

# Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan

2024-27



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# Introduction

The *Queensland Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011* (the Act) requires each State entity to develop, adopt and implement a Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan (the Plan) that is publicly available.

The Act requires that the Plan includes information about:

- waste reduction and recycling targets
- actions to be taken to improve waste reduction and recycling
- performance management and monitoring
- continuous improvement in waste management.

The Department of Housing and Public Works (the department) is committed to the efficient and effective use of resources to minimise waste.

The focus of the department's Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan is to identify the activities and actions that will either avoid or reduce the waste generated by the department in the delivery of its functions and services or improve the way the department manages its waste.

This Plan will outline how the department will continuously improve its waste management activities, including its quantification and measurement of targets for reporting purposes.

The first year of this Plan's implementation will include activities that help identify a baseline of current performance across the diverse portfolio, alongside waste reduction and recycling targets.

The second and third year of the Plan will build upon progress, consolidate learnings and actions that work to meaningfully reduce the volume of waste management produced by the department.

The Plan aligns with the *Queensland Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy* which provides the strategic framework across government.

# Overview of the organisation

The department's vision is a brighter future for Queenslanders through housing, building and service innovation. Our purpose is to deliver a place to call home for more Queenslanders, to create a more prosperous Queensland through government procurement, youth engagement and a thriving night-life economy, and to strengthen the construction sector.

This is achieved through our objectives:

- Secure Queensland's housing foundations – increase housing options and harness the potential of the community housing and homelessness sectors to grow and deliver housing that helps people find, secure and keep a place to call home.
- Unlock potential – create future prosperity by unleashing Queensland's procurement power, bolstering the night-life economy, and activating opportunities for young Queenslanders.

- Build Queensland's future – boost Queensland's productivity through an effectively regulated construction industry and contribute to a more sustainable, low-emission future.
- Strengthen our performance – foster a culture of integrity, wellbeing, learning and inclusion where we empower our people to deliver solutions and continuously improve.

The department provides essential services to Queenslanders, including social and affordable housing and homelessness support, building and design services and advice, initiatives for young Queenslanders, and assistance with government procurement.

## Scope

The primary focus of the Plan is to understand the types of waste generated by the department's business activities and implement a range of initiatives to improve waste management and reduction practices. It aims to not only drive compliance with legislative obligations in respect to waste management but also to promote more sustainable waste management practices within the department. Ultimately, the goal is to transition over time to increasingly achieve the principles of a circular economy.

The Plan applies to all department's employees and focuses on operations within the department controls.

Statutory bodies/authorities under the portfolios of the Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Youth are not included in this Plan. These entities are responsible for their own plans.

## Waste generated from departmental activities

### Context

The department has a combined workforce of approximately 4,100 people across 105 locations in Queensland, including 22 Housing Service Centres and 35 works depots. While we predominately work in office environments within Brisbane city, our housing and QBuild services are decentralised with regional offices across the State.

The department leases premises from several vendors which means it does not have full control of all sites. In all circumstances the department will seek to influence behaviours noting that there may be constraints due to the location and its circumstances.

### Types of waste generated by the department

For waste management purposes, the department's activities are categorised into two main categories:

- office-based waste
- non-office-based waste.

It is assumed that office-based functions, regardless of location, generate similar types of waste. For instance, an administration office in Robina is likely to produce the same waste as one in Mount Isa or Mackay.

In contrast, non-office-based functions are often unique in nature and, therefore, generate distinctive waste streams. Most of this waste is generated under construction and maintenance contracts managed by Public Works through QBuild or Major Projects business areas. QFleet also generates unique waste streams, primarily consisting of used tyres.

## **Office-based waste**

Most office-based waste includes:

- office consumables – paper, pens, cleaning items
- carbon produced by transportation – travel by air or car to regions and communities
- energy – sub-optimal use of printers, lighting and other generative technologies
- co-mingled – plastic bottles and containers, coffee cups, milk/juice cartons, disposable cutlery, aluminium cans
- organics – food and plant material
- technology – obsolete laptops, hard-drives, phones, equipment, printer and toner cartridges, batteries
- furniture – obsolete, surplus, or broken furniture or artwork
- facilities – broken light bulbs, scrap materials.

