



## Recycling Frequently Asked Questions

### **Will you be extending the recycling household services beyond the current pilot areas, and what are my other recycling options?**

The decision in the short term is to delay any further roll-out of an enhanced Council service due to the economic conditions that have forced budget constraints on the Council, and also to finalise an evaluation of viable alternatives, which is being undertaken as part of the imperatives of the new legislation (i.e. the National Environmental Management Waste Act and the Consumer Protection Act). There are still lessons we are learning from the pilot project (Think Twice), as well as initiatives that the private sector (which includes the waste industry, manufacturers and retailers) should contribute to.

In the background, the packaging industry (amongst others), together with the Department of Environmental Affairs are also hard at work to develop an [industry waste management plan](#), which will determine the responsibilities of these industries. We are hoping that this process will conclude soon, but there is a wide consultation process, as allowed for in the Constitution and the Acts, which must be concluded first.

For all recycling facilities visit the [Recycling facilities](#) page.

### **How do I dispose of used compact fluorescent lights (CFLs) and batteries?**

Pick 'n Pay and some Woolworths stores, as well as other recycling facilities will safely dispose of CFLs and batteries.

For further information click [here](#).

### **Why is waste minimisation and recycling better than the current waste disposal and landfill solutions?**

It is a more responsible and sustainable way to manage our resources. Waste items can be an economically viable resource if channelled in the right way through the right business mechanism, and can be used to benefit the economy. Also, there is less negative environmental impact if waste isn't disposed of at landfill (landfills generate methane, a potent greenhouse gas).

### **How will the man on the street benefit from [waste minimisation](#) and recycling?**

What are the incentives, if any? The waste minimisation and recycling industry has the potential to offer space for new and diverse businesses which use waste as an input. In addition, the man on the street may end up saving money if he recycles (especially the case with businesses, complexes etc.). Also, the satisfaction of knowing he is doing something to save the environment (i.e. indirect benefit of less negative impact on environment). In terms of incentives, currently in Cape Town, if a business or complex has more than 1 wheelie bin, they pay for each one, and if they minimize their waste they can reduce their number of bins to be collected and thus have a lower monthly bill.

### **What are the major obstacles involved in improving household waste management in South Africa?**

In many municipalities in South Africa, the infrastructure does not yet exist to ensure an efficient value chain from the collection of recyclables, sorting and sale to the end markets, making the current systems of recycling expensive, and thus not always economically viable.

How could waste minimisation and recycling best be implemented in South African households? The most important way households can effectively minimize their waste, is to divert all their green waste and as much food waste as possible out of the waste stream by means of a combination of worm composting and traditional composting measures. This would greatly minimize the burden on the landfill sites. In addition, households can wash and set aside all recyclable items, stockpile them at home for as long as possible, then drop them off at the closest recyclable drop off site.

### **What are the possibilities for recycling at fuel stations?**

The city and the recycling industry have recognised the potential suitability of fuel stations to become recycling facilities. However, the majority of the automotive industry has only committed to, and embarked on recycling two waste streams, namely motor oil and the containers in which motor oil is sold at fuel stations, whether those be oil tins or plastic oil containers. Currently most of the fuel station owners do participate in the recycling of motor oil through the ROSE Foundation. Oil containers and tins are also collected for recycling by Collect-a-can where they are cleaned before reuse or recycling.

To further waste minimisation, Solid Waste Management arranged a workshop with the automotive industry in November 2008. The main focus areas were awareness raising on our [Integrated Waste Management policy](#); the mutual responsibility of all stakeholders; and also to find ways and means to work together. Discussions included mechanisms by which the recycling of motor oil, tyres and other related products could be stimulated in and by the automotive industry, but various limitations were identified with reference to certain products. The recycling of products such as paper, plastics and glass at fuel stations has certain limitations and also do carry some risks. The limitations are mostly related to space and height clearance for the service trucks (to lift the igloos). Safety however is the biggest risk due to increased vehicular movement in different directions and areas on the site, but mostly because of the potential fire hazard created in the storage of materials such as paper and plastic.

The electronics industry is currently starting similar discussions with the automotive and related industries relating to the possibility of starting drop off points for used electronic waste at fuel stations, so there may still be a medium to long term future possibility to phase in the collection of other waste streams if these discussions are successful.