

An icon for Community Recycling Centres, consisting of a white square with rounded corners containing three downward-pointing arrows above three U-shaped symbols representing recycling bins.

# Community Recycling Centres

## CASE STUDY: Salamander Bay Community Recycling Centre

Port Stephens Council opened its Community Recycling Centre (CRC) in May 2014. The Council received funding of \$97,000 from the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) to establish a pilot centre which has been well received by residents. This is evidenced by the continued increase in householder visits to drop off their problem wastes.

Council's Waste Management Coordinator, Aaron Malloy managed the project from the outset, overseeing the initial funding process through to commissioning the centre. Port Stephens Council share their experience.

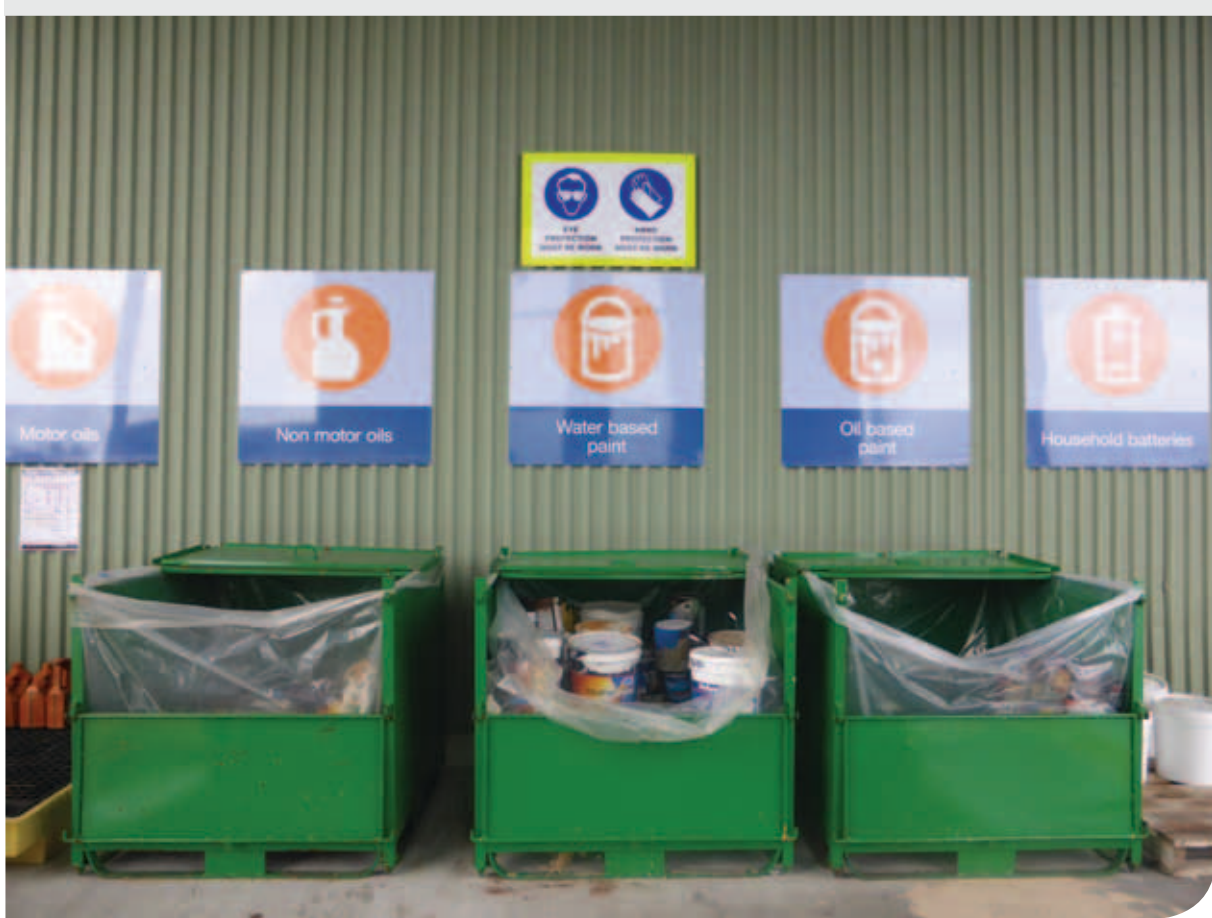
### Getting started – selling the value was not hard

Existing infrastructure at the Salamander Bay Waste Transfer Station made Port Stephens Council an ideal candidate to receive EPA funding to become a CRC early start demonstration site.