## **Non-office-based waste**

The department, through Public Works, influences the disposal of construction and demolition waste created under contracts and leasing arrangements, particularly through ‘preferred supplier’ arrangements. This includes:

- adopting industry recognised targets and verification methodologies for managing construction and demolition waste, such as the Green Star rating tools and engaging with industry recyclers accredited under the Product Stewardship for Oil (PSO) Scheme.
- actively participating in the Sustainable Built Environment National Research Centre (SBEnc) project 1.65 A National Economic Approach to Improved Management of Construction and Demolition Waste.

The Act requires that the Plan addresses all aspects of waste management, including waste minimisation actions in third-party activities that the department controls or influences through contractual arrangements and specifications.

While the department is not directly responsible for the waste generated during construction, renovation, maintenance, and demolition projects undertaken by external contractors, it actively promotes and influences

waste minimisation activities where possible. Clients and contractors are encouraged to minimise or divert as much waste as possible from landfill to strategies such as the effective use, reuse and recycling of materials.

## Public Works as Service Provider

Public Works has a unique role in managing Queensland Government generated waste as a service provider to other agencies. The quality of service delivered by Queensland Government Accommodation Office (QGAO) and QBuild has a direct impact on the ability of other state government agencies to fulfil their own waste reduction plans.

Public Works can, therefore, influence the overall effectiveness of the government's waste strategy and improve efficiencies through:

- influencing the design and materials/product selection of new facilities
- supporting waste management and the circular economy through specifications and contractual arrangements during construction activities
- supporting consistent education and signage in multi-agency facilities
- influencing the terms and conditions of new and renewed office leases
- managing specifications and contract arrangements for cleaning and waste collection services
- providing meaningful reporting to tenant agencies.

## Approach to waste management

The *Queensland Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy* notes that historically, the Queensland economy has been predominantly linear, which means that things are typically made from virgin raw materials, used, and then thrown away. However, the global economy is transitioning to a more circular economy where emphasis is given to the recirculation of products and materials for as long as possible through reuse, repair, remanufacturing, delivering products as services, sharing and recycling.

Underpinning the department's Plan is a commitment to collaboration to minimise overproduction, duplication, and waste. All divisions and staff have a role to play in increasing awareness and making deliberate decisions to reduce the waste footprint. This includes:

- minimising and avoiding the overproduction of meeting papers wherever possible
- utilising contemporary digital materials instead of hardcopy paper files
- adopting born-digital record creation, utilisation, and storage methods
- limiting unnecessary consumption of materials and resources
- recycling and repurposing materials already produced
- keeping travel to essential meetings only.

Inherent in the successful adoption of contemporary practices is acknowledging that resources are finite. The Waste and Resource Management Hierarchy (Figure 1) provides a clear order of preference for managing waste and resources.

## Resource management hierarchy

The resource management hierarchy and guidelines set out in the Act provide the foundations for the department's approach to waste management.

Waste avoidance should be the top priority. After that, options to reduce, reuse, recycle, and repurpose should be considered.

The least favourable option is to dispose of waste. Where disposal is required, the department seeks to ensure that the method is the least harmful to the environment.

