



Disaster Recovery What a waste!

There have been very few local government areas of Queensland untouched by cyclone or floods over the past few months. Waste managers have been faced with an extraordinary volume of cyclone debris, flood damaged waste and waste generated as a result of power outages. All LAWMAC member councils have been stretched dealing with the aftermath of natural disasters.

It would be appreciated if members could keep in mind some of the innovative methods taken in dealing with these wastes so that they can be included in the next edition of the newsletter and shared with all.



Victoria Mill offers green waste solution to Hinchinbrook

Mountains of green waste collected across the Hinchinbrook Shire in Cyclone Yasi's wake could end up helping to power Sucrogen's Victoria Mill during the upcoming cane crushing season.

As part of an agreement formed with Hinchinbrook Shire Council in the days after the cyclone, Sucrogen will allow some of the expected hundreds of thousands of cubic metres of green waste to be stockpiled on the Victoria Mill site, outside Ingham.

There, it will eventually be woodchipped, with a view to trialling a blend with bagasse to be used as a supplement boiler fuel for Victoria Mill's boilers during the 2011 crushing season. Bagasse is the fibre leftover after sugarcane is crushed to remove its juice. The byproduct is traditionally used as boiler fuel at all seven of Sucrogen's sugar mills, to produce steam, which is converted into electricity for the milling process. Victoria Mill Site Manager Russell Brown said although no large quantities of woodchips had previously been tried as fuel for the site's boilers, they had been used successfully at other sugar mills.

He said Sucrogen's agreement with the council delivered benefits to both parties. "Hinchinbrook Shire Council didn't have the capacity at its waste facilities to store the massive amount of green waste created by Cyclone Yasi," Mr Brown said. "We have the storage room available on site and are willing to have a go at recycling the waste. "Our bagasse stocks were at critical levels by the end of the last crushing season after having to constantly stop and start the factory because of rain interruptions. "Some of the bagasse we were stockpiling for the coming season was then exposed to rain during the cyclone, when tarpaulins covering it were damaged, leaving us with limited supplies to restart the mill." While Sucrogen is optimistic the green waste can be effectively used as boiler fuel, it will take some experimenting to make it work. "We have to make sure we have the right blend of bagasse and green waste," he said. "The quality of the woodchip is also important. "The council has given us an undertaking, as much as practicable, to remove palm fronds and tree species with high levels of sap or gum, like frangipanis.

Meeting Dates – 2011

The next LAWMAC meeting date is the 3-4 March 2011 at the Riverway Centre. The rest of the years meeting dates will be finalised at this meeting.

How do you eat an elephant?

Townsville was lucky to be spared significant structural damage from Cyclone Yasi however an estimated 65,000 trees were blown over during the event. Townsville Waste Services has been called on to provide waste management for an estimated 3-4 years worth of greenwaste over the next two months. This means that Townsville will produce somewhere between three to four hundred thousand cubic metres of mulch.

Temporary mulching sites have been set up throughout the City to reduce the short haul time for collection trucks. Traffic control and security at these sites is a challenge at times. Temporary greenwaste sites significantly reduce the traffic demand on our landfills.

Disposing of the product is also a mammoth (that's a very large hairy elephant!) task. We are covering our landfill batters and spreading it across the undisturbed portions of our landfills. Residents will also be able to take chipper waste from neighbourhood parks.



To put that in perspective, if we spread it evenly in one pile on a rugby league field, the pile would be 60 metres high. That's the same height as a twelve story building.

To chew through this elephant one bite at a time, we have contracted greenwaste contractors from Townsville, Brisbane and Sydney. Initially commencing production of 5,500 cubic metres per day, mulch is currently being produced at 8,000 cubic metres per day.



The V8 solution to food waste

Townsville's V8 track was put to good use after Cyclone Yasi when it was used to set up a temporary transfer station to dispose of spoiled food stuffs.

Twenty bulk bins and a front lift truck were located permanently at the site for three days after Cyclone Yasi.

Loss of power meant that many residents had spoiled foodstuffs to get rid off. They were encouraged to bag the waste and to deliver it to the V8 track or to take it to the normal landfill and transfer stations sites.



Overall this proved to be a very worthwhile response and we will include this in our disaster management plans as a normal response following any future disaster event.

During the course of the three days over 2500 vehicles entered the site. This significantly reduced the load on our landfills and provided a quick drop off for residents.

The major challenges for Townsville Waste Services were traffic control and ensuring our use did not conflict with the needs of the SES who were also using the facility.

Developments in Waste Reform

You would have to have been hiding under a big rock to not know that the new Queensland Waste Strategy and associated Industry Waste Levy is about to descend upon the good people of Queensland.

The draft strategy and proposed levy were announced in June 2010, with the finalised strategy produced in December. The strategy provides ambitious targets for waste reduction and resource recovery and many local governments will need to review how they conduct their waste management operations if they are to meet these targets. The targets aren't mandatory (yet!) but give us a good look at where the State would like to see waste management in the next ten years.

The industry waste levy was due to commence 1 July 2011 but with the significant impact of natural disasters across the state, the commencement date has been delayed until 1 January 2012. Information on this has just been released through the LGAQ Circulars – we release information as soon as know so local government is informed.

LGAQ has lobbied hard for good outcomes from an industry waste levy the government was determined to introduce. Some of these outcomes include:

- No industry waste levy on municipal solid waste (MSW) or self haul domestic waste.
- A more streamlined operational model for the waste levy, avoiding the "stockpiling" system used in other jurisdictions where councils are required to collect a waste levy on materials that will ultimately be recovered.

LAWMAC's Website

www.lawmac.org.au

for past issues of the newsletter and information.

Guaranteed access by councils to funding under the Waste Avoidance and Resource Efficiency Fund (WARE) and the Sustainable Future Fund (SFF), despite industry opposition.

- A transitional provision exempting recycling residuals from the levy.
- A \$4 million fund to get councils levy ready by assisting with infrastructure and ancillary costs.

LGAQ is still negotiating the governance arrangements of the SFF with the state government and information will be released as soon as these details are finalised.

A number of information sessions are being planned across the levy zone for February and March. The aim of these sessions is to provide up to date information to elected members and officers. There has been some confusion and concern surrounding the strategy and levy and these sessions will allow these issues to be addressed.

If you have any questions regarding the waste reform contact Christine Blanchard, LGAQ Principal Advisor Council Support, phone 30002243, 0407653896 or email Christine_blanchard@lgaq.asn.au.

Extension of the Phase 2 Waste Facility Assistance Grant program

Due to the recent natural disasters across Queensland and the extension of the Phase 1 program, the application closure date is now

31 March 2011

Further information available from
Stephen Murray, Project Manager 07 33395820
stephen.murray@derm.qld.gov.au

More information on the project and a list of successful schools can be found on the "Do the right thing, use the right bin" school project website:

http://www.derm.qld.gov.au/environmental_management/waste/public_place_recycling/schools_project.html

DERM is currently reviewing running a second round. If you support a second round please email schoolrecycling@derm.qld.gov.au



Queensland Students Set to become waste busters

Primary schools across Queensland have signed up to become waste busting champions through the Queensland Governments 'Do the right thing, use the right bin' project.

The project was launched in August 2010 with the aim of providing 150 Queensland primary schools with waste minimisation equipment and awareness raising material to help cut their waste by half. The materials included wheelie bins, colour coded lids, bin stickers, posters, organics caddies and rebates for composters and worm farms.

In total, 151 schools successfully applied for the project with 30 schools located within LAWMAC councils. Included in these successful schools are Kinchant, Tinaroo and Paluma Environmental Education Centres where schools will be able to come and learn about waste management and recycling using the "Do the right thing, use the right bin" materials.

With the help of the Australian Packaging Covenant and the Department of Education and Training and their Earth Smart Science program, over 50,000 Queensland primary school students will soon be learning to minimise their waste, increase recycling and help the environment.

Townsville Waste Services goes to University!



Steve Robson and Robyn Lyons Townsville Waste Services

The existing waste contract calls for approximately 40 front lift bins of varying sizes serviced over a 7 day period throughout the year. Service levels are currently being jointly reviewed by both parties to enhance effectiveness and reduce waste to landfill.

Townsville City's executive manager of waste services, Mr Gary Ewart said "the JCU contract is a major achievement for Townsville Waste Services. It demonstrates our ability to provide competitively priced services that meet the outcomes of the QLD waste strategy."

Townsville Waste Services has recently been awarded a contract to supply and service cardboard bins; paper waste and commingled recycling bins at Townsville's James Cook University Campus.

This contract has an initial operating period of three (3) years and will complement the existing waste collection contract. This means that Townsville Waste Services will provide the bulk of the James Cook Universities waste management requirements.

The contract will incorporate the use of front lift and 1100l cardboard bins. A variety of commingled recycling bins will also be provided including 1100l 660l; 240l and 120l commingled recycling bins and 240l and 120l blue paper bins, a total of 326 bins.

These bins will be serviced using both front lift and rear lift trucks with each waste stream serviced separately on different days and alternant cycles according to requirements as specified within the terms of the contract. The bins for this contract will shortly begin to be rolled out across the University Campus with the contract expected to commence soon after that.



National Television and Computer Product Stewardship Scheme Update

The Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities is preparing the drafting of regulations to underpin arrangements for collecting and recycling televisions and computers under the new national Television and Computer Product Stewardship Scheme. Whilst the consultation process includes public meetings, designed to be both explanatory and to gauge views on the issue, none had been originally scheduled for North Queensland due to the current focus on natural disaster recovery. However, a meeting is now scheduled for 4 April 2011, 11am to 1pm with the venue yet to be announced. The consultation paper will be released in early March and further information will be posted on the department's website www.environment.gov.au/settlements/waste/ewaste/consultation/index.html

Shake-up at Townsville Waste Services

There have been some staff changes at Townsville Waste Services (TWS). In 2010 Townsville City Council reviewed the Commercial Businesses Division which includes TWS. As a result of that process, there have been a number of changes in staff and responsibilities.

The management structure of TWS has been streamlined. Waste Collection and Waste Disposal now report to a single manager of operations – Mr Matt McCarthy (pictured right)

The executive manager position in TWS has been removed. TWS now reports to a new position, the Executive Manager Utility Services which has been filled by Mr Gary Ewart. Utility Services includes TWS, Trade Services and laboratories.

TWS has farewelled Mr Ian Kuhl and Mr Peter Gray, both of whom elected to take voluntary redundancies. Ms Hayley Page has been recognised for her work and has been appointed to a wider project management role in Commercial Businesses. She will retain her close links with TWS as she continues to provide support across the entire Division.

The Director Commercial Businesses Mr Ken Diehm said "the restructure would provide greater efficiency in services and would mitigate expected increases in utilities charges. "The objective of the review was to look at the best use of available resources to deliver the best services we provide to the community in an effective and efficient manner," he said.

"Having said that, it was also done in the expectation of the community for water and sewerage charges to increase, and that this increase in charges would be limited.

"Next year we've got significant infrastructure coming on board which will add to our costs and this \$ 1.2 million saving will go a way towards mitigating cost increases associated with that."

Mr Ken Diehm said the position axings had nothing to do with performance



Matt McCarthy

DrumMuster

The drumMUSTER program continues to evolve in North Queensland, with all local councils on board determined to support and enhance the nation-wide recycling program.

New Regional Consultant Colin Hoey has taken the reins from the iconic Bill Davis and is starting to get comfortable with the operations and staff involved in the north. Colin will continue to focus on increased returns through better access to compounds for chemical users. This strategy has proven successful in all areas where it has been undertaken. "The farmers generally want to recycle their containers and it is important that we provide options which facilitate the program's objectives" said Colin.

New Sites

Giru and Home Hill in the Burdekin Shire have just completed new drumMUSTER compounds. "These facilities are now able to receive containers during open hours at Giru Transfer Station and Bojack's Road Transfer Station. The Bojack's Road compound is right in the cane growing area and I would expect good participation from locals," said Mr. Hoey.

The Whitsunday area has also has new compounds at Proserpine and Bowen. Residents in these areas can now deliver drums during the course of normal operating hours to Kelsey Creek and Bowen Waste sites. The ease of receipt is sure to attract the attention of local farmers and increased program participation is a given if results from other areas is an indication.

"The Bowen area is a significant production area and I would expect that the increased receipt hours will lead to better returns", Hoey said.



Home Hill transfer station

ChemClear

The ChemClear program is gearing up for a collection in Queensland in mid-2011. Bookings to date are 14,121 litres of group 1 and 18,497 litres of group 2. Councils which have confirmed bookings prior to the collection will be contacted as usual regarding pick-up points. A total of 59,613 litres of product has been received by the program in the two previous collections in Qld.

For further information on drumMUSTER and Chemclear please contact your Queensland Regional Consultant Colin Hoey on 0428 964 576 or colinhoey@bigpond.com

Do the right thing Schools program

Thanks to cyclone Yasi, DERM advise that bins and allocated materials destined for successful schools have been delayed but orders have been packed and are on their way out. Further information contact schoolsrecycling@derm.qld.gov.au

Long serving officer retires

Ian Kuhl has ended his local government career that commenced in 1967 as a Cadet Health Surveyor for Emerald Shire Council and was punctuated by a service in the military when Ian was called up for National Service. Ian went to recruit on the 26th of January 1971 and graduated as an Infantry Platoon Commander. Typical of the army, Ian requested Armoured, Artillery or Infantry Corps but was instead sent to Medical Corps.

After a very interesting Army career involving work in Papua New Guinea, Ian was appointed as an EHO with Thuringowa City in February 1991. After a couple of years easing back into the local government culture made the move to Townsville City. Ian sees LAWMAC as an extremely valuable organisation which assists small councils with a knowledge bank, allows the larger councils with more resources to develop their technologies and also provides a voice in the political decision making at State and Federal level.

Ian has very many fond memories of the group and the culture. Ian found representing LAWMAC on committees and working groups was very professionally rewarding.



Ian Kuhl demonstrating some of his skills in PNG

Ian stressed it is people who have made his life whether it be his family, in local government, in the rugby community, in the disability sector or in the military, he thanks them all.