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M E D I A R E L E A S E

RENEW NSW combats global warming

Scientists believe that we are producing more waste than the environment can absorb. With 14 tonnes of greenhouse gases generated each year by the average Australian household, RENEW NSW is on a rescue mission to reduce global warming.

The earth's temperature is estimated to rise between 1.4 and 5.8oC this century making global warming a hot issue. **RENEW NSW**, the voluntary group focused on improving waste management solutions for rural and regional NSW, has been working on initiatives and education to help reduce greenhouse gases and global warming in Australia.



Landfills throughout Australia are a major contributor of producing the greenhouse gases of which methane and carbon dioxide are two of the biggest contributors to the rise of temperature. In landfills, these gases are generated when organic matter, (food, paper, cardboard and garden waste), breaks down without fresh air. And unfortunately, polluting gases are still produced for up to 30 years after landfills have been closed.

Global warming is caused by the increase in greenhouse gases in the Earth's atmosphere. The sun's infra-red radiation is trapped by the greenhouse gases when it leaves the atmosphere which results in an increase of the Earth's temperature.

The great news is that organic matter does not have to end up in landfills as there are a number of alternatives! It can be recycled into new products or deposited in composts. **RENEW NSW** is initiating alternative waste management projects throughout rural and regional NSW aimed at reducing the amount of organic waste being disposed in landfills.

In one year, 187,686 tonnes of domestic waste was recycled by rural regional councils, which roughly equates to greenhouse gas savings of over 94,000 tonnes (CO₂ equivalent) or taking more than 22,500 cars off the road.

REROC Waste Forum, which represents the Eastern Riverina region of NSW, is working with Charles Sturt University on the Small Communities Closed Loop Recycling Pilot Project. The aim of this project is to develop and test an organics recycling system that can be operated in small communities to reduce the amount of organic waste ending up in landfill.

Charles Sturt University have set up 8 different composts of organic matter including grass, food waste, paper and cardboard. These composts are being tested to determine the amount of maintenance needed to sustain the composts and which compost works best on different gardens and lawns. The results of the tests will provide Councils with a recipe for a low cost, low key compost solution which they can set up to turn organic waste into a usable resource.

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As a result of this project, to date 245 tonnes of organic waste has been processed through this system or the equivalent to 3500 60kg household garbage bins full of organic waste was saved from landfill.

A side benefit of this project includes the creation of compost which will enrich Council's gardens and parks.

Another **RENEW NSW** group, the Northern Inland Regional Waste group (NIRW), which represents New England and North West of NSW, have set up the Green Waste project which is a great example of recycling organic matter. Councils participating in this project have set up green waste collection methods which include a fortnightly kerbside collection, green waste pick ups and stockpiling the green waste which is delivered to landfills.

Green waste, including garden, vegetation and timber, is collected and processed into mulch and then offered to the local community to use on their gardens. As a result of this project, NIRW has produced 214,000m³ of mulch since November 2005 or 85 Olympic sized swimming pools, diverting this waste product from landfills.

To help combat global warming, the North East Waste Forum (NEWF), which represents the North East region of NSW including Byron Bay, Ballina and the Clarence, Richmond and Tweed Valleys, has established the Waste Wise events project. NEWF are working with eight local event organisers to assist them with waste management practices which will increase awareness of and promote sustainable practices in event management.

As a direct result of this waste initiative from four events which have recently taken place, between two to three tonnes less waste has been disposed of to landfill. A popular regular event, the Bangalow Market introduced a 3 bin system to separate organics, paper and recyclable drink containers from general waste. This resulted in a reduction of waste to landfill by 70%. Another favourite event, the All Girls Surf Showdown which was held in Lennox Head diverted 40% of the events waste for recycling.

The collaborative approach of **RENEW NSW** allows the implementation of waste avoidance and resource recovery programs of which regions wouldn't be able to deliver alone. **RENEW NSW** – working together for the benefit of regional and rural NSW.

