

Better Practice Vergeside Collection Guidelines



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Introduction

These Better Practice Guidelines have been developed by the WA Local Government Association, with funding from the Waste Authority through the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Levy.

The term Better Practice, rather than Best Practice, has been used to recognise that these guidelines and indeed the whole of waste management practice changes over time. There is no static Best Practice; rather there is ongoing improvement through developing better practice.

A range of research and engagement activities have been undertaken in the development of these Guidelines. The information provided by the WA Local Government Census 2012/13 has also been used. Other activities have included two workshops with Local Governments and service providers, learning from local practices and research into interstate and international approaches. A separate *Background Paper on Better Practice Vergeside Collection* includes this information.

Section one provide a brief overview of the factors which have led to the development of these Guidelines, existing and potential complementary mechanisms and highlights some of the legal considerations relevant to Vergeside collections.

The second section of the Guidelines outlines the aims and objectives of Vergeside collection – including the rationale for providing the service and long term resource recovery targets.

Section three of these Guidelines outlines how Local Governments can optimise current service delivery options. Each aspect of vergeside collection is examined and the conclusions from consultation and research applied. Specific costs of each service option have not been included because accurate data is not currently available and costs may vary between Local Governments (depending on a range of factors). Where relevant, additional tools for use by Local Government have been included in Appendix 1.

Section four of the Guideline outlines the long term vision for vergeside collections, focusing on efficient service delivery and Better Practice approaches.

SECTION ONE: Background

What is vergeside collection?

The materials collected through vergeside collections include both hard and green waste. Hard wastes are loosely defined as those large items that cannot be disposed of through the containerised kerbside waste collection system. Hard waste collections include items such as large household junk, furniture, white goods, electronic items and mattresses. The term green waste refers to biodegradable materials. Green waste collections predominantly feature garden wastes such as brush or tree cuttings.

Why are these Guidelines needed?

In Western Australia, there are a range of different approaches taken by Local Governments towards vergeside collections. In the Metropolitan area, the majority of Local Governments provide separate hard waste and green waste collections. In the Non-Metropolitan area, about half of all Local Governments provide a vergeside collection service. Of those providing a service, the majority have hard waste collections once or twice a year, whereas green waste collections are often more frequent (two to three times a year). The frequency and type of vergeside collection service is influenced by a number of factors – including other services provided by the Local Government, historic decisions of a Council and budgetary constraints.

Vergeside collection services captured 12% of the entire Local Government waste stream in 2012/13. Of this amount, only 7% of hard waste was recovered and 95% of green waste was

recovered. Table 1 provides the state-wide tonnages collected through the vergeside collection system for 2012/13.

	Local Governments with service	Tonnes collected	Tonnes to Landfill	Tonnes recovered	Tonnes per household
Hard waste	77	82,123	76,330	5,792	0.10
Green waste	63	61,154	3,195	57,959	0.08

Table 1: Local Government vergeside collection tonnage – 2012/13 (Source: Local Government Census).

Through consultation, Local Governments have identified a range of significant issues with Vergeside collections such as increasing waste volumes, increasing costs, very low recovery rates and illegal disposal of material on the verge.

These Guidelines aim to address:

- Inconsistent approaches to vergeside collection, by promoting a transition to consistent practice, based on research;
- Rising costs for vergeside collections;
- Increasing the recovery rate from vergeside collection, by promoting waste avoidance, reuse and clear separation of recyclable material; and
- Ensure that legal requirements are met.

What supporting mechanisms are there?

The approach suggested in these Guidelines focuses predominantly on what Local Government can do to work towards better practice vergeside collection. It is acknowledged that there are a range of complementary measures needed in order to reduce waste and increase the recovery of material which may currently be disposed of through vergeside collections. These measures include voluntary producer take back initiatives as well as more formal Product Stewardship Schemes, charity collections and fee for service business collections. Where possible these Guidelines link in with these complementary measures. However, a lack of these complementary measures should not reduce Local Governments ability to change its own practices. Changes in Local Government services may encourage innovation in the private sector which will assist in the provision of services to the community.

Vergeside collections are only one of the waste services that a Local Government may provide. Local Governments also provide a range of other services, such as kerbside waste, organics and recycling collections and drop off areas, these services should be considered when making changes to vergeside collections. All of the services provided by Local Governments work together to ensure the community has a reasonable level of access to waste and recycling options.

What legal issues are there?

Federal Legislation

The *Ozone Protection and Synthetic Greenhouse Gas Management Act 1989* (the Act) and its Regulations help ensure Australia meets legal obligations under the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. This framework establishes the requirement for anyone that handles refrigerant or works on Refrigeration and Air Conditioning (RAC) equipment - to hold a current refrigerant handling licence. This includes decommissioning or disposing of RAC equipment where refrigerant is present.

This licence is issued by the Australian Refrigerant Council (ARC) on behalf of the Federal Government and can be obtained by completing the online licence application form on the ARC website: <https://www.arctick.org/index.php>.

It is an offence under section 45B(1) of the Act to act in a way that results in the unlawful discharge of ODS/SGGs, including fluorocarbon refrigerant. A penalty of up to \$51,000 for an individual or up to \$255,000 for a corporation may apply.

The ARC has an interactive online reporting form that can be used by the community to report alleged breaches of this legislation.

This legislation has significant implications for Local Governments providing vergeside collections, as fridges and freezers are often picked up during these collections.

State Laws

The *Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984* covers the safety of workers undertaking the Vergeside collections and is a key consideration.

