

9 Glossary of Waste & Recycling Terms and Acronyms

This fact sheet forms part of a series of resources to assist local governments with the collection and reporting of waste and recycling data. The remaining fact sheets and case studies can be downloaded from www.wasteauthority.wa.gov.au/publications/lg-resources.



The glossary of terms and acronyms provided here is intended for use specifically with the Annual Local Government Waste and Recycling Census for Department of Environment Regulation.

Term / Acronym	Description
Ad hoc events	See 'special events'
Annual charges	Waste (kerbside and vergeside): \$/yr/premises. Annual fee householder pays for waste collection service, may be provided in a breakdown in rates fees. Kerbside recycling: \$/yr/premises. Annual fee householder pays for recycling collection service, may be provided in a breakdown in rates fees. Drop-off waste or recycling charges: fees paid by householder (i.e. general public) to dispose of waste or recycling (e.g. disposal fees for trailer of waste to be disposed of at landfill).
AWT	Alternative Waste Treatment facility / process. An alternative method of handling waste compared to disposal to landfill. AWT may convert waste into energy, or useful by-products. AWT can be placed into three broad categories, which include modifications to conventional landfilling, thermal treatment, and biological treatment.
Bulk rubbish collection	See hard waste collection.
Construction and Demolition (C&D) waste	Construction and demolition waste. Material generated from commercial, government or residential building sites.
Co-mingled dry recyclables	Common recyclables, mostly packaging such as glass, plastics, aluminium and steel cans, cardboard, paper, liquid paperboard (milk cartons). 'Dry recyclables' excludes organic material.
Commercial and Industrial (C&I) waste	Waste originating from commercial and/or industrial activities (non-municipal and not construction & demolition).
Composting	The biological process that converts organic material into a useful soil additive. This process diverts organic material from landfill and so prevents the production of methane (a powerful greenhouse gas).
Contamination	Waste component of recyclables that is usually sent to landfill.
Contractor invoices	Financial information that often contains waste tonnage / volume data. Often received monthly.
Conversion Factors	Calculation used to convert a known volume of material to a weight. Factors are specific to the type of waste and level of compaction.
DER	Department of Environment Regulation, Western Australia. www.der.wa.gov.au .
Dockets	Dockets / tickets / receipt which provide evidence of waste delivery to a facility (landfill, transfer station etc.) usually provides volume or tonnage information and costs.
Domestic (or 'household') waste or recycling	Waste or recyclables generated from households collected by Local Government or their contractors.

Term / Acronym	Description
Drop-off facility	Site where residents can bring their waste or recyclables for disposal. Often located at the local landfill or transfer station.
E-waste	Electronic or electrical waste (anything with a plug or battery), such as televisions (cathode ray tubes), computers, fridges, printers, kettles, irons, microwaves etc.
	In Australia this is often used to refer to goods such as computers and their peripherals and televisions covered by product stewardship legislation.
Evaluation	Assessing data sets against relevant benchmarks and/or targets to establish the overall performance of a programme or project (usually carried out at key milestones for a project or at specific points in a year).
Financial year	Year running from 1 July to 30 June (e.g. 01/07/2012 – 30/06/2013) inclusive.
Fluorescent tubes/lamps	Light tubes or compact fluorescent (energy efficient) globes (rather than standard incandescent light globes).
FORC	The Forum of Regional Councils (FORC) comprises the five metropolitan Regional Councils and the City of Greater Geraldton which have agreed voluntarily to work to promote areas of common interest associated with waste management.
General waste	Material that is intended for disposal to landfill or AWT, normally what remains after the recyclables have been collected separately (also mentioned under 'mixed waste').
Green Purchasing Policy	See 'sustainable purchasing policy'.
Green waste	Plant material generated from gardens and parks e.g. grass clippings and vegetation prunings.
Gross (weight)	Total (laden) weight of vehicle and contents (waste).
Hard waste (see also bulk waste and vergeside collection)	The collection of bulky items of discarded 'junk' (e.g. furniture, TVs, barbeques etc.) from households on a regular, but infrequent basis (generally about two to four times per year).
Household	Occupants of a dwelling whether a house, flat, unit or farm with its own street address (or lot number for some rural dwellings).
Illegal dumping	A particular type of littering where people go out of their way to dump rubbish. It can be small bags of rubbish in urban streets and parks or trailer loads of material in National Parks or bushland reserves. Illegal dumping can be prosecuted under the Litter Act 1979 and can attract an infringement notice of \$200 or up to thousands of dollars if taken to court.
Inert waste	Inert waste is neither chemically or biologically reactive and will not decompose; examples include glass, sand and concrete.
KABC	Keep Australia Beautiful Council. A movement active in all States and Territories to lead, challenge and inspire all Australians to strive for a sustainable and litter free environment.
Kerbside collection	A regular, containerised collection services (often a wheelie bin) where the waste or recycling is collected from outside a resident's dwelling. Can apply to recycling, general waste and green waste.
LG	Local Government.
LGA	Local Government area.
Liquid paperboard	Composite packaging composing mainly of reconstituted paper fibres (e.g. milk cartons); often recyclable depending upon local infrastructure.
Litter	Rubbish left in public places; not disposed of into a bin. Common litter items include cigarette butts, chip and confectionery wrappers, fast food containers and drinks bottles.
MGB	Mobile Garbage Bin – a wheeled bin with a lid often used for kerbside collection of waste or recyclables. (Often called a 'wheelie bin').

Term / Acronym	Description
Mixed recyclables	Sometimes referred to as 'commingled recyclables' such as bottles, cans, jars, cardboard and paper collected mixed together for recycling.
Mixed waste	Waste (general waste and / or recyclables sent to landfill or AWT).
Monitoring	An ongoing process of collecting data and other information that can feed into an evaluation process.
MRF	Materials Recovery Facility. Plant and equipment for sorting and pre-processing materials from the waste stream for resource recovery.
Municipal waste	Waste derived from residential and public activities, collected by local governments (or their agents) from households, public places and public buildings. Municipal waste may include waste from small commercial premises or other similar activities where this is collected as part of the standard local government service.
MWAC	Municipal Waste Advisory Council: a standing committee of WALGA with delegated authority on municipal waste issues.
NEPM	National Environment Protection Measure: broad framework-setting statutory instruments which outline agreed national objectives for protecting or managing particular aspects of the environment.
Nett (weight)	Resultant weight of contents removed. Gross Wt – Tare Wt = Nett Wt
Organic waste	Separated food and/or 'green' material (e.g. grass clippings or vegetation prunings).
Permanent public place	See public place services.
Presentation rate (%)	This is the percentage of households which put their bin out (present) on collection day. This is useful to understand when conducting bin audits since some householders (particularly single or small households) may not 'present' their bin for collection every week if it is not full (most common for recycling bins).
Public place services	Public place services are waste bins (and can be public place recycling bins) permanently located in public areas such as in parks and on the street.
Putrescible waste	Putrescible waste comprises waste capable of decomposition; examples include food organics, green waste, manures, paper and cardboard.
Receipt	Refer to 'docket'.
Recyclable	Able to be recycled; that is, that local infrastructure is available for collection, sorting and transport to a recycling facility.
Recyclables	Materials that can be collected separately from the general waste and sent for recycling. For the purposes of this report it incorporates container glass, plastic, ferrous and non-ferrous metals, paper, cardboard and green waste, remembering that 'recyclable' is a location-specific term.
Recycling	A set of processes (including biological) that converts solid waste into useful materials or products, net of contaminants/residuals disposed.
Residual waste	Remaining waste that is sent to landfill once the recyclables have been sorted out or the biodegradable organic fraction has been recovered.
Reuse	Recovering value from a discarded resource in its original state without reprocessing or remanufacture (e.g. moving clean sand from one construction site to another). The term 'reuse' can also be applied in circumstances where an otherwise disposable item is replaced by a more durable item hence avoiding the creation of waste (e.g. using a ceramic coffee mug in place of disposable cups).
Separate paper and cardboard collection	Collection of paper and cardboard in a separate container to the waste bin and a separate container to other recyclables.
Separate recyclable containers only	Mixed dry recyclable bottles, jars, cans etc. such as glass, plastics, aluminium and steel (excludes paper and cardboard).

Term / Acronym	Description
Service provider / contractor	Private waste company contracted to undertake waste and / or recycling collection and transportation to disposal or recycling.
Solid waste	Waste products and materials that are 'spadeable'.
Special event	An event held by the local government that will require additional bins to be provided on a one-off or ad hoc basis (e.g. concerts, fireworks displays or other public gatherings).
Sustainable purchasing policy	Formal policy endorsed by the local government Chief Executive Officer that provides a framework for considering some or all of the following factors when buying goods or services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practices / operations that avoid or minimise consumption of resources • Minimise and manage potential environmental and social impacts associated with production of goods or delivery of services • Minimise social and environmental impacts of whole-of-life of goods and services • Provides value for money over whole-of-life • Is locally produced
Tare (weight)	Un-laden weight of vehicle once waste has been removed.
Ticket	Refer to 'docket'.
Tonnage	Weight of material in metric tonnes (equal to 1000 kg).
Transfer station	Location where waste and recyclables are collected and stored temporarily before transport to final destination. Transfer stations may be at a landfill premises or at an independent site. Some sorting of recyclables may occur at these sites.
Vergeside service	Vergeside collection services are bulk, infrequent (~every 4-6 months or on demand) services. Material is collected from residential 'vergesides' either non-containerised or in a skip provided by the Local Government. Vergeside services may relate to green waste or hard waste.
WALGA	Western Australia Local Government Association. WALGA is the peak industry body that advocates on behalf of ~140 WA Local Governments and negotiates service agreements for the sector. WALGA is not a government department or agency www.walga.asn.au .
Waste	Any substance or object the holder discards, intends to discard or is required to discard. Generally relates to material where the ultimate end point is disposal rather than recycling.
Waste audit	Detailed analysis of waste using physical sorting and weighing to identify composition and weight of each material in the waste stream.
Waste Authority	Statutory body to drive strategic planning and policy development for waste in WA. The Waste Authority was established by the <i>Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act (2007)</i> .
Waste composition	The proportion of different materials or products present in a given waste streams e.g. 10% glass, 50% general waste, 30% paper and cardboard, 10% plastics.
Waste generation	The sum of products and materials that are recycled, recovered for energy or disposed to landfill.
Weighbridge	Weighing device that vehicles drive onto; often used at landfill gatehouses to accurately weigh the waste delivered.