Further information on **RENEW NSW** can be found on their website: www.renewnsw.com.au

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Interviews are available with –

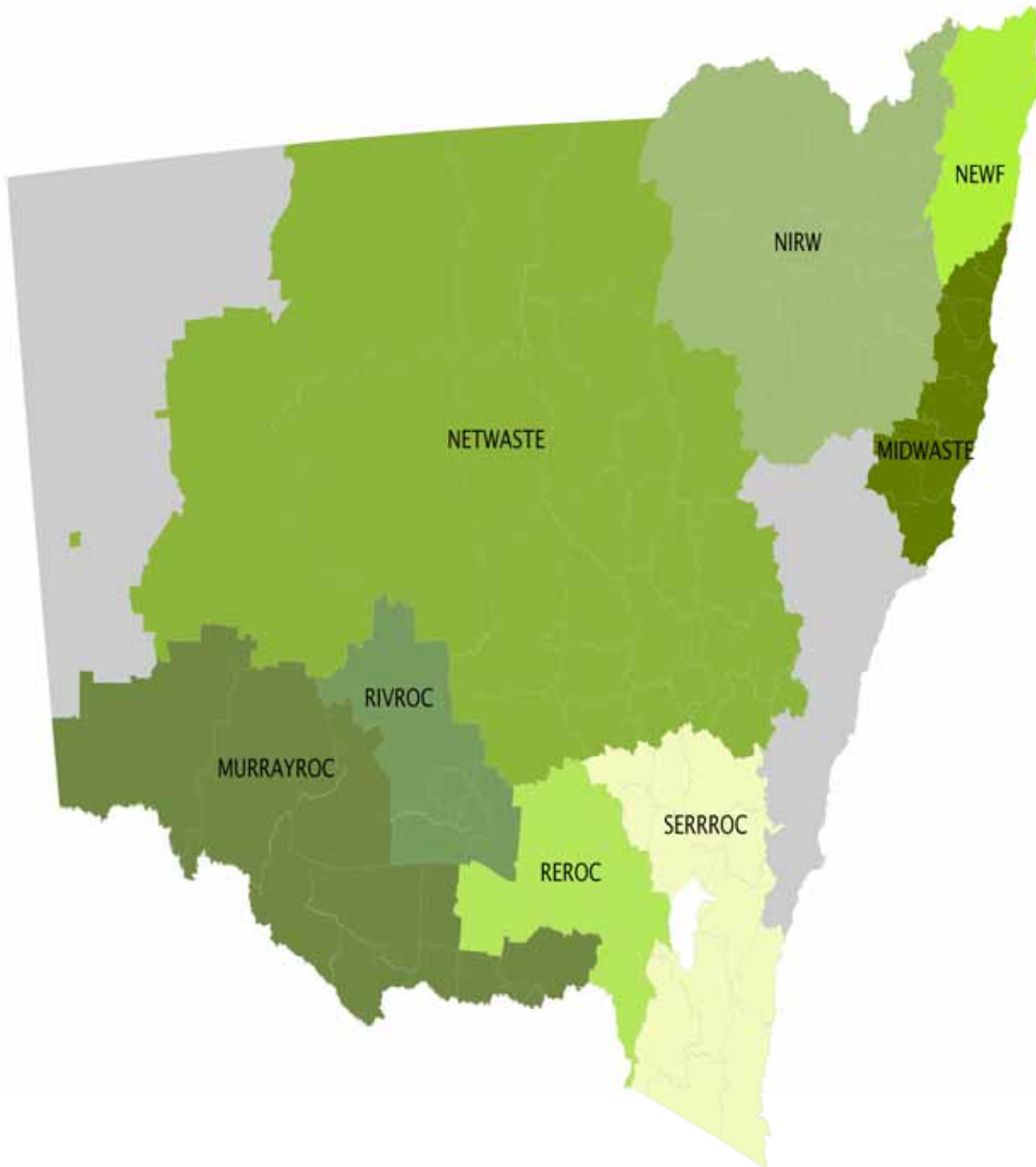
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Renew NSW is the collective identity of the eight voluntary regional waste management groups working across rural regional NSW

Renew NSW represents over 95 councils in rural regional NSW.