

Message from the Administrator



Residents may have noticed in the media recent announcements made from the Victorian Government regarding reforms to household waste and recycling in an effort to increase recycling rates and reduce waste going to landfill.

Our contract arrangements have meant that to date, no recycling collected by the South Gippsland Shire Council or its contractors has needed to be disposed of to landfill due to the recent recycling crisis, but other councils in the State have not been as fortunate. The recycling crisis has prompted the government to take action and make changes to the current system.

The release of the State Government's *Recycling Victoria – A New Economy* has prompted some media reports that all households in the State will receive a fourth bin for glass. These statements are premature because it is also recognised that an additional kerbside bin for glass may not work in all circumstances and that alternative arrangements may be more suitable. Council will investigate all options prior to determining the most appropriate method for the separate glass collection within our region.

It is likely however that food waste will be collected through a kerbside food organics/garden organics (FOGO) service in order to meet expected waste diversion targets.

In any case, changes to the current kerbside waste and recycling collection services are unlikely to occur until new contracts commence which may not be until 2023.

Another significant aspect of the reforms is the increase in landfill levy that Council is required to pay the Victorian Government. This is a tax that is paid on every tonne of waste sent to landfill and over the next three years the rate per tonne will almost double. This will lead to an increase in transfer station and landfill disposal fees and an increase in waste service charges for kerbside waste and recycling collection.

These changes are not only limited to kerbside collections – we will also see a container deposit scheme introduced by 2023, a requirement for commercial businesses to pre-sort their waste from 2025 and more investment made in facilities that convert waste to energy. The container deposit scheme will provide people with the opportunity to drop off bottles, cans and other specific recyclables for cash reimbursement.

While these announcements may be a little overwhelming to some, it is important to remember the changes to services will be rolled out over several years and all options will be carefully considered by Council to ensure that the best outcomes are achieved. Council will ensure that the community are continually updated and kept informed of changes to services as they are proposed and implemented.

Ultimately we will end up with a waste system that is more efficient and achieves better outcomes for the environment into the future.

Christian Zahra AM
Administrator