

Media Release

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WHAT IS E-WASTE?

E-waste is growing three times faster than any other municipal waste in Australia - a result of increased technology trends, reduced product lifespan and consumer demand for new products.

From 1 July, electricals and electronics will no longer be accepted in any bin and must go to a designated e-waste drop-off point.

Most Gippslanders are used to taking their larger unwanted electricals, like fridges, washing machines, televisions and computers to transfer stations; or depositing their mobile phones and batteries at a number of retail outlets across the region. This now applies to electrical and electronic items in the home including power tools, electronic toys, and small appliances including blenders and vacuum cleaners.

According to Matthew Peake, executive officer with the Gippsland Waste and Resource Recovery Group, significant activity is underway preparing for the ban.

“In Gippsland, the state government has invested around \$2.2 million to support councils prepare for the e-waste to landfill ban. Investment has been directed toward the upgrade of e-waste collection and storage facilities at transfer stations and most councils will also have drop-off boxes for small items at key locations.”

“I’d encourage residents in Gippsland to check with their local council regarding the e-waste drop-off points in their particular area.”

E-waste refers to any item with a plug, battery or cord that is no longer working or wanted. Most items contain valuable materials that can be recovered and reused.

There are also important environmental and public health reasons for keeping this material out of landfill.

“Recovering these materials helps alleviate the strain put on the environment by stopping hazardous elements leaching into the ground when e-waste is dumped in landfill.”

“E-waste is a significant resource and when it’s recovered and processed properly the usable life of the resource is extended providing value back to the economy.”

Issuing a challenge to the community, Mr Peake concluded, “When it comes to maximising resources and minimising waste, it’s important for everyone to consider their responsibilities as purchasers, users and consumers. Do you really need it, can your existing item be repaired, can someone else reuse it if you’re upgrading, how do you dispose of it in a way that brings greatest benefit?”

To learn more about e-waste and find details of your nearest e-waste drop-off point visit your local council’s website or go to ewaste.vic.gov.au.

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