With regards to litter and illegal dumping, Local Governments are authorised to issue infringements and prosecute under the *Litter Act 1979*. The revenue raised by a Local Government from the fines in the Litter Act 1979, can go back to the Local Government. The penalties tied to s23 & s24 of the *Litter Act 1979* are as follows:

(a) for an individual, a fine of \$5,000 (no daily penalties)

(b) for a body corporate, a fine of \$10,000 (no daily penalties)

Substantially higher penalties for illegal dumping can be pursued using s. 49A of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (EP Act). Infringements are not issued under this legislation, instead a prosecution is required. Note: A prosecution brief must be prepared and approved by the Department of Environment Regulation Environmental Enforcement Unit before the matter can be pursued by a Local Government. Despite 150 Local Government Officers being authorised under the EP Act to, there have been few or no Local Government initiated prosecutions. The penalties under s49A include:

Individuals: \$62,500 (no daily penalty)

Body Corporate: \$125,000 (no daily penalty)

The majority of revenue raised through these penalties, goes into the 'consolidated account.' Although, s99P does state that modified penalties can go back to the Local Government.

Local Laws

The question is frequently asked about what power Local Government has with regard to vergeside collections. Within the WALGA template *Activities on Thoroughfares and Trading Local Law*, which would have wide application, the following clause is included:

2.2 Activities allowed with a permit - general

(1) *A person shall not, without a permit –*

(b) subject to Division 3 of this Part, throw, place or deposit anything on a verge except for removal by the local government under a bulk rubbish collection, and then only in

accordance with the terms and conditions and during the period of time advertised in connection with that collection by the local government;

Penalty

2.2(1)(b)	Throwing or placing anything on a verge without a permit	125
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There may also be clauses to the same effect in Local Government Health or Waste Local Laws.

Currently there is not a model Waste Local Law, which has led to a delay in removing the waste elements of Health Local Laws. WALGA, with funding from the Waste Authority, is currently developing a Model Waste Local Law, which will be presented to the Joint Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation. If the Committee agrees, this will greatly aid Local Governments in adopting consistent provisions with regard to waste. Subject to the consideration by the Committee, the Model Waste Local Law is expected to be completed by the end of 2014. The intent is to include specific provisions in the Model Waste Local Law relating to vergeside collections.

The Local Government insurance service is currently preparing advice regarding vergeside collections which will be appended to these Guidelines on completion.

SECTION TWO: Vergeside Collection Aims, Objectives and Targets

Vergeside waste collections form one part of a suite of waste management services provided by Local Governments. As mentioned, Local Governments are experiencing a range of issues in providing these services which has, in part, led to the development of these Guidelines.

Although there are problems with the current structure of vergeside collections, there are a number of reasons why these Guidelines do not recommend that Local Governments cease to provide vergeside collections. These include:

- **Residents are accustomed to vergeside collections:** Ceasing to provide collections could result in further instances of illegal dumping on Local Government managed land and / or charities receiving even more undesirable donations.
- **Behaviour change takes time:** For businesses and the community to begin to take greater responsibility for the waste they produce there will need to be a concerted effort with regard to behaviour change and this is likely to take time.
- **Impact on business:** If new approaches to vergeside collection are suggested it will take time for businesses to invest in new collection and processing techniques.
- **Contractual arrangements:** Many Local Governments have long term collection contracts with various service providers, so a change cannot occur immediately without breaking contract.
- **Local Government reform:** The government process for reform is still occurring, this creates a degree of uncertainty for a number of Local Governments, therefore substantial change to current service delivery options is less likely.

From a community perspective, a vergeside collection service may be needed so that residents can easily dispose of unwanted bulky goods. It is an important service, as not all community members are able to independently undertake this activity within the economic/practical means available to them. Local Governments are a community representative, enforcement agent and a service provider in this area. As a consequence Local Governments are seeking to address a range of criteria in providing a vergeside collection service. These include:

- Providing an effective service to meets community needs;
- Providing an economic service;
- Increasing resource recovery and reduce waste to landfill;
- Protecting the environment and human health;
- Reducing the likelihood of illegal dumping*; and
- Ensuring the service is undertaken in way which meets Occupational Health & Safety outcomes.

*illegal dumping includes both dumping on, for example, vacant land and on the verge.

Targets

Often it is difficult for Local Governments to assess how well their own systems are performing if there is limited information available on what other equivalent systems are achieving. Therefore for the purposes of these Guidelines targets have been developed based on current practice.

Amount of hardwaste per household: Less than 70kg / household average

A number of Local Governments, of varying sizes, demographics and population densities are already achieving this Target. Through refining current services this target is considered achievable by all Local Governments.

At least 50% recovery for hardwaste

This target will be a stretch for many Local Governments, as approximately half of the Local Governments are currently not recovering any material from hard waste collections. However, one Local Government has reported recovering up to 65% of material from hardwaste collections. Other Local Governments are recovering in the region of 15 – 20% of material. From the Mindarie Regional Council audit data, around 58% of material placed on the verge should be recoverable (timber, mattresses, white goods, scrap metal and e-waste).

The target of 50% diversion of municipal waste from landfill, in the metropolitan area, is also included in the waste strategy.

At least 95% recovery for greenwaste

This target is currently achieved by the majority of Local Governments providing greenwaste collection and should be sustained.

Transition

As indicated these Guidelines do not recommend ceasing vergeside collections. An alternative transitional approach is outlined in Table 2.

Stage	Activity	Timeline
1	Assess current Vergeside practices against the Better Practice Guidelines – using Self Assessment Table – Appendix 2.	When Guidelines are released.
2	Provide Report to Council and seek Council Commitment to Better Practice Approaches for Vergeside Collection.	As soon as practical.
3a	Move to current Better Practice Approaches.	As soon as practicable. This approach is outlined in Section Three. Some of these approaches can be adopted with relatively small changes to current practice.

3b	Transition to new arrangements.	Start planning immediately, as transition to new arrangements may take several years due to contractual obligations or other inhibitors. Communication with stakeholders is vital at this stage.
4	Future Better Practice Approach.	In 3 - 4 years' time, after suitable planning and communication with stakeholders. This approach is outline in Section Four.

Table 2: Transitional approach for move to better practice vergeside collection.

SECTION THREE: Better Practice Approaches

Current Better Practice approaches

This section outlines a better practice approach based on the research undertaken. Current recovery rates for vergeside hard waste collections are generally low, however there are some clear steps that Local Governments can take in the short term to address this and reduce the amount of material which is placed on the verge.