The Council's identified site already received waste and separated food and garden organics, concrete and bricks and cardboard and steel for recycling. However, the facility was not equipped to accept low level toxic waste such as paint and batteries.

**Project Manager, Aaron Malloy said "The opportunity to apply for early start EPA funding was very timely, as Council didn't have the funds to build a facility that would take this type of waste."**

**"Selling the value of the project internally was not hard – we immediately identified that the CRC would not only add value to residents but would also be a valuable part of the Council's waste management program."**



## Planning – using existing infrastructure

Port Stephens Council selected the site because there was existing infrastructure such as fences and security cameras in place, helping to reduce the upfront capital investment. It was also in close proximity to the population centre.

In planning for the facility, the project team worked to the initial schematic issued by the EPA for the shed where materials were to be dropped off by residents. An additional shed was added with cover and bunding to store the full receptacles for collection.

The Council located the drop-off area close to its existing operations and in the line of sight of operators to ensure residents placed materials in the correct storage receptacles.

When asked what could have been done differently during the planning stage, Aaron said he was limited by space onsite. If more space had of been available, he would have made the design larger to accommodate more storage receptacles at the drop off area.

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## Design and construction – apply rigour

The Council went through a tender process to select a design and construction company and supplied a schematic of the EPA's minimum CRC design standards. The Council required engineering sign-off on the drawings and on the final build.

The project took a little longer to complete than initially anticipated.

**“Our project took ten months from start to finish but it is certainly achievable to get a similar CRC project completed in five to six months,” Aaron said.**

Council believes it is important to meet on-site with contractors during the Request for Tender period so they have a clear understanding of the site and requirements and to insist on strict reporting requirements during the build.

## Operation and logistics – all systems go

The site is located next to an industrial area of Salamander Bay and a sporting ground.

As an existing site, no development application was required. The Council was essentially upgrading an area that was already used to collect waste. It was beneficial to involve Council's planning department early in the discussions.

Aaron said the CRC has experienced good uptake by residents with 100–150 cars each weekend visiting the centre. The centre was designed with a circular entry and exit to avoid traffic congestion.

At any given time four operators are on the site and one supervisor. Prior to the CRC opening, employees completed a dangerous goods awareness course. The EPA contractor provided training for staff on the operation of the CRC which included risk management and emergency response.

Residents will often bring containers that are leaking, broken or without lids, which can result in spills. To address this, Council provided extra outer containers to contain spillages and absorbent materials to immediately clean up any spills. Staff have been trained to watch out for these containers and respond appropriately.

To promote the new facility, Port Stephens Council placed advertisements in the local newspapers and in various Council publications. The council is also looking at joint radio advertising with neighbouring Lake Macquarie City Council, which also has a CRC.

**...the CRC has experienced good uptake by residents with 100–150 cars each weekend visiting the centre.**

**“The CRC is operating how we'd hoped it would – it is really encouraging and we feel as though it has been a very worthwhile experience.”**

## Key learnings

- Make sure the design fits the site – plan for your future requirements.
- Where possible utilise an existing structure and include space for other household waste materials in the drop off area.
- Ensure there are sufficient storage receptacles. We initially had five storage receptacles for water and solvent based paint but an extra four spares were later provided to meet the high demand.

## CRC features

- Built at an existing waste transfer site.
- Undercover drop off area with walls on three sides attached to the north side of the main waste transfer station building.
- Sections with clear panels to let light in.

## Contact Port Stephens CRC

### Salamander Bay Waste Transfer Station

4 Tarrant Rd (Off Soldiers Point Rd), Salamander Bay

**Phone:** 4980 0255

This is a NSW EPA Waste Less, Recycle More initiative funded from the Waste Levy.

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