

MEDIA RELEASE

NEW COMMON WASTE COLLECTION SYSTEM FOR SHOROC REGION BEING CONSIDERED BY COUNCILS

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The future residential waste and recycling service for the Northern Beaches and Mosman beyond 2014 is being considered by Manly, Mosman Pittwater and Warringah councils.

The councils are seeking to design a system that maximises recovery of resources for environmental benefit at the same time as being practical and easy to use for residents and minimising cost to the community.

“As landfill space becomes increasingly rare and costly, it is vital that the collection system makes the most of the new recycling and resource recovery facilities being built at Kimbriki Resource Recovery Centre in Terrey Hills”, said SHOROC Executive Director Ben Taylor.

“We need to change the way we recycle so it is sustainable well into the future and keep costs to the community as low as possible. This plan would deliver the best social, environmental and economic outcomes for the community”.

To identify an optimal collection system, SHOROC commissioned independent waste experts Impact Environmental to work with the councils. Council waste staff then collaboratively developed recommendations which are being taken to all four councils for endorsement.

The recommended collection system being considered includes:

- **A food and garden organics bin collected WEEKLY** and converted into compost, with a small kitchen bench top tidy bins and cornstarch liner bags supplied and delivered to all households for food collection.
- **A combined recyclables bin**, including glass, plastics and paper, **collected FORTNIGHTLY** (weekly for units)
- **A general waste bin for left-over waste collected FORTNIGHTLY** (weekly for units), with further investigation into options for the handling of nappies through a weekly service for those that have a demonstrated need.

This new system will not create additional smells and odours as all food will continue to be collected weekly and options are being explored for a weekly nappy collection service as needed.

In addition, staff are recommending that greater economic savings could be gained by joint tendering through a combined Regional Waste Collection Services Contract, and that business models for the efficient and cost effective delivery of quality waste services be explored (excluding Manly Council).

“This is exactly what the community is asking for – Council’s working together in a smarter and more efficient way”, said Mr Taylor.

It is planned the common collection system would be established from around 2014 and its introduction would include significant community education.

Ends – more detail on some common questions is below.

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Shore Regional Organisation of Councils – a partnership of Manly, Mosman, Pittwater & Warringah Councils.

Common Questions & Answers

What system is being proposed?

The average house or 'single dwelling' service includes:

- (1) A combined food and garden organics bin collected **WEEKLY**, with kitchen bench top tidy bins and cornstarch liner bags supplied and delivered to all households for food collection
- (2) A fully co-mingled recyclables bin, including glass, plastics and paper, collected **FORTNIGHTLY** (weekly for units)
- (3) A general waste bin collected **FORTNIGHTLY**

For multi-unit dwellings (units, apartments, large townhouse developments) weekly services across all waste streams will continue.

Why the suggested change?

This is a much more modern and efficient service that will mean increased recycling, reduced waste going into landfill and keep costs as low as possible for residents.

It saves residents money. Landfill disposal costs are increasing each year due to the increasing State Government landfill levy and landfill operating charges. The new system being proposed minimises the impact of these increasing costs and will keep rates much lower than if we kept our current system.

Recycling is increased as the food and garden organics are recycled into compost which can be re-used by councils or other organisations. Currently food waste, which makes up 40% of the general garbage stream, goes to landfill.

This system will also allow the councils to meet targets set by the State Government for all local councils to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill.

If garbage is only going to be collection fortnightly, won't it start to fester and smell?

This system is already being used by hundreds of thousands of residents across Sydney and doesn't cause a problem.

Food will continue to be collected WEEKLY in the green lidded 'organics bin' along with garden clippings, prunings, leaves etc. This will include fruit & vegetable scraps, fish, meat, bones, tea bags, coffee grounds, leftover foods, bread, cereal, pasta, grains, leftover foods, grass clippings, sticks, twigs, weeds, leaves, flowers, paper towel, tissue and pet excrement.

As the smells and odours we typically associate with our waste bin come from the decomposing food waste, this new system is no more likely to cause odours than the current system.

The residual garbage bin should mainly contain 'inert' materials, things like textiles, ceramics and dust/dirt, meaning the contents should not be rotting or decomposing.

What about nappies?

Councils will be investigating options for the handling of nappies through a weekly service or something similar for those that need it.

Will I have to pay more rates?

The cost of waste disposal is increasing because of the escalating cost of landfill and various environmental levies.

The new system being proposed minimises the impact of these increasing costs and will keep rates much lower than if we kept our current system.

This is because the new system takes the food waste out of landfill and puts it through a composting system, therefore avoiding the significant landfill costs. With food making up around 40% of our general waste stream at the moment, this is a big potential saving.

How will I get my food scraps into the organics bin?

Councils plan to provide all residences with a kitchen 'tidy bin' that can be placed on the benchtop or in a cupboard. Special cornstarch bags will be provided to be used as bin liners which then breakdown quickly when composted. Residents simply collect their food waste in the tidy bin until full when it can be tied up and placed in your organics bin along with your garden and other organic waste.

What can I place in a co-mingled recycling bin?

The proposal to move to a co-mingled recycling bin is about simplifying the recycling, making it easier for residents and continuing the high recovery rate of recyclables.

In a co-mingled bin residents simply place all paper and cardboard, as well as plastics, glass and recyclable metals in the same bin. This is much simpler than the current system which has two separate streams and is hardly used anywhere else in Sydney.

Can I get a bigger bin if I want?

It is planned that residents will be able to pay for a bigger bin if considered necessary. The extra cost is to cover the extra cost of disposing of the waste to landfill.

When will the system be brought in?

If agreed by all the councils, it is planned the system will be introduced in around late 2014. The introduction will follow a significant period of community education to ensure all residents fully understand and are comfortable with the system.