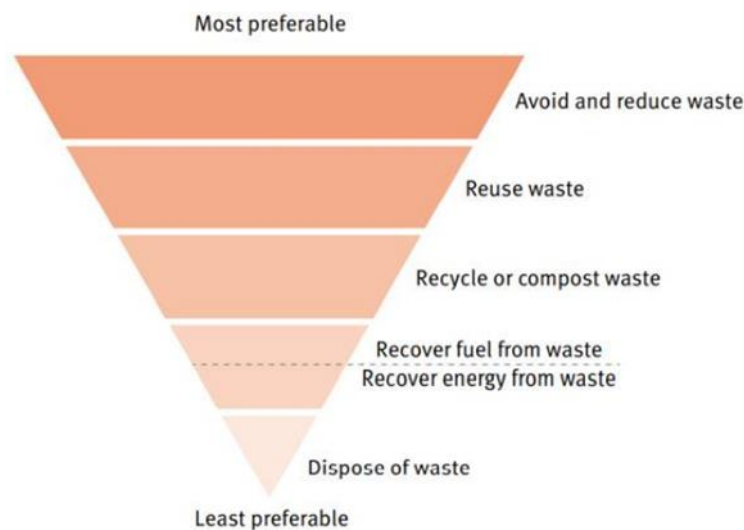


Figure 1: Waste and Resource Management Hierarchy

## Waste and resource management principles

The department is guided by the waste and resource management principles in decision making:

- The **polluter pays principle** states that all costs associated with the management of waste should be borne by the people or organisation of people who generated the waste. The costs associated with the management of waste may include the costs of minimising the amount of waste generated; containing, treating, and disposing of waste, and rectifying environmental harm caused by waste.
- The **proximity principle** states that waste and recovered resources should be managed as close to the source of generation as possible. This may include using local service providers wherever possible which is consistent with the proximity test in the Queensland Procurement Policy.
- The **circular economy principle** notes that all products and materials are kept for as long as they have value or remain useful. A whole-of-life view of the production and consumption of products and materials is promoted as a means to reduce or eliminate the need to send waste to landfill, ensuring

that through design, procurement, and logistics, resources are reused or recycled to their maximum capacity.

- The **product-stewardship principle** notes that there is a shared responsibility between all persons who are involved in the life cycle of a product for managing the environmental, social, and economic impacts of the product.

## Waste reduction and recycling targets

The department's targets are consistent with the *Queensland Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy* targets which were developed to support the Strategy's vision, drive market growth and deliver the benefits associated with improved waste management:

- 25 per cent reduction in household waste by 2050
- 90 per cent of waste is recovered and does not go to landfill by 2050
- 75 per cent recycling rates across all waste types by 2050.

Specific initiatives that the department will pursue are included in the Action Plan.

## Performance management and monitoring

### Roles and responsibilities

Roles	Responsibilities
Executive Leadership Team	Sponsorship and support for the Plan at an enterprise and divisional level to achieve the objectives of the <i>Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011</i> .
Senior Executives	Tactical responsibility at a business group area to comply with the Plan and to provide enabling support to the Executive Leadership Team.
Manager (or Director) Corporate Governance	Promotion of the Plan, liaison with divisions in the development of new initiatives to support the Plan and measurement and reporting of outcomes against the Plan.
Departmental staff	Awareness of the Plan and ensuring that personal behaviours and team decisions are compatible with the spirit and intent of the Plan.

### Reporting requirements

The department will produce an annual report on its waste management activities in accordance with the Act (section 148).



## Continuous improvements

The department is committed to continuous improvement in waste management and will refresh the action plan annually over the lifecycle the Plan. Where targets have been met or exceeded the department will develop new targets to further improve outcomes in waste reduction.

The department will report annual waste management achievements to the Audit and Risk Committee to provide governance and assurance of activities and garner insights for how performance and targets may be improved.

## Action Plan

The department Waste Reduction and Recycling Action Plan 2024-27 is based on four main strategies:

1. waste avoidance
2. waste management to improve reuse and recycling
3. waste reduction
4. planning, evaluation and reporting.

