

FACT SHEET

Materials Recovery in the Cradle Coast



Do you know what a Materials Recovery Facility is and why it is important?

Back in the days before tips were called landfills, Materials Recovery Facilities were commonly known as recycling depots. Back in time even further, such a thing didn't exist at all. All waste from homes, businesses, schools and public places including all of the glass, paper, plastics, aluminium and steel ended up in the same place – burnt or buried at the tip.

Over time, we've become wise to the economic, social and environmental cost of these 'throw-away' behaviours and today we try and extract as much re-use from materials that can be recycled and minimise the amount of waste going to landfill.

A Materials Recovery Facility is where recyclables and other items that have resale potential are delivered and sorted, ready for conversion into new products.

In the Cradle Coast region, there is one Materials Recovery Facility located in Spreyton. This facility receives recyclables from your Local Council's fortnightly bin collection, plus directly from larger organisations. If you drop off recyclables in the designated areas at your Council's waste transfer station, these are also packed up and delivered in bulk to the Materials Recovery Facility for processing.

What does a Materials Recovery Facility do?

In simplest terms, it receives recyclables, sorts them into their different types and sells and ships them to wholesalers or processors to convert into new materials.

This important task avoids thousands of tonnes of materials from taking up valuable space in our landfills. In turn this means that our landfills have a longer life, our landfill environments are less polluted, and less energy is used in extracting raw materials to make new products – the Materials Recovery Facility is an important step in delivering good waste management services in the Cradle Coast region.

How is the Materials Recovery Facility funded?

Veolia runs the Materials Recovery Facility in Spreyton as a commercial operation. A portion of your Council rates is used to pay Veolia for the important service of collecting kerbside recyclables and receiving and sorting recyclables from waste transfer stations and other sources.

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Veolia also sell the recyclable materials to Australian and international processors so that income is generated to maintain the Materials Recovery Facility site and equipment.

As market demand fluctuates for recycled steel, aluminium, plastics, glass and other materials, so does the price paid by Australian and international buyers for our recyclables. When providing recycling services, the Local Councils and waste management providers such as Veolia consider not only the financial costs and benefits, but also the costs and benefits to the environment and to the health and wellbeing of current and future generations – these factors all influence what waste management services are offered and for what fees and prices in the Cradle Coast region.

To find what waste services exist in the Cradle Coast region, visit www.rethinkwaste.com.au and select your Council from the drop-down list.