The approach outlined is based on the waste hierarchy, where the first step is to look at the options available to reduce the amount of material place on the verge. For example, Local Governments can encourage residents to investigate other options for reducing their waste and reusing material they currently own.

Appendix 1 contains a range of information which be used by Local Government, such as contact details for charities, businesses and examples of compliance information.

Separate Collections

Aim: Source separation for different material types.

Approach: Separate hard and green waste collections are recommended.

Rationale: This is to ensure that contamination of green waste will be minimal, and allow Local Governments to undertake more green waste collections if necessary.

Hard Waste Collections

The amount of material per household collected by Local Governments varies, with some Local Governments collecting upwards of 242kg/hh, while others collect a far lower amount (e.g. 37kg/hh).

The characteristics which lead to these different collection amounts do vary. However, there are some factors which appear to have an impact. These include the collection frequency, amount of material allowed and the level of enforcement. Each of the following sections focuses on one element of vergeside collections which Local Governments can implement, in moving towards better practice. WALGA recommends that the approaches suggested in all of these sections should be adopted, as they are interrelated.

Reduction

Aim: Reduce the amount of material placed on the verge for collection and increase reuse of material.

Approach: It is recommended that Local Governments provide residents with clear information on how they can reduce and reuse the material that would usually be put out for vergeside collections. This information should be provided long before the scheduled vergeside collection to educate the community about how they can dispose of a range of bulky materials all year round, rather than wait for their annual hard waste collection. This is particularly important if a reduction in the collection frequency is pursued, as residents will need to be able to access easy disposal options.

Rationale: Figure 1 shows a common sight as part of vergeside collections, a range of small items which could have been disposed of or reused in another manner. The research undertaken by the Town of East Fremantle indicates that residents are often unsure of how to recycle material, so provision of information prior to the collections will assist in addressing this issue. Feedback from the Garage Sale Trail in 2013, indicated that one of the principle reasons that people participated was to 'de-clutter' their homes. This could be an effective approach to residents when encouraging other means of disposal. There is also the opportunity to work with local charities to promote their services. A range of businesses now exist which offer specific material collections from households, these businesses can assist Local Government and provide a convenient and cheap service to the household.



Figure 1: Materials put out for vergeside collection which includes a number of small items which could be re-used or recycled if taken to the appropriate outlet.

Frequency

Aim: Reduce the number of hard waste collections per year.

Approach: Move to one hard waste collection per a year.

Rationale: The amount of waste collected by Local Governments providing one collection a year is very similar to the amount generated per household from two collections a year. More material is not necessarily being collected, so an annual collection may reduce costs. Local Governments providing more than 2 collections annually are collecting significantly more material.

Research shows that Local Governments providing one collection per year are collecting an average of 85.5kg/hh, whereas those Local Governments providing two collections per year are collecting 85.2kg/hh. The Local Governments providing more than 2 collections experience a substantial increase in the amount of material collected throughout a year. Local Governments providing three collections averaged 199kgs/hh, those with four collections averaged 147kgs/hh per year.

The reduction in frequency of the collection is intended to encourage residents to look at other means of disposing of unwanted items. For the Local Governments providing 3 or 4 collections there is an opportunity to reduce these over time and substantially reduce costs, as the amount of material collected is likely to decrease.

The reduction in frequency is not a standalone measure however – it is important to ensure that the community is well educated about their options for disposal and that the limits Local Government sets for collections are enforced.

Amount of material allowed

Aim: Consistent amount of material allowed on verge.

Approach: Move to 2 cubic metre volume allowance for hardwaste collections.

Rationale: There are a range of different size limits provided by Local Governments; they range from 2 cubic meters, to three cubic metres, to 6 cubic meters to no limit. Only one Local Government has a kg / hh limit. Residents are unlikely to weigh material prior to placing it on the verge. A cubic metre limit, that is clearly illustrated, is recommended as it will be easier to understand for residents.

On average, 68.5kg of hard waste per household is collected by Local Governments limiting hard waste to two cubic metres. Local Governments that restrict hard waste to three cubic metres per household collect an average of 170.9kg. Local Governments limiting hard waste quantities to six cubic metres collect on average 98kg/hh while Local Governments offering limiting to twelve cubic metres collect 102kg/hh. The one Council which provides a 70kg/hh limit collected an average of 210kg/hh. The remaining Local Governments that do not set a weight or volume restriction collect an average of 82.6kg/hh.

Any limit on material volumes must be enforced – refer to the section on options for Enforcement.

Type of material allowed

Aim: Consistent and safe range of material presented for collection.

Approach: Limit materials collected and do not collect hazardous material.

Rationale: The most commonly accepted hard wastes can be divided into four categories: general household junk and furniture, metal items, mattresses, and white goods. White goods, including refrigerators and freezers are accepted in all Local Government verge collections except in Cities of Belmont and Bayswater. These two Local Governments provide separate, free collection alternatives. Most Local Governments require all white goods to have doors removed. As noted in the Legislation section, there are specific requirements for de-gassing of fridges which will need to be met. Worker Occupational Health and Safety is a factor in relation to the type of materials that are allowed to be put out for collection.

It is suggested that Local Governments do not include the following in their collections:

- Tyres;
- Asbestos and fibrous cement;
- Construction/demolition material;
- Plate glass or mirrors;
- Household hazardous waste (including gas cylinders, batteries, paint, oil etc);
- Domestic rubbish and food; and
- Green waste.

If materials such as e-waste and motor vehicle parts cannot be recovered through the vergeside collection system (and there are readily available alternative recovery options, such as drop off points), then exclusion of these materials should also be considered.

Collection Notification

Aim: Residents understand exactly what, when and how much material they are allowed to place on the verge for collection.

Approach: The information that is provided to residents prior to collection should be easy to follow, containing a high degree of pictorial information.

