



Waste Management Policy

1. Policy statement

The Office of the Information Commissioner (**OIC**) is committed to ecological sustainability through effective waste management practices involving avoidance, reduction, recycling, reuse and disposal of waste.

2. Purpose

This policy outlines how we give effect to our commitment. It strengthens our management strategies to minimise waste through waste reduction and recycling activities.

3. General

A number of drivers shape our Waste Management Policy:

- the *Environmental Protection Act 1994* is the overarching umbrella for protecting Queensland's environment while allowing for development that improves the total quality of life, both now and in the future, in a way that maintains the ecological processes on which life depends (ecologically sustainable development)
- the *Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011* aims to promote waste avoidance and reduction, and resource recovery and efficiency actions, reduce the consumption of natural resources and minimise the disposal of waste by encouraging waste avoidance and the recovery, re-use and recycling of waste
- Queensland's *Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy* and the *Queensland Plan* express the state-wide outlook for the next 30 years

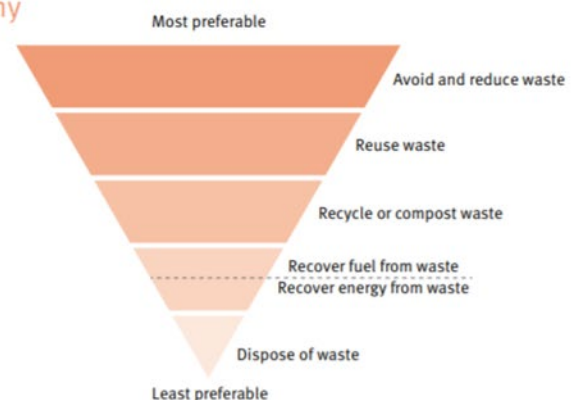
Note: OIC is not subject to Chapter 6, Part 3 of the *Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011*. This policy does not propose to address all the legislative requirements in that act.

4. Actions – within the Office

Our actions are structured around the waste management hierarchy. They focus on paper usage as this is the resource we consume the most.

Figure 1. Waste and resource management hierarchy

The waste and resource management hierarchy is a framework that guides the order of preference for managing waste. Waste should be avoided as a first priority, after which options for reuse and recycling should be explored. The options of fuel production, energy production or disposal should be reserved for residual waste that is unsuitable for higher order options. The hierarchy shapes the Strategy's priorities and provides the basis for the development of actions.



Source: Queensland's *Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy*



4.1 Waste avoidance

All staff should avoid wasting resources (including finances) in the first place by taking measures such as:

- asking themselves whether a hard copy of an electronic communication (email or voluminous material downloaded from the Internet) is really required
- checking the settings on photocopiers to ensure they are appropriate for the job – a previous setting may be for multiple/double sided etc copying when the job only requires a single sheet
- asking whether, for example, a simple manila folder would do the job just as well as a more expensive 'D' ring binder
- taking only what is needed from the stationery cupboard – a single item rather than a boxful which could deteriorate through lack of use and ultimately have to be discarded.

When, however, it is not possible to avoid generating waste, we will endeavor to reduce, reuse or recycle waste.

4.2 Waste reduction

Officers procuring products and services on behalf of OIC should refer to [the Integrating sustainability into the procurement process](#) guide. This will help conserve natural resources, save energy and maintain environmental quality and safety.

Environmentally friendly products include:

- recycled 'off-white' paper and paper products
- recycled photocopier/laser printer cartridges (provided they don't void machine warranty)
- materials capable of being recycled
- energy efficient office equipment and appliances (refer to purchasing guides for the Energy Rating)

Other waste reduction measures include (but are not limited to):

- updating our ICT tools and services to maximise employee benefits and reduce wastage
- printing double sided
- operating in a 'paper-lite' environment where we create and maintain files electronically and maximise electronic means of communication
- switching off office equipment at end of working day
- switching off lights in conference rooms/meeting rooms etc when not required
- giving preference to four cylinders (or alternative fueled/hybrid vehicles if available) when hiring/leasing motor vehicles for business purposes. Using blended fuel when available to reduce vehicle emissions.

4.3 Waste reuse

All staff should reuse old/discarded folders, binders, file covers and the like as much as possible and print draft copies of documents on scrap/pre-printed paper.

4.4 Waste recycling

All staff should separate recyclable materials (aluminum/metal cans, plastics, glass, paper, batteries, coffee pods etc) from general waste and place same in appropriate recycling receptacles.



4.5 Waste disposal

The removal and disposal of general and recyclable waste generally takes place on a regular or as required basis, however, the building services coordinator should be alerted if a backlog occurs. All staff should shred confidential material before its disposal.

5. Responsibilities

The **Director, Engagement and Corporate Services (DECS)** is responsible for:

- overall management of our waste management activities
- progressing ecological sustainability (including waste management best practice) within OIC
- reviewing implementation plan to enable the setting of targets in 2023
- ensuring staff are informed of current waste management legislation.

The **Business Services Manager (BSM)** is responsible for:

- providing input to the waste management section of our annual report
- coordinating responses/comments relative to high level waste strategies etc
- monitoring new/amended waste management legislation, guidelines etc
- collecting and documenting baseline data for new/recycled paper purchases
- establishing and maintaining a database for paper purchases.

All staff are responsible for:

- avoiding waste generation where possible
- familiarising themselves with legislative/administrative requirements relating to waste management (especially Queensland's [Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy](#))
- separating recyclable materials from general waste.

6. Reporting

The DECS shall report on the implementation of the policies' progress to the ELT every quarter. The DECS shall coordinate/provide information about OIC's waste management and make sure the information is included in the relevant section of OIC's annual report.

7. Records

Staff shall ensure that all waste related documentation can be readily accessed electronically and/or placed on relevant files.

8. Resources

- [Environmental Protection Act 1994](#)
- [Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011](#)
- Queensland's [Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy](#)
- [Integrate sustainability into procurement](#)



9. Version Control

Date	Version No.	Name	Change
November 2021	2	Tebony Justins	Update v1 from 2009 with current staff position names, terminology and formatting
December 2021	3	Adeline Yuksel	Update v2 with latest policy reference
January 2022	3	Sandra Heidrich	Refreshed and amendments made
February 2022	4	Adeline Yuksel	Amendments accepted and approved for distribution to ELT and staff
November 2022	5	Paxton Booth	Change of name from Plan to Policy