

PRESS RELEASE

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2005 STEEL CAN RECYCLING CHALLENGE



Risen to *the Challenge* Gosford Council wins national recycling award

Gosford City Council are big recyclers of post-consumer packaging waste and to prove it they entered the Steel Can Recycling Council's (SCRC) Local Government Challenge this year - and won!



With a 186% increase in steel can recycling over the past three years, Gosford City Council has collected a massive 561 tonnes of steel packaging from the 108,000 tonnes available nationally for recycling. This equates to 3.45kg of steel packaging from each of their residents this year, which falls above the national average of 3.05kg per capita.

Located in NSW's central coast region Gosford City Council has beaten 375 local government areas to be awarded the coveted Steel Can Recycling Council's Local Government Challenge for excellence in steel can recycling.

James Lawson, Senior Technical Officer, talking to a resident at a shopping centre display

'The Steel Can Recycling Challenge', open to all councils across Australia, is aimed at decreasing the number of steel cans going to landfill.

The results of these awards are good news for Australian steel can recycling which has a recovery rate of 56% with around 60,000 tonnes of steel packaging being recycled in Australia each year. However, even though 94% of Australians have access to steel can recycling, Australians throw away enough steel cans each year to rebuild the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

Recent research conducted by Roy Morgan for the Steel Can Recycling Council shows that whilst 67% of people gain their information about recycling from council communications, a significant 57% look to the packaging for help on whether the item is recyclable.



Joe Stefano, Chair of the Steel Can Recycling Council, said *'we are delighted to be able to give the award to Gosford City Council this year. It is great to see a council really driving steel can recycling education and awareness and producing the sorts of results we would like to see across Australia. We would also like to thank Australian Brandowners who help to educate consumers by including the recyclable steel logo on their packaging.'*

How have Gosford done it?

Gosford City Council attribute the huge increase in their steel can recycling rate to their extensive education programme - Lets Get It Sorted - that has helped to raise awareness amongst residents. Council has been working closely with the SCRC and other industry players promoting the benefits of recycling steel through their domestic waste system and free drop-off facilities.

Communications through the local media, including full page colour advertisements in local newspapers, regular radio advertisements, television and shopping centre displays have kept the messages prominent amongst residents. The Coles Cares for the Environment shopping centre displays, for example, attracted over 700 people to the stand over a two day period and included various giveaways generously donated by many of Australia's leading food manufacturers who use steel as a packaging material.



Shopping Centre Display

As a reward for their efforts, two members of staff will be heading off next year on an overseas study trip to the South West of England for the Chartered Institute of Waste Management (CIWM) annual conference, worth more than \$AUD10,000 to see examples of best practice in waste management abroad.

Runners up, Fairfield City Council in Sydney and City of Unley in South Australia, who have also shown impressive increases in their steel can recycling rates, will have an opportunity to attend events on waste management within Australia. Other finalists in the awards included: Woollahra Council (NSW) and Moonee Valley Council (VIC).

The economic and environmental benefits are there - recycling steel cans saves 75% of the energy it takes to make the can from raw materials and in most parts of Australia there are ready markets for used steel packaging.



NOTES TO EDITOR

For more information and high resolution photos, please contact Lisa Kinahan at Cansmart on 1800 073 713 or lisa@cansmart.org.

The Expert Panel of Judges comprised: Jane Garcia, Editor - Government News, Angela Maier, Waste Ed Officer - Canterbury City Council (03 Awards Winner), Nick Harford - Visy Recycling and Anne Prince - Australian Council of Recyclers