Rationale: Pictorial information is often more useful to residents than written descriptions, as it provides an easy to follow guide for all, regardless of language group or literacy. The way the information is structured will also help residents to be able to picture the exact amount of material they are allowed to place on the verge for collection. Encouraging residents to separate different material types into specific piles makes collection and recycling easier as it allows for source separation. An example of clear pictorial information is shown in Figure 2.

HOW TO SET OUT YOUR WASTE

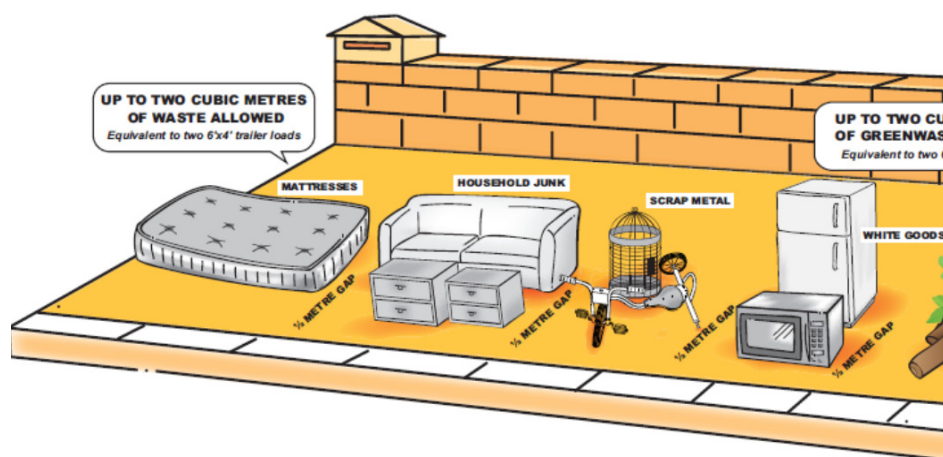


Figure 2: Example of pictorial representation of household material, taken from Shire of Mundaring, Bulk Verge Collections Information Pamphlet

Collection – Timing

Aim: Collection occurs within a week of residents being allowed to place material on verge.

Approach: Ensure collection happens quickly after informational material has been distributed; one week after distribution is recommended.

Rationale: Most Local Governments have information on vergeside collections available all year round via websites and calendars. However, many Local Governments will also provide an additional prompt to the resident by way of a flyer in the letterbox or signage in the area. It is from this point in time that a week of accumulation before the collection occurs is recommended.

If collection occurs promptly after the notification of the collection, it is likely to reduce the amount of material on the verge. Feedback from Local Governments where material has been on the verge for a long time indicates that additional material is frequently added to existing piles.

Enforcement

Aim: Material type, timing and amount limits enforced.

Approach: Local Governments needs to follow up to ensure residents are putting out the correct amount and type of material at the time specified by the Local Government.

Rationale: Enforcement is essential, whatever requirements the Local Government has put in place for collection have to be enforced. If there is not a clear and consistent approach to enforcement then it is likely that non-compliant collections will increase. Enforcement is often a difficult and resource intensive activity for a Local Government to undertake, however the benefits are considerable and the experience of many Local Governments is that residents will comply. It is important that when Local Government officers embark on compliance (particularly if it has not been extensively undertaken before), it clearly communicated what is occurring to Councillors and all staff, especially those in customer service roles. This will ensure that a consistent message is presented by all levels of the Local Government. It is also vital that contractors undertaking a collection service on behalf of a Local Government are engaged and supportive. The following Case Study from the City of Rockingham outlines how the City undertook compliance and the results.

CASE STUDY: City of Rockingham:

In 2014, the City commenced an enforcement campaign which saw Local Government staff enforce the volume limits, material allowed and follow up to ascertain if illegal dumping was occurring. This very successful initiative saw a 5 – 10% reduction in the amount of material collected. Prior to collection, material which was outside what the Local Government had specified was marked with pink spray paint (see Figure 3), photographed and a notice provided to the household to remove the material from the verge (Appendix 1). During the collection, the City worked closely with contractors to ensure only allowed material was collected and that customer service queries were answered quickly and effectively. Following the collection, the material outside of Council specifications was not collected, residents were provided with information on where they could take the material, following that Rangers were notified. There were a few incidents of illegal dumping, however due to the comprehensive documentation process; the material could be tracked back to the original owners.



Figure 3: City of Rockingham – enforcement of excess amounts of material presented on verge.

Green Waste Collections

The amount of material per household collected by Local Governments varies, with some Local Governments collecting upwards of 180kg/hh and others collecting a far lower amount for example 21kg/ hh.

The characteristics which lead to these different collection amounts vary. However there are some factors which appear to have an impact specifically collection frequency - the more collections provided, the greater amount of greenwaste that needs to be managed.

Each of the following sections focuses on one element of vergeside collections. To move towards better practice, it is suggested that all of these sections are adopted.

Reduction

Aim: Reduce the amount of material placed on the verge for collection.

Approach: It is recommended that Local Governments provide residents with information on composting/worm farming options for greenwaste as well as alternative options for disposal.

Rationale: Greenwaste can be composted by the householder, which reduces the need for Local Government collections. Many Local Governments also provide drop off locations where material can be deposited.

Frequency

Aim: Reduce the frequency of collection.

Approach: Move towards two collections, or fewer per year.

Rationale: There is a clear correlation between the number of collections and the amount of material collected. As green waste collected through the vergeside collection has a market and is usually recovered well, other factors should determine the frequency. These factors could include budgetary constraints and other services provided.

On average, 56.9kg/hh of green waste is collected by Local Governments offering a single green waste per year. Local Governments that offer two green waste collections per year collect an average of 85.6kg/hh. Local Governments offering three green waste collections per year collect on average 98.7kg/hh and similarly, Local Governments offering four collections collect 97.4kg/hh per year. A Local Government which offers on demand green waste collections averages 113.1kg/hh each year.

Amount of material allowed

Aim: Consistent amount of material allowed on verge.

Approach: Move to 2 cubic metres.

