

Welcome to the first issue of **re:source**, a bi-monthly e-newsletter from the Waste Minimisation team at the Ministry for the Environment.

re:source will keep you up-to-date with the progress we are making implementing the Waste Minimisation Act and any developments being made in the field of resource efficiency.

If you have any feedback or questions you'd like to pose to the Waste Minimisation team about re:source (or any other waste related topics) please email us at: [waste@mfe.govt.nz](mailto:waste@mfe.govt.nz)

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**Class act: introducing the new Waste Minimisation Act**

The Waste Minimisation Act 2008 was passed on 25 September. Its purpose is to encourage a reduction in the amount of waste we generate and dispose of in New Zealand, to protect the environment from harm, and provide social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits.

Until now, waste minimisation schemes have largely been introduced on a voluntary basis. However, for New Zealand to achieve our 'Zero Waste' targets by 2020 we need more investment in 'front-of-pipe' waste initiatives, encouraging efficient and innovative design solutions.

The Act will support both public and private entities to work towards the 2020 'Zero Waste' goal by:

- putting a levy on all waste disposed of at landfill (from July 2009)
- helping, and when necessary making producers, brand owners, importers, retailers, consumers and other parties take responsibility for the environmental effects of their products
- introducing regulations to make it mandatory for local authorities and others (for example, landfill

operators) to report on waste, to improve waste minimisation information

- clarifying the roles and responsibilities of local authorities on waste minimisation
- introducing a new Waste Advisory Board.

[Read more about the Waste Minimisation Act](#)

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## Waste Advisory Board appointed

On 16 October 2008, the Waste Advisory Board was appointed to give independent advice to the Minister for the Environment on waste minimisation issues.

[Read more about the Waste Advisory Board](#)

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## How the Waste Minimisation Levy affects local authorities

Local authorities have new roles and responsibilities under the Waste Minimisation Act which will require them to make changes to key strategy and planning documents.

To assist with planning the Ministry is sending a letter, to all council chief executives and solid waste managers in mid-December outlining the following processes:

- progress with Waste Minimisation Act 2008 implementation
- calculating the share local authorities receive from the Waste Minimisation Levy (which is being brought in to effect in July 2009)
- administering the Waste Minimisation Fund
- delivering guidance material to local authorities.

Councils should currently be drafting their 2009/10 long-term council community plan (LTCCP). The letter advises councils to incorporate their share of the waste levy in their LTCCP.

Estimating how much each council will receive from the levy is difficult to calculate until the levy has been implemented and revenue begins flowing in. However, we can confirm that the first quarterly payment will be made in December 2009 (for the July-September quarter).

For more detailed information about council roles and responsibilities please refer to the letter. A copy can be obtained by emailing [waste@mfe.govt.nz](mailto:waste@mfe.govt.nz)

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## eDay 2008

New Zealanders cleared out a phenomenal 946 tonnes of obsolete computers, printers and other electronic waste during the 2008 national eDay in October – almost double the amount collected in 2007.

E-waste contains toxic substances which can potentially harm both our health and the environment if disposed of inappropriately. Recycling means the valuable material in e-waste can be recovered and reused, and the hazardous elements disposed of safely, a good alternative to landfill disposal.

This year the Ministry provided \$200,000 to support the second nationwide eDay through the Sustainable Management Fund.

The equipment collected will be transported to accredited recycling plants which ensure the safety of workers and maximise the recovery of materials.

For more information on eDay please visit: [www.eday.org.nz](http://www.eday.org.nz)

## Packaging Accord Year 4 Progress Report

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The Packaging Accord was set up in 2004 with the aim of reducing waste from packaging. The Accord has brought stakeholders, such as councils, recyclers, manufacturers, government and retailers together to work towards reducing the environmental impact of packaging waste.

At the end of year four, