

Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan

2024-27

Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning and Public Works



Introduction

The *Queensland Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011* (the Act) requires each State entity to prepare, adopt and implement a Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan (the Plan) that is publicly available.

The Act requires that the Plan include information about:

- Waste reduction and recycling targets
- Actions to be taken to improve waste reduction and recycling
- Management and monitoring of performance
- Information about continuous improvement in waste management.

The Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning and Public Works (DHLGPPW) is committed to the efficient and effective use of resources to minimise waste. The focus of the department's Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan is to identify the activities and actions that will either avoid or reduce the waste generated by the department in the delivery of its functions and services or improve the way the department manages its waste.

This Plan will reference how the department will continuously improve its waste management activities over time including its quantification and measurement of targets for reporting purposes.

The first year of this Plan's operation will include activities that help identify a baseline of current performance across the diverse portfolio alongside waste reduction and recycling targets.

The second and third year of the Plan will build on progress and consolidate learnings and actions that work to meaningfully reduce the volume of waste management produced by the department.

The Plan aligns with the *Queensland Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy* which provides the strategic framework across government.

Overview of the organisation

DHLGPPW's vision is More homes, faster | Building a better future. Our purpose is to drive the creation of more homes and responsive services through an integrated housing system.

This is achieved through our objectives:

- More homes - deliver well-designed housing solutions through planning, building and partnerships
- More services - support Queenslanders to achieve improved housing outcomes
- Greater resilience - strength resilience where people want to live, work and play
- Connected department - integrate our business and empower our people.

The department delivers services to Queenslanders in the areas of social and affordable housing, homelessness services, public works, government building management and maintenance, land use planning and property development, infrastructure planning and investment, and plays a central role in ensuring local governments are accountable, well-managed, and community-focused.

Scope

The primary focus of the Plan is to develop an understanding of the types of waste generated through DHLGPPW's business activities and implement a range of initiatives to help improve the way it manages and reduces waste. It aims to not only drive compliance with legislative obligations in respect to waste management but also to promote more sustainable waste management practices in the department and transition over time to increasingly achieve the principles of a circular economy.

The Plan applies to all DHLGPPW employees and focuses on the operations within the department controls.

Statutory bodies/authorities within the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Public Works' portfolio are not included in this Plan. Statutory bodies/authorities are responsible for their own waste reduction and reporting plans.

Waste generated from departmental activities

Context

DHLGPPW has a combined workforce of approximately 4500 people across 114 locations in Queensland, including 22 Housing Service Centres and 35 works depots. While we predominately work in office environments within Brisbane city, our housing and QBuild services are decentralised with regional offices across the State.

DHLGPPW leases premises from several vendors which means it does not have full control of all sites. In all circumstances the department will seek to influence behaviours noting that there may be constraints due to the location and its circumstances.

Types of waste generated by DHLGPPW

For the purposes of waste management, DHLGPPW's activities are divided into two broad categories:

- office-based waste
- non-office-based waste

There is an underlying assumption that office-based functions generate a generic waste stream, irrespective of geographical location or functional support delivery. For example, an administration office in Robina on the Gold Coast is likely to produce the same types of waste products as one in Mount Isa or Mackay.

Alternatively, non-office-based functions are often unique in nature and, therefore, generate distinctive waste streams. Most of this waste is generated under construction and maintenance contracts managed by Public Works through QBuild or Major Projects business areas.

Office-based waste

Most of the waste generated by DHLGPPW office-based activities includes:

- office consumables – paper, pens, cleaning items
- carbon produced by transportation – travel by air or car to regions and communities
- energy – sub-optimal use of printers, lighting and other generative technologies
- co-mingled – plastic bottles and containers, coffee cups, milk/juice cartons, disposable cutlery, aluminium cans
- organics – food and plant material
- technology – obsolete laptops, hard-drives, phones, equipment, printer and toner cartridges, batteries
- furniture – obsolete, surplus, or broken furniture or artwork
- facilities – broken light bulbs, scrap materials.

Non-office-based waste

DHLGPPW (through Public Works) also has influence over the disposal of construction and demolition waste created under contracts managed by it and through leasing arrangements, ie. via 'preferred supplier' arrangements.

The Act requires 'all aspects of waste management for the entity are comprehensively addressed (by the Plan)'. This is read to include waste minimisation actions in third party activities it controls or influences through contractual arrangements and specifications.

External contractors undertake most construction, renovation, maintenance and demolition of government managed buildings and facilities on behalf of DHLGPPW or other asset-owning departments and agencies.

Although DHLGPPW is not directly responsible for the associated waste generated in these activities, it proactively influences waste minimisation activities where possible. For example, through the department's role as a contract manager, clients and contractors are encouraged to minimise or divert as much waste as possible from landfill to strategies such as the effective use, reuse and recycling of materials.

Public Works as Service Provider

Public Works has a unique position within the management of Queensland Government generated waste as a service provider to other agencies. The quality of service delivered by Queensland Government Accommodation Office (QGAO) and QBuild has a direct impact on the ability of other state government agencies to fulfil their own waste reduction plans.

Public Works can, therefore, influence the overall performance of the government's waste strategy and improve efficiencies through:

- influencing the design and materials/product selection of new facilities
- supporting waste management and the circular economy through specifications and contractual arrangements during construction activities
- supporting consistent education and signage in multi-agency facilities
- influencing the terms and conditions of new and renewed office leases
- managing specifications and contract arrangements for cleaning and waste collection services
- providing meaningful reporting to tenant agencies.

Approach to waste management

The *Queensland Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy* notes that historically the Queensland economy has been predominantly linear, which means that things are typically made from virgin raw materials, used, and then thrown away. However, the global economy is transitioning to a more circular economy where emphasis is given to the recirculation of products and materials for as long as possible through reuse, repair, remanufacturing, delivering products as services, sharing and recycling.

Underpinning DHLGPPW's Plan is a commitment to collaboration to minimise over production, duplication, and waste.

All divisions and staff from across DHLGPPW have a role to play in increasing awareness and making deliberate decisions to reduce the waste footprint. This includes:

- minimising and avoiding wherever possible over production of meeting papers
- utilising contemporary digital materials instead of hardcopy paper files
- born-digital record creation, utilisation, and storage methods
- limiting the unnecessary consumption of materials and resources
- recycling and repurposing materials already produced
- keep travel to essential meetings only.

Inherent in the successful adoption of contemporary practices is acknowledging that resources are finite.

The Waste and Resource Management Hierarchy (figure 1) provides a clear order of preference for managing waste and resources.

Resource management hierarchy

The resource management hierarchy and guidelines set out in the Act provide the foundations for DHLGPPW's approach to waste management.

Waste should be avoided as everyone's top priority, after which options to reduce, reuse, recycle, and repurpose should be pursued.

The least favourable option is to dispose of waste. Where disposal is required, DHLGPPW seeks to ensure that the method is the least harmful to the environment.

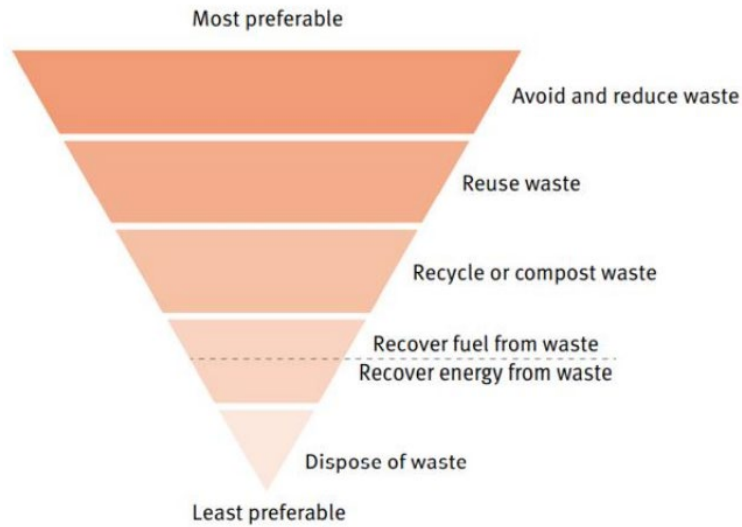


Figure 1: Waste and Resource Management Hierarchy

Waste and resource management principles

DHLGPPW is guided by the waste and resource management principles in decision making:

- The polluter pays principle states that all costs associated with the management of waste should be borne by the people or organisation of people who generated the waste. The costs associated with the management of waste may include the costs of minimising the amount of waste generated; containing, treating, and disposing of waste, and rectifying environmental harm caused by waste.
- The proximity principle states that waste and recovered resources should be managed as close to the source of generation as possible. This may include using local service providers wherever possible which is consistent with the proximity test in the Queensland Procurement Policy.
- The circular economy principle notes that all products and materials are kept for as long as they have value or remain useful. A whole-of-life view of the production and consumption of products and materials is promoted as a means to reduce or eliminate the need to send waste to landfill, ensuring that through design, procurement, and logistics, resources are reused or recycled to their maximum capacity.
- The product-stewardship principle notes that there is a shared responsibility between all persons who are involved in the life cycle of a product for managing the environmental, social, and economic impacts of the product.

Waste reduction and recycling targets

DHLGPPW's targets are consistent with the *Queensland Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy* targets which were developed to support the Strategy's vision, drive market growth and deliver the benefits associated with improved waste management:

- 25 per cent reduction in household waste by 2050
- 90 per cent of waste is recovered and does not go to landfill by 2050
- 75 per cent recycling rates across all waste types by 2050.

Specific initiatives that the department will pursue are included in the Action Plan.

Management and monitoring of performance

Roles and responsibilities

Executive Leadership Team:	Sponsorship and support for the Plan at an enterprise and divisional level to achieve the objectives of the <i>Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011</i>
Senior Executives:	Tactical responsibility at a business group area to comply with the Plan and to provide enabling support to the Executive Leadership Team
Manager (or Director) Corporate Governance:	Promotion of the Plan, liaison with divisions in the development of new initiatives to support the Plan and measurement and reporting of outcomes against the Plan
DHLGPPW Staff:	Awareness of the Plan and ensuring that personal behaviours and team decisions are compatible with the spirit and intent of the Plan.

Reporting requirements

DHLGPPW will produce an annual report on its waste management activities in accordance with the Act (section 148).

Information about continuous improvements in waste management

DHLGPPW is committed to continuous improvement in waste management and will refresh the action plan annually over the lifecycle the Plan. Where targets have been met or exceeded the department will develop new targets to further improve outcomes in waste reduction.

DHLGPPW will report annual waste management achievements to the Audit and Risk Committee to provide governance and assurance of activities and garner insights for how performance and targets may be improved.

Action Plan

The DHLGPPW Action Plan 2024-27 is based on four main strategies:

1. waste avoidance
2. waste management to improve reuse and recycling
3. waste reduction
4. planning, evaluation and reporting

Waste Reduction and Recycling Action Plan

2024-27

Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning and Public Works

Action Plan					
Ref	Lead Area	Action	Waste Type	KPI/Measure/Outcome	Target date
1. Waste Avoidance					
1.1	Public Works (QBuild)	Investigate opportunities to influence customers and contractors to adopt waste minimisation measures in relation to construction and demolition waste created under contracts managed by QBuild. QBuild to update social procurement framework to provide guidance to support the inclusion of these requirements where applicable and directed by the customer agencies.	Building and construction	Customer requirements queried and established as part of QBuild project and program intake processes. Where there is a specific environmental / sustainability criterion as part of non-priced evaluation, QBuild can report on how many projects used that criterion within a defined period.	June 2025
1.2	Public Works (QGAO)	Investigate the feasibility of replacing non-recyclable with recyclable paper towels in bathrooms and kitchens of DHLGPPW occupied office accommodation that provide recycled waste streams.	Office waste (paper)	Pilot program in one owned office building	June 2025
1.3	Corporate Services	Reduce: - reliance on and consumption of paper - delete any pages of printing not required through 'Follow-me-print' - provide staff with the functionality and capability to transition from paper or digital information and records management - continue ongoing support to the department to utilise Microsoft 365 collaboration and tools Reuse: - encourage staff to reuse scrap paper Recycle: - dedicated secure recycling bins available to all staff to encourage the recycling of printed material.	Office waste (paper)	Reduce printing and photocopying by 1 per cent per annum	Annually by 30 June 2027

Action Plan					
Ref	Lead Area	Action	Waste Type	KPI/Measure/Outcome	Target date
2. Waste Management to improve reuse and recycling					
2.1	Public Works (QGAO)	Expand data collection arrangements from property managers and waste collection contractors for office waste.	Office waste (general, comingle, paper / cardboard, organic)	75 per cent of QGAO portfolio by floor area supplying data for whole of government reporting.	June 2026
2.2	Public Works (QGAO)	Investigate feasibility of introducing organic waste streams to QGAO managed office accommodation as such services become available and economic.	Office waste (general, comingle, paper / cardboard, organic)	Feasibility report finalised.	June 2025
2.3	Public Works (QGAO)	Investigate inclusion of waste stream monitoring and reporting arrangements within Green Lease Policy.	Office waste (general, comingle, paper / cardboard, organic)	Update Green Lease Policy to include waste monitoring and reporting	Ongoing
2.4	Public Works (QGAO)	Liaise with waste collection contractors to encourage phase-out of volumetric based data and adoption of weight-based data.	Office waste (data quality)	Weight-based data provided for all DHLGPPW occupied sites (except where a Local Government-only service is available)	Ongoing
2.5	Public Works (QGAO)	Apply comparative metrics to identify QGAO managed sites that may be over-serviced in terms of bin sizes, bin quantities, service frequency or mix of bin types.	Office waste (data quality)	Number of over-serviced sites identified	Ongoing
2.6	Public Works (QGAO)	Audit QGAO managed sites identified as potentially overserviced to review and adjust bin sizes, bin quantities, service frequency or mix of bin types.	Office waste (data quality)	Number of sites where waste data improves after audit and intervention	June 2026
2.7	Public Works (QGAO)	Review cleaning contract practices at over-serviced QGAO managed sites to ensure bin capacities are fully utilised at time of collection and develop	Office waste (data quality)	Number of sites where cleaning practices are modified	June 2026

Action Plan					
Ref	Lead Area	Action	Waste Type	KPI/Measure/Outcome	Target date
		strategies to improve access to data from confidential waste service providers in Public Works managed sites.			
2.8	Public Works (QGAO)	Develop strategies to improve access to data from confidential waste service providers in QGAO managed sites.	Office waste (Confidential waste)	Strategy developed Strategy implemented	Ongoing
2.9	Corporate Services	Disposal by an ICT lifecycle management supplier of printers, screens, laptops, tablets and PCs managed by the Technology and Digital Solutions Group (TDSG) for the department.	E-waste	Number of items sent for disposal by TDSG that are classified as e-waste	Ongoing
2.10	Public Works (QGAO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review current office waste management systems and practices in place in office building occupied by DHLGPPW - Consolidate DHLGPPW CBD premises reducing square meterage utilised by the department 	Office waste (general, comingle, paper/cardboard , organic)	Diversion of 50 per cent office waste from landfill (all DHLGPPW occupied office buildings)	August 2025
3. Waste Reduction					
3.1	Corporate Services (Lead for all divisions)	<p>Reduce:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - amount of stationery ordered by central team members who collate and review requests from individuals to be considered - team members encouraged to minimise stationery use. <p>Reuse:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reuse old binders, stationery, file folders, report covers and the like, where possible <p>Recycle:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensure recycling bins for various types of stationery (paper, plastic etc.) are available for all staff. 	Office waste (Stationery)	Annual reduction in stationery uses by 1 per cent	Ongoing

Action Plan					
Ref	Lead Area	Action	Waste Type	KPI/Measure/Outcome	Target date
3.2	Corporate Services (Lead for all divisions)	<p>Reduce:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - crockery, glasses, cutlery provided to minimise single use items in kitchens - electronic activities are encouraged to reduce waste - bins not supplied at individual desks to reduce waste - staff awareness programs to understand recycling options. - staff are encouraged to purchase products and services which have less impact on the environment and human health, where possible. <p>Reuse:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - staff are encouraged to reuse materials - repurpose furniture. <p>Recycle:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensure recycling bins are provided at the department's locations - include co-mingled recyclables, battery and toner recycling options and secure paper recycling bins. 	Office waste (Other)	60 per cent of waste is recycled	Ongoing
4. Planning, evaluation and reporting					
4.1	Corporate Services	Ensure Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan is reviewed at least every three years and Action Plan reviewed annually	Not applicable	Plan reviewed (3 yearly) / Action Plan reviewed (annually)	June 2027
4.2	Corporate Services	Report progress against the Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan annually	Not applicable	Reporting completed (annually)	Annual
4.3	Corporate Services	Increase awareness by actively promoting waste reduction and recycling initiatives across the department, including:	Not applicable	Improved quantifiable measure of waste streams identified/implemented	Ongoing

Action Plan					
Ref	Lead Area	Action	Waste Type	KPI/Measure/Outcome	Target date
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - develop and implement a targeted education campaign to raise the awareness of waste management - work with divisions to identify specific waste streams and, where practicable, develop quantifiable measures for waste generated, recycled, or disposed of (particularly non-office waste), with a view to establishing initiatives, baselines and future targets - refresh signage - undertake internal communications. 			
4.4	Corporate Services (Lead for all Divisions)	Service Level Agreements (SLAs) and Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with other agencies to include avoidance of waste as a key principle. Waste reduction to be a standard agenda items on meetings between parties.	Not applicable	SLAs/MoUs to be updated as they become due to renewal	30 June 2027
4.5	Corporate Services (Lead for all Divisions)	<p>Policy and practice reviews:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - key policies across department to be updated, where relevant, to promote resource efficiency and incorporate waste management targets - travel policy to be updated to include clauses that promote travel as a last resource and use Microsoft Teams - entertainment policy to be updated regarding not using single use items (plastic cups and cutlery). 	Not applicable	Policies to be reviewed	30 June 2025
4.6	Corporate Services (Lead for all Divisions)	Identify opportunities as part of a review process to improve circular economy participation by the department. This may include reviewing travel expenditure, consumables expenditure and opportunities for collaboration.	Not applicable	Undertake quarterly reviews of budgets	Ongoing