Rationale: There is a range of different size limits provided by Local Governments, from 2 cubic meters, to three cubic metres, to 6 cubic meters to no limit. Only one Local Government has a kg / hh limit. Two Local Governments have height limits for material. Residents are unlikely to weigh material prior to placing it on the verge. A cubic metre limit, that is clearly illustrated, is recommended as it will be easier to understand for residents.

Kilograms of green waste collected per household were compared to volume and weight limits to determine if more waste quantity restrictions affected the amount of waste. On average, 68.9kg/hh of green waste is collected by Local Governments limiting green waste to one metre high piles while an average of 29.8kg/hh of green waste is collected by Local Governments limits waste to 1.5m high piles. Local Governments that restrict green waste to 16kg/hh collect an average of 96kg/hh. Local Governments limiting green waste quantities to two cubic metres collect on average 86.6kg/hh while Local Governments offering limiting to three cubic metres collect 74.8kg/hh and those limiting to six cubic metres collect 120kg/hh. the remaining Local Governments that do not set and weight or volume restriction collect an average of 87.4kg/hh.

This information is not as conclusive as for hard waste as another factor to consider with green waste is the frequency of collections. However for consistency, it is suggested that a 2 cubic metre limit is set.

Any limit on material volumes must be enforced – refer to the section on options for Enforcement.

Type of material allowed

Aim: Consistent and safe range of material presented for collection

Approach: Only greenwaste is allowed to be placed on the verge.

Rationale: Some Local Governments allow residents to place bags/boxes full of greenwaste on the verge at collection time. This is a potential source of contamination. Cardboard boxes will compost, however plastic bags will not. By ensuring a consistent message is provided across all Local Governments, will allow the current low level of contamination for material collected to be continued.

Collection Notification

Aim: Residents understand exactly what, when and how much material they are allowed to place on the verge for collection.

Approach: The information that is provided to residents prior to collection should be easy to follow, containing a high degree of pictorial information.

Rationale: Pictorial information is often more useful to residents than written descriptions, as it provides an easy to follow guide for all, regardless of language group or literacy. The way the information is structured will also help residents to be able to picture the exact amount of material they are allowed to place on the verge for collection.

Collection - Timing

Aim: Collection occurs within a week of residents being allowed to place material on verge.

Approach: Ensure collection happens quickly after informational material has been distributed; one week after distribution is recommended.

Rationale: Most Local Governments have information on vergeside collections available all year round via websites and calendars. However, many Local Governments will also provide an additional prompt to the resident by way of a flyer in the letterbox or signage in the area. It is from this point in time that a week of accumulation before the collection occurs is recommended.

If collection occurs promptly after the notification of the collection, it is likely to reduce the amount of material on the verge. Feedback from Local Governments where material has been on the verge for a long time indicates that additional material is frequently added to existing piles.

Enforcement

Aim: Material type and amount limits enforced.

Approach: Enforcement is essential, the Local Government needs to follow up to ensure residents are putting out the correct amount and type of material.

Rationale: As for hardwaste collections enforcement of limits on amount and type of material is essential. Figure 5 shows an example of non-compliant material.



Figure 5: Marked non-compliant material – City of Rockingham.

Other Considerations

In developing the Guidelines a number of issues regarding vergeside collections has been raised, this section aims to address some of these considerations and provide advice on how to proceed.

Issue: Containerised vs Un-containerised collections

Comment: 2 Local Governments in the metropolitan area are providing containerised (skip bin) collections. These Local Governments are collecting an average of 187.1 kg/hh. The recovery rate for one of the Local Governments is nil, the other has a 13% recovery rate.

Skip bin collections are well established in these areas, however generate a high amount of waste per hh and a relatively low recovery rate. There may be other methods of sorting the material which yield higher recovery rates, however the risk with these containerised collections is that non-specified material will be included and have a detrimental impact on recovery.

Issue: Servicing multi-residential locations

Comment: The amount of multi-residential properties is increasing and the traditional approach to vergeside collections may not be applicable. Opportunities exist to engage Strata Companies, and offer a service which is beneficial to both the Local Government and residents. While containerised collections do not necessarily yield high recovery rates, they may be a solution for multi-residential properties. The following case study from the City of Belmont identifies how such a service could work.

CASE STUDY: City of Belmont

The City of Belmont offers a special service to their multi-residential properties where the standard vergeside collection services are not practical. The City assesses each location and determines where a skip bin can be placed, they have a range of skip bin sizes available through their contractor Cleanaway, from 4 ½ to 30 cubic metres.

All residents are notified 2 weeks in advance, that for a specified amount of time (Saturday 8 – 11am) they are able to deposit their bulky waste in an area near the multi-residential area. The Strata companies and caretakers are also notified. The contractor for the City (Cleanaway), deliver the bin, ensure staff are present while people dispose of material, then take the bin away. Recently, residents from 150 units filled a 30 cubic metre bin in this way.

Issue: Removal of material from the verge collections by non-authorized persons

Comment: Further investigation needs to occur regarding the legal implications of allowing 'verge shopping' – members of the community who remove whole items from the verge for reuse.

This activity has the potential to reduce the amount of material on the verge for collection and encourages reuse of materials. However, those members of the community who are creating a hazard to public safety should be most strongly discouraged (e.g. removing copper coils from old TV's on the verge). Therefore, it is important that Local Governments have a clear position on what is acceptable/not acceptable behaviour, and enforces this. The development of the model Waste Local Law may assist Local Governments with this issue by providing options.

Issue: Access to recycling opportunities

Several Local Governments hold drop off days, where they provide the community with additional recycling options, the amount of material on the verge can potentially be reduced and the amount of material recycled increased. The following case study from the City of Swan highlights what is possible.

CASE STUDY: City of Swan

In 2012/13 the City commenced providing (in addition to verge collections), specific recyclable material drop off days for residents every two months. Residents are able to drop off electronic waste, wood waste, metal and mattresses for recycling. Figure 6 shows the process of drop off and separation.



Drop off



Material separation

Figure 6: City of Swan recyclable drop off days.

Issue: Contracting for vergeside collection

Comment: Providing flexibility when tendering for verge collections can be advantageous as it may provide opportunities for new and innovative approaches. There are a number of companies who provide a specific material collection, this could assist in reducing the amount of material collected and increase recovery. When contracting for the service, having separate material type components in the contract may assist in increasing recovery. By ensuring that disposal costs are clearly identified and covered in the contract will provide a full cost of service.

SECTION FOUR: Future Better Practice

For future Better Practice, the approach suggested is that hard waste collections move from the current approach to vergeside collections, to an on call service that functions in partnership with charities and business. This type of collection service would also work in conjunction with other services provided by the Local Government such as drop off facilities or days.

With an on call collection system, residents are required to contact their Local Government (or contracted service provider), to schedule a collection at the next available date offered by the Local Government. Many Local Governments across Australia have established efficient on call collection systems where a periodic 'collection run' occurs (for example, a collection run could occur on the 4th Thursday of each month, with a limited number of bookings made available to the community). Residents then place material on the verge, any material that has not been 'booked in' for a collection is then treated as illegal dumping.

Research from interstate shows that collections managed through an on call service have overall lower costs and less material collected per household. This type of system can be easily transitioned to a user pays system or even a need based system at later date if the Local Government chooses.

Appendix 3 provides several in depth case studies which include the cost of the types of service and the rationale Local Governments have identified for moving to a different service approach.

Reduction

Aim: Reduce the amount of material that Local Government is collecting.

Approach: It is recommended that the Local Government provide residents with clear information on how they can reduce and reuse all material generated by their households.

Rationale: As with Section three, the main goal for Local Government, should be to reduce the amount of material that is disposed of through the collection system. An on-call system in which residents have to 'book in' a collection via telephone or an online booking system, presents Local Government with an opportunity at the point of contact to suggest alternative uses for material (e.g. *'have you considered donating quality unwanted items to charity'*), and ensure that only the correct type and volume of material is placed out for collection. By registering contact details for a collection service, a Local Government also has an opportunity to ask residents if they would like to receive tips/news on sustainable living throughout the year.

Frequency

Aim: Provide residents with access to collection service which meets their needs

Approach: Local Governments provide residents with one or two opportunities to access an on call collection service.

Rationale: On call services provide greater flexibility for residents as they are able to schedule collections when it is convenient for them. This system also has benefits for Local Government, as it allows service requirements to be spread more evenly across the year. Residents will be required to request a service, and then be scheduled in by the Local Government (or contracted service provider) at the next available date offered by the Local Government. In the event that a Local

Government wishes to implement an efficient periodic 'collection run' styled model, all promotional materials must specify that residents will be booked in at a time that is convenient to the Local Government, and that there are a limited number of collection bookings available during each 'collection run.' Promotional materials must also be clear about potential waiting times for services during particular seasons of the year.

Information provision

Aim: Provide residents with clear, concise information on the collection system, and how to comply with servicing requirements.

Approach: The information that is provided to residents prior to collection should be easy to follow and provide both online and telephone options for booking in collections.

Rationale: Residents should be offered a variety of ways to schedule a collection service with the Local Government. When establishing both telephone and online booking systems, Local Governments should consider incorporating:

- Reduction messages, such as prompts for alternative disposal options (e.g. *'have you considered donating quality unwanted items to charity'*);
- Guidance on the type and volume of material that will be collected;
- Guidance on when and where material can be placed for collection;
- Advice on potential waiting times for services (due to a limited number of available bookings during each collection run);
- Advice that Local Government will take action to address non-compliance;
- Advice on measures the resident can take to report problematic scavenging activity that places the health and safety of the community at risk;
- A 'tick box' option for residents to indicate if they would like to receive Local Government updates throughout the year; and
- A follow up email or letter to the resident confirming the date of the collection, how to use the collection service, and what action to take in the event a collection is missed.

Collection

Aim: Provide a collection system that enhances local amenity and meets health and safety requirements.

Approach: Residents should only place bulky items outside property the night before the scheduled collection date.

Rationale: This approach reduces the chance of materials getting damaged by scavengers, illegally dumped, or damaged/moved about during adverse weather. A measure that could be taken to discourage scavengers from removing valuable materials from the verge, and creating a potentially hazardous situation for residents, is to empower residents to 'dob in' these types of scavengers to the Local Government. Another approach that could be taken by Local Government to combat illegal dumping, is to provide residents that have scheduled a collection a label for the material. This makes it very clear for the Local Government (or contracted service provider), and neighbours why the material is on the verge, and how to correctly schedule a collection. The following Case Study from Maroondah in Victoria provides additional information about this approach.

Case Study: Maroondah City Council - VIC

The Maroondah City Council provides two hard waste collections to residents annually. Residents wishing to utilise this service, must contact the City. Collection dates are subject to availability, and material can only be presented for collection the weekend prior to the collection week. Materials to be collected must have a 'booked' sticker placed on one of the items in the pile of materials that is clearly visible from the road.

Further information is available from: <http://www.maroondah.vic.gov.au/CleanOut.aspx>.

In order for an on call collection system to function smoothly, clear guidance needs to be provided to residents on how to use the system, as well as the fact action will be taken by the Local Government to address non-compliance.

Enforcement

Aim: Material type, timing and amount limits enforced.

Approach: Enforcement is essential. Local Governments need to follow up to ensure residents are putting out the correct amount and type of material, at the right time.

Rationale: On call collections make this type of enforcement far easier, as it is more obvious where the material has come from. In the event that the incorrect materials are placed out for a booked collection, establishing direct contact with the resident is much easier, as the collection has been booked in. Many South Australian Local Governments that provide on-call collections give clear advice that unbooked material placed on the verge, is viewed as illegal dumping and that offenders will be fined.

Please refer to section one for the enforcement options available using Local Government Local Laws, and section three for information on a range of additional enforcement activities that have proven to be an effective means of achieving desired outcomes.

Other considerations

Issue: Contracting for vergeside collection

Approach: Provide flexibility when tendering for on call collections

Comment: Providing flexibility when tendering for verge collections can be advantageous as it may provide opportunities for new and innovative approaches. There are a number of companies who provide a specific material collection, this could assist in reducing the amount of material collected and increase recovery. When contracting for the service, having separate material type components in the contract may assist in increasing recovery. By ensuring that disposal costs are clearly identified and covered in the contract will provide a full cost of service.

Appendix 1: Tools for Local Government

Reduction

Charities

The National Association of Charitable Recycling Organisations is currently developing a website which will include the location of all charity shops and drop boxes. Local Governments will be able to promote this website as an easy avenue for residents to make smaller items available for reuse, such as clothes and household brick-a-brack. For more information: www.nacro.org.au/

Businesses

WALGA is developing a Preferred Supplier Panel in 2014 which will cover a range of businesses that can assist Local Government with the recycling materials and which may be able to provide a service which the Local Government can promote to the community to reduce the amount of material put out on the verge.

The Recycling Near You website already provides information on a range of businesses which could assist the community in disposing of unwanted items www.recyclingnearyou.com.au

Product Stewardship – TVs and Computers

Through the National Product Stewardship Scheme for TVs and Computers there are a range of drop off sites that residents can use to recycle their unwanted electronic equipment. These sites are listed on the Recycling Near You website www.recyclingnearyou.com.au/ewastescheme/.

Example of Verge Collection Discontinuation

The following example from the Sunshine Coast City Council demonstrates the rationale that can be provided to the community, on why a vergeside collection service has been discontinued:

”Council does not provide an Annual Kerbside Bulk Waste Service for the following reasons:

- There is a commonly held idea that the service is free. This is incorrect.
- The service was estimated to cost \$2.06 million across the Sunshine Coast Region for 2012-2013.
- Ratepayers would pay about \$15 extra on their rates for the service.
- In the past only 25% to 30% of the community took advantage of the service.
- The service is heavily subsidised by the majority of the residents who do not use the service.
- Council wants to keep rates down - council's waste collection charges are much lower than most southeast Queensland councils.
- Items stored on the footpath can cause danger to the public and property during storms and high winds.
- Waste on the footpath overnight provides a trip / injury hazard and may result in liability claims against council.
- Waste on the footpath in our main tourist areas detracts from the beauty of the area.
- The service does not maximize separation and recycling of waste.
- Council's Waste Minimisation Strategy promotes a user pays system for waste producers.
- Waste producers have a responsibility to pay for their waste and not be subsidised by others.”



CITY OF ROCKINGHAM VERGE WASTE REPORT

1251

DATE: _____ TIME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO THE RESIDENT:
YOUR VERGE WASTE DOES NOT COMPLY WITH THE GUIDELINES FOR
THE VERGE WASTE COLLECTIONS**

YOUR VERGE WASTE WILL NOT OR HAS NOT BEEN COLLECTED DUE TO THE FOLLOWING:

- Exceeds TWO CUBIC METRES. Any excess waste will be left on your verge
- Placed on vacant land or public reserve verge. Waste must be placed on your own verge for collection
- Placed out after the collection is completed
- Bulk waste over 1.5 metres in length (basketball hoops, swing sets, trampolines etc)
- Green waste exceeds 1.5 metres in length or 350mm in diameter
- Placed against fences, light poles, street signs, trees etc
- Non-conforming waste placed out:

BULK WASTE

- Tyres
- Glass
- Asbestos or Super six fencing
- Paint
- Oils
- Batteries
- Food waste
- Building materials (fencing, concrete, bricks etc)

GREEN WASTE

- Bag or boxes of leaves/grass clippings
- Weeds and root material
- Sand and soil
- Dug out lawn
- Green waste contaminated with lattice/wiring

OTHER: _____

ANY WASTE LEFT ON THE VERGE AFTER THE COLLECTION IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE RESIDENT.

**NON-COMPLYING WASTE MUST BE REMOVED OR PLACED BEHIND YOUR FENCE LINE
WITHIN 7 DAYS OR LITTER INFRINGEMENTS OF \$200.00 TO \$500.00 MAY BE ISSUED.**

For further information visit www.rockingham.wa.gov.au, refer to your Residential Verge Waste Collection Service flyer or call 9528 8550.

We appreciate your assistance in this matter.

Regards

Waste Services Department
P: (08) 9528 8550
Office hours Monday to Friday 8am – 4:30pm

Appendix 2: Self Assessment Table

Better Practice Recommendation	City/Town/Shire Current Practice/outcome	Change needed
Separate Hard and Green waste collections		
Hard waste - less than 70kg/ household		
Hard waste - recovery rate of at least 50%		
Residents are provided with information outlining other options for reusing and recycling material usually disposed of through vergeside collections		
Collection Frequency – 1 per year		
Hard waste collection amount – 2 cubic metres		
Limit materials to non-hazardous items		
Clear collection information provided		
Residents have one week to place material on verge, then it is collected		
Material type, amount and timing is enforced by Local Government		
Green waste – recovery rate of at least 95%		
Residents are provided with information outlining options for reducing their green waste		
Collection Frequency – 1 or 2 per year		
Green waste collection amount – 2 cubic meters		
Limit material to green waste only		
Clear collection information provided		
Residents have one week to place material on verge, then it is collected		
Material type, amount and timing is enforced by Local Government		

There are other considerations that a Local Government should also examine in relation to vergeside collections, including:

- How are multi-residential dwellings serviced? Is there an opportunity for improvement?
- What legal requirements does the Local Government have in place regarding unauthorised persons removing material from the verge? Do these requirements need to be amended/updated?
- What other services does the Local Government provide for residents to reuse/recycling materials (for example drop off days)?
- What approach does the Local Government take to contracting for vergeside collection services?

Appendix 3: Case Studies

The following case studies provide a summary of the rationale Local Governments have used, to determine if a move towards a different service approach is required.

