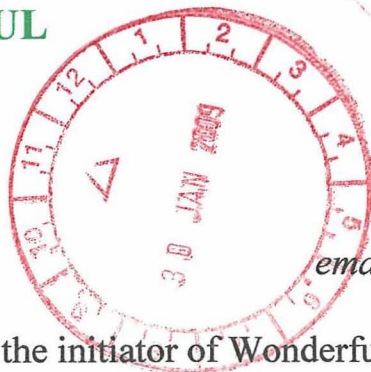


PUBLIC**WONDERFUL
WAYS
WITH
WASTE**

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Adrian Price is the initiator of Wonderful Ways With Waste, a program he created in 1997 to promote the 3R's to schools, community groups and rural Local Governments.

For a number of years, Adrian was a member of the Advisory Council of Waste Management also the Waste Management Board and the WA Litter Prevention Taskforce.

Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs.

1a. The function, effectiveness and efficiency of rural and Metropolitan Regional Councils with respect to the management of waste.

RURAL LANDFILLS.

While visiting rural towns to promote improved recycling; also as Tidy Towns judge for Keep Australia Beautiful Council of WA, I usually have a look at landfill sites and other waste management facilities. The following are my observations which I feel need to be addressed.

The majority of landfills are unmanned, no secure fencing other than a fence to minimise windblown litter escaping. Such landfills are often on fire and contain chemical containers which did not pass the DrumMuster inspection. Dead animals, asbestos, and tyres are among wastes which should not be disposed at domestic landfills.

At most rural landfills, space has been created to separate mixed household waste from scrap metal, greenwaste, demolition materials. Without a secure fence and a constant landfill attendant, the public often dispose at the easiest location, which is usually the landfill pit.

Many rural landfill sites are located adjacent to productive farms. There is increased risk of fires escaping from burning landfills. Escaping litter is also a problem to farmers, especially plastic bags which if picked up by a harvester could cause the harvester to overheat and catch fire.

Some landfills are located in bush reserves where the problems of fire and litter also exist.

A high percentage of potentially recyclable materials are buried (or burnt) in landfills.

Rural Recycling.

Only a few rural shires have recycling programs close to the effectiveness of those in the Perth metro area. There are isolated examples which could claim to be even more effective than the metro schemes. Wickepin and Boyup Brook each handle at least twenty two different types of household recyclables.

By contrast, many towns have nil, or very limited recycling efforts. With this in mind, I organised to launch the Keep Australia Beautiful Council - Event Recycling Trailer at the 2007 Dowerin Field Days and later at the Earth Solutions Expo, Toodyay.

I have photos of most of the above examples and would be happy to appear before the Committee.

Metropolitan and Regional Councils.

Generally waste management is well promoted, and managed. Further improvements appear to be the aim of the Regions. (*I have been out of WA for twelve months, returning April 2009 and therefore some of my comments may be out of date*) To my knowledge, Geraldton is the only city/regional waste facility which does not link with a kerbside recycling scheme or provide easy access recycling facilities.

The former Maroochy Shire Council in Queensland introduced a micro-chipped recycling bin. The Cleanaway trucks were fitted with computers and video equipment so that the driver when picking up the bin, recorded the address and weight of recyclables. The video enabled the driver to assess if all items were recyclable. If so, the resident had their rates reduced according to the weight of recyclables. If rubbish was included, the resident did not receive a reduction, instead received a reminder of what is recyclable. As with a Cleanaway promotion in WA about seven years ago, a promotion video was sent to every household.

Residents need to be constantly reminded of what is recyclable in their district. Provide new promotion regarding any changes.

Canning Vale Experience.

This excellent facility has demonstrated that domestic recyclables can be sorted in close proximity to other industries and residential areas. From what I have gathered from various reports, complaints arose regarding the odour of composting and perhaps mulching. Such future greenwaste treatments should only be considered in rural areas, unless in sealed units to prevent escape of odour. Similar problems may occur with most landfills and likewise are best located well away from metro areas and towns.

I do not have updated information with me while in Queensland and therefore have chosen not to comment on Terms of Reference 1b; 2 and 3.

I am grateful for being given the opportunity to make the above comments.

Adrian Price, WA Local Hero-Australian of the Year Awards 2004.