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PRESS RELEASE

Better waste management needed for NSW residents

“Better Federal, State and Local government coordination is needed to tackle the high levels of residential waste” argues the NSW Standing Committee on Public Works in a Report released today.

The Committee’s *Municipal Waste Management in NSW* Report recommends 19 policy reforms across all levels of government to address the problems of rising residential (or municipal) waste. Unfortunately Australia’s per capita municipal waste production is one of the largest in the world. Although the average Australian householder is putting more in recycling bins than a decade ago, Australians are still creating more waste per person.

The Report, a culmination of a nine month inquiry, considers whether the current municipal waste management arrangements are value for money, environmentally sound and delivering community objectives. The Committee argues that a broad perspective on waste is required that recognises the links between sustainability concerns, consumption activity and waste and includes all participants in the waste cycle from producers, consumers to waste processors.

The Chair of the Committee, Mr Kevin Greene MP, said that *“Waste management today is a complex, capital intensive, and environmentally concerning issue and while Councils are responsible for municipal waste management, all levels of government, industry and the community must play a greater role to turn these disturbing trends around.”*

The Committee particularly focuses on the capacity of councils to evaluate waste management options in light of recent increases in the State landfill charges for waste disposal and the availability new of Alternative Waste Technology facilities to divert waste from landfills. The Committee found that Councils need independent technical support to assess options and that proposals need to be integrated with the State Government’s sustainability plan to generate the best outcomes for the whole community.

The inquiry considered nearly 100 submissions and has involved substantial contributions from various peak bodies, State and Federal departments, local councils, community members and individuals.

The Committee’s report was tabled in the NSW Parliament today. Copies are available online from the Committee’s web site at www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/ or ph. 9230 3054.

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