Case Study: Western Metropolitan Regional Council - WA

Summary of existing service

The WMRC services a well-established region in Perth, with just over 29,300 dwellings. In 2011, the WMRC developed a Business Case to be considered by Council, on the potential benefits of providing standardised waste management services across the region, including on-call hard waste vergeside collections. The Business Case identified that the current approach to providing hard waste area wide collections, was costing the collective Local Governments of the region in the order of \$667,859 per annum.

The WMRC identified a number of Local Governments in the Eastern States, with similar characteristics that had previously implemented an on call hard waste collection service. The costs of providing this service by the City of Port Stephens (NSW) and the City of Port Phillip (Vic) were investigated further. A summary of the findings are as follows:

	City of Port Stephens - NSW	City of Port Phillip - VIC
Dwellings	28,883	49,069
Service	On-call	On-call, hard and green waste + illegally dumped material
Cost	est. \$350,000	\$556,996/annum
Cost /hh	\$12.11	\$11.35

The WMRC Business Case used these examples, to estimate what it would cost to service the entire WMRC under a regionalised contract (two options were costed). This approach is considered reasonable, given the WMRC had not yet tested the local market by going out to tender. The WMRC concluded that:

*“Assuming a similar per household cost could be achieved in Perth’s western suburbs, the annual cost would be **\$333,361-\$355,683/annum** to deliver an on demand bulk waste service. This is half the current cost of bulk waste collection services in the region.”*

The Town of Mosman Park commissioned research into the costs of providing on call collections in Melbourne (Victoria), as part of its consideration of the WMRC Business Case. The consultants were broadly supportive of the proposal to adopt the WMRC on call waste collection trial (with minor amendments). A summary of the research’s comparison of the type and cost of services provided by various Local Governments in Melbourne is provided in Table 3. As with other case studies, it was difficult to make direct comparisons between costs. This was due to the type of services provided by the Local Governments differed.

	Bayside City Council	Glen Eira City Council	City of Yarra	Hobson Bay City Council
General Stats				
Population	90,475	140,000	78,600	84,000
Number of Tenements	41,600	56,000	32,139	38,000
Entitled Services Per Year	2	3	2	1
Maximum amount per service	4m3	4m3	2m3(flexible)	3m3(flexible)
Booking & Pick-up Stats				
Approximate Annual Bookings	12,000		10,500	6,861
Approximate Annual Pick Ups	18,000	23,000	12,900	6,861
Assumed Collection Days	248	248	248	248
Ave Collections Per Day	73	93	52	28
Peak - Pick Ups Per Day	Approx 95	114	61	32
Disposal & Recycling Stats – Annual Tonnes				
Hard Waste to Landfill	1,800	2,337	1,600	306
Bundled branches	300			147
Mattresses	120		67	
Steel	270	65	325	284
e-Waste	120		130	
Wood/timber				397
Collection Cost Stats (Excl. Landfill Fees)				
Approx Annual Collection Cost	\$350,000	\$667,000	\$410,000	\$342,000
Approx Cost Per Tenement	\$8.41	\$11.91	\$12.76	\$9.00
Approx Cost Per Pick Up	\$19.44	\$29.00	\$31.78	\$49.85

Table 3: Comparison of costs (Source: Table 19 & 20 Comparative Analysis Summary, Survey and Analysis of At Call Bulk Waste Collection Services, Prepared for Town of Mosman Park Draft 9 August 2012, Fox-Lane Consulting).

Case Study: Campbelltown City Council - SA

Summary of existing service

Campbelltown City Council is home to approximately 22,500 properties. The City was previously providing area wide hard waste collection for residents every two years. This service had a household participation rate of 45%. In addition to this service, the City also provided a *subsidised* service where residents could pay to have scrap metal collections (\$5 each collection, fortnightly basis) and mattress collections (\$10 for the first item and \$5 for each subsequent item, weekly basis). In 2010, there were 10,627 collections that resulted in 1,236.29 tonnes of material. In 2012, there was a slight decrease, with 8,778 collections and 886.96 tonnes of material collected.

Summary of proposed service

In April 2014, Council resolved to take a new approach towards hard waste collections, titled 'Clean Campbelltown.' This new approach involved moving to an annual on-call service, and providing improved recycling opportunities. This was due to a high number of calls (80-100 per month) on illegal dumping, and requests for more frequent collections. The City also committed to providing each household with a free mattress collection annually, as well as a permanent e-waste drop off facility. A comparison of costs between the current service, and 'Clean Campbelltown' is provided in Table 4.

Current Service		Clean Campbelltown	
Type	Budget Cost (annual)	Type	Budget Cost (annual)
Biennial Area Wide Hardwaste Collection	\$169,500	On-call collection	\$230,000 (inc. disposal)
Scrap Metal Collection	\$0	Scrap Metal Collection	\$0
Mattress Collection	\$10,000	Mattress Collection	\$20,000
E-waste drop off day (twice per year)	\$21,000	Permanent E-waste drop off	\$10,000
Total Cost	\$200,500	Total Cost	\$260,000

Table 4: Cost comparisons for Campbelltown

Very rough calculations by WALGA, show the average cost of existing area wide collections per dwelling to be \$7.53 (i.e. $169,500/22500=7.53$). The cost of moving to the new collection system per dwelling was estimated to be \$10.22 ($230000/22500=10.22$).

The assumptions used by the City to arrive at this budget cost, were based on the contractor's ability to complete 70 collections per day, for two days every week. This would result in a maximum of 7200 collections per year. Given approximately 19,500 tonnes was collected through the area wide collection system over past four years, with an average participation rate of 45% every 2yrs, the City made the assumption that this would equate to a participation rate of less than 25% annually (i.e. 5630 collections). Based on these assumptions, it was determined that the contractor would be able to meet the servicing requirements of the City.

This new initiative is scheduled to begin in July 2014, and will be accompanied by a campaign that informs residents where to take other waste materials such as gas bottles, CFL's, oil etc.

Further information is available from the 1 April 2014 Council Agenda, available at: <http://www.campbelltown.sa.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/Council%20Agenda%20-%201%20April%202014.pdf>.