# Waste Reduction and Recycling Action Plan

2024-27

# Action Plan

Ref	Lead Area	Action	Waste Type	KPI/Measure/Outcome	Target date
<b>1. Waste avoidance</b>					
1.1	Public Works (QBuild)	Investigate opportunities to influence customers and contractors to adopt waste minimisation measures in relation to construction and demolition waste created under contracts managed by QBuild. QBuild to update social procurement framework to provide guidance to support the inclusion of these requirements where applicable and directed by the customer agencies.	Building and construction	Customer requirements queried and established as part of QBuild project and program intake processes.  Where there is a specific environmental / sustainability criterion as part of non-priced evaluation, QBuild can report on how many projects used that criterion within a defined period.	June 2025
1.2	Public Works (QGAO)	Investigate the feasibility of replacing non-recyclable with recyclable paper towels in bathrooms and kitchens of department occupied office accommodation that provide recycled waste streams.	Office waste (paper)	Pilot program in one owned office building.	June 2025
1.3	Corporate Services	Reduce: - reliance on and consumption of paper - delete any pages of printing not required through 'Follow-me-print' - provide staff with the functionality and capability to transition from paper or digital information and records management	Office waste (paper)	Reduce printing and photocopying by 1% per annum	Annually by 30 June 2027

Ref	Lead Area	Action	Waste Type	KPI/Measure/Outcome	Target date
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- continue ongoing support to the department to utilise Microsoft 365 collaboration and tools.</li> <li>Reuse: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- encourage staff to re-use scrap paper.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Recycle: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- dedicated secure recycling bins available to all staff to encourage the recycling of printed material.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			
1.4	Procurement (QFleet)	Require all contracted tyre suppliers on the Tyres and Associated Services Standing Offer Arrangements (SOA) to be members of <a href="#">Tyre Stewardship Australia</a> . This scheme discourages the inappropriate dumping of old tyres as well as encouraging their reuse/recycling.	Motor vehicle fleet waste materials	100% of SOA participants are members of Tyre Stewardship Australia.	Ongoing
1.5	Procurement (QFleet)	Businesses applying to become a 'preferred supplier' of vehicle servicing and repair services to QFleet are requested to advise if they have an environmental waste management plan in place and secure arrangements with a registered waste management provider with the appropriate approvals.	Motor vehicle fleet waste materials	All new suppliers requested to provide details on environmental waste management plans and approvals.	Ongoing
<b>2. Waste management to improve reuse and recycling</b>					
2.1	Public Works (QGAO)	Expand data collection arrangements from property managers and waste collection contractors for office waste.	Office waste (general, comingle, paper/ cardboard, organic)	75% of QGAO portfolio by floor area supplying data for whole of government reporting.	June 2026
2.2	Public Works (QGAO)	Investigate feasibility of introducing organic waste streams to QGAO managed office accommodation as such services become available and economic.	Office waste (general, comingle, paper/ cardboard, organic)	Feasibility report finalised.	June 2025

Ref	Lead Area	Action	Waste Type	KPI/Measure/Outcome	Target date
2.3	Public Works (QGAO)	Investigate inclusion of waste stream monitoring and reporting arrangements within Green Lease Policy.	Office waste (general, comingle, paper/ cardboard, organic)	Update Green Lease Policy to include waste monitoring and reporting	Ongoing
2.4	Public Works (QGAO)	Liaise with waste collection contractors to encourage phase-out of volumetric based data and adoption of weight-based data.	Office waste (data quality)	Weight-based data provided for all DHPW occupied sites (except where a Local Government-only service is available)	Ongoing
2.5	Public Works (QGAO)	Apply comparative metrics to identify QGAO managed sites that may be over-serviced in terms of bin sizes, bin quantities, service frequency or mix of bin types.	Office waste (data quality)	Number of over-serviced sites identified	Ongoing
2.6	Public Works (QGAO)	Audit QGAO managed sites identified as potentially over-serviced to review and adjust bin sizes, bin quantities, service frequency or mix of bin types.	Office waste (data quality)	Number of sites where waste data improves after audit and intervention	June 2026
2.7	Public Works (QGAO)	Review cleaning contract practices at over-serviced QGAO managed sites to ensure bin capacities are fully utilised at time of collection and develop strategies to improve access to data from confidential waste service providers in Public Works managed sites.	Office waste (data quality)	Number of sites where cleaning practices are modified	June 2026
2.8	Public Works (QGAO)	Develop strategies to improve access to data from confidential waste service providers in QGAO managed sites.	Office waste (Confidential waste)	Strategy developed Strategy implemented	Ongoing
2.9	Corporate Services	Disposal by an ICT lifecycle management supplier of printers, screens, laptops, tablets and PCs managed by the	E-waste	Number of items sent for disposal by TDSG	Ongoing

Ref	Lead Area	Action	Waste Type	KPI/Measure/Outcome	Target date
		Technology and Digital Solutions Group (TDSG) for the department.		that are classified as e-waste	
2.10	Public Works (QGAO)	Review current office waste management systems and practices in place in office building occupied by DHPW  Consolidate DHPW CBD premises reducing square meterage utilised by the department	Office waste (general, comingle, paper/ cardboard, organic)	Diversion of 50% office waste from landfill (all DHPW occupied office buildings)	August 2025
<b>3. Waste reduction</b>					
3.1	Corporate Services (Lead for all divisions)	Reduce: - amount of stationery ordered by central team members who collate and review requests from individuals to be considered - team members encouraged to minimise stationery use. Reuse: - reuse old binders, stationery, file folders, report covers and the like, where possible Recycle: - ensure recycling bins for various types of stationery (paper, plastic etc.) are available for all staff.	Office waste (Stationery)	Annual reduction in stationery use by 1%	Ongoing
3.2	Corporate Services (Lead for all divisions)	Reduce: - crockery, glasses, cutlery provided to minimise single use items in kitchens - electronic activities are encouraged to minimise waste - bins not supplied at individual desks to minimise waste - staff awareness programs to understand recycling options. - staff are encouraged to purchase products and services which have less impact on the environment and human health, where possible. Reuse: - staff are encouraged to reuse materials - repurpose furniture.	Office waste (Other)	60% of waste is recycled	Ongoing

Ref	Lead Area	Action	Waste Type	KPI/Measure/Outcome	Target date
		Recycle: - ensure recycling bins are provided at the department's locations - include co-mingled recyclables, battery and toner recycling options and secure paper recycling bins.			
<b>4. Planning, evaluation and reporting</b>					
4.1	Corporate Services	Ensure Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan is reviewed at least every three years and Action Plan reviewed annually	N/A	Plan reviewed (3 yearly) / Action Plan reviewed (annually)	June 2027
4.2	Corporate Services	Report progress against the Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan annually	N/A	Reporting completed (annually)	Annual
4.3	Corporate Services	Increase awareness by actively promoting waste reduction and recycling initiatives across the department, including: - develop and implement a targeted education campaign to raise the awareness of waste management - work with divisions to identify specific waste streams and, where practicable, develop quantifiable measures for waste generated, recycled, or disposed of (particularly non-office waste), with a view to establishing initiatives, baselines and future targets - refresh signage - undertake internal communications.	N/A	Improved quantifiable measure of waste streams identified/implemented	Ongoing
4.4	Corporate Services (Lead for all Divisions)	Service Level Agreements (SLAs) and Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with other agencies to include avoidance of waste as a key principle. Waste reduction to be a standard agenda items on meetings between parties.	N/A	SLAs/MoUs to be updated as they become due to renewal	30 June 2027
4.5	Corporate Services (Lead for all Divisions)	Policy and practice reviews: - key policies across department to be updated, where relevant, to promote resource efficiency and incorporate waste management targets - travel policy to be updated to include clauses that promote travel as a last resource and encourage the use of Microsoft	N/A	Policies to be reviewed	30 June 2025

Ref	Lead Area	Action	Waste Type	KPI/Measure/Outcome	Target date
		Teams - entertainment policy to be updated regarding not using single use items (plastic cups and cutlery).			
4.6	Corporate Services (Lead for all Divisions)	Identify opportunities as part of a review process to improve circular economy participation by the department. This may include reviewing travel expenditure, consumables expenditure and opportunities for collaboration.	N/A	Undertake quarterly reviews of budgets	Ongoing
4.7	Procurement	Engage with private contractors to ensure waste from departmental leases is managed and data is collected to further enhance process	N/A	Continued improvement of waste management and accessible contractor data	Ongoing