

Help to divert waste from landfill

Each year a significant amount of recyclable material collected in kerbside recycling bins ends up in landfill unnecessarily due to contamination or because it has been put in the wrong bin.

In fact, an independent audit of kerbside waste and recycling bins in South Gippsland showed that approximately 20 per cent of the total weight of items put into recycling bins each year were items that were unable to be recycled. Additionally, 12.5 per cent of the weight of resident's garbage bins is recyclable products that were put into garbage bins instead of being recycled.

Although these figures aren't large, the potential cost saving if all recyclable material was put in the correct bin exceeds \$165,000 annually.

This year, South Gippsland Shire Council is partnering with Sustainability Victoria to try and reduce the amount of recyclable material heading to landfill by raising awareness of the five products that most often end up in the wrong bin.

These items are:

- Soft plastics (such as bread packaging and plastic bags) placed in recycling bins. This material cannot be recycled in the kerbside recycling bin as it gets tangled in the equipment used to sort the recyclables. Placing it in the recycling bin can result in entire loads being rejected by the recycling facility, with all of that recyclable material ending up in landfill. Soft plastics must be put in the garbage bin.
- Non-recyclable hard plastic (such as PVC pipe fittings). These materials contain plastic types unable to be re-melted and re-moulded. These types of plastics need to be put in the garbage bin.
- Items such as broken window glass and crockery including drinking glasses and Pyrex placed in recycling bins. If placed in recycling bins, these materials contaminate loads, with the risk that entire truck loads of recyclable materials may be sent to landfill. These materials belong in your garbage bin.
- Paper products are sometimes put in the garbage bin and sent to landfill. These materials should be put into recycling bins.
- Quantities of recyclable rigid plastic packaging (those numbered 1 to 7) were also found in garbage

bins during the audit process. These materials can be recycled so should be put in the recycling bin.

To find out more about recycling, please visit: www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/recycling

Quote attributable to South Gippsland Shire Council Mayor, John Schelling:

“South Gippsland Shire Council would like to thank Sustainability Victoria for providing grant funding to help us continue to improve the outcomes of the kerbside recycling services that we provide in South Gippsland. Good recycling just makes sense. It saves money, it helps to ensure our landfill sites can last longer and it’s good for the environment. I hope by working together we can divert more waste from landfill and increase the recovery of materials for recycling.”

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