \$150 per year.

How am I supposed to get rid of my green waste?

Council provides a range of alternatives for managing your green waste.

Depots*

Drop your green (garden) waste at any one of our ten Recycling and Waste Depots. (Fees apply).

Green (and bulky waste) on-call collection service*

Call 4429 5681 or email greenandbulky@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au to arrange a garden waste pick up. (Fees apply).

Home Composting

SCC runs Home Sustainability Workshops. Attend our composting workshop and receive a free compost garden bin.

Increase your bin size

Elect to use a LARGER CAPACITY RED-LID BIN. Increase from the standard 120L bin to a 240L bin. (Fees apply).

Mulching

Use your grass clippings, leaves etc for mulch is a great way to keep your garden healthy and use less water.

Isn't putting organic matter into a green bin a more environmentally friendly practice?

Other Councils that provide a green bin service, report that the contents of the green bin waste are often contaminated with materials other than garden waste, mainly plastics.

When residents sort and drop off their own green waste, as we do in the Shoalhaven, the result is a much cleaner product which allows for carbon and plant nutrients to be recycled back into our customers gardens.



This 'mulch-like' product is available for Shoalhaven residents at all Recycling and Waste Depots for FREE.

There must be benefits to having a green bin?

The main benefit is convenience for the householder. However, this convenience comes with a greater amount of bin capacity for household waste disposal and potentially more waste produced.

To combat this perverse increase in total waste, most Councils change their standard red-lid bin to a smaller bin or collect it fortnightly, causing some residents to add rubbish to the green bin.

The introduction of a green bin would be almost pointless for residents who are already successfully managing their green waste through composting and other methods, and be inconvenient for other residents that have limited storage for an extra bin.

A green bin only addresses one part of a household's waste and recycling needs.

* You can use your no charge [Household Waste Disposal](#) or [Garden Waste Disposal Voucher](#) for these services

What is Council doing to reduce landfill?

Council provides a range of [recycling services at the ten Recycling and Waste Depots](#) (many free) for common household waste including some problematic materials e.g. electronic waste, batteries and paints.

The West Nowra Recycling & Waste Depot has a range of on-site recycling facilities including, polystyrene, glass and electrical cabling.

We work in partnership with government and private organisations to operate an Australia-first [Green Ceramic MICROfactorie™](#), which recycles plastics, glass, textiles and

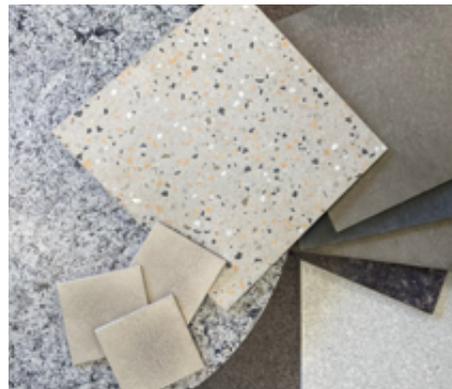
mattresses into architectural applications.

There are and will be, more facilities in the pipeline as we continually seek out new technologies and best practices to recycle materials traditionally disposed of in landfill.

As always, we continue with our public education programs that address avoiding, reducing, reusing and recycling waste.

We aim to do everything to reduce waste to landfill in an environmentally and economically sustainable way.

MICROfactorie™ 'Green Ceramic Tiles'



Above: Polystyrene recycling

Below: Electric cabling recycling



What is the future solution?

It is proposed to seek out and go forward with the latest technology to sort the mixed waste of red-lid bins.

Everything that can be recycled in these bins will be, including organics.

It was agreed by the council in 2019, that extracting the recyclable waste from the red-lid bin is the best long-term investment, both financially and environmentally, for Council's Waste Management objective of reducing landfill.

Emerging technologies have shown the potential to remove up to 90% of waste from the red-lid bin. Beneficial re-use of this amount of material is a superior solution for managing waste in the Shoalhaven.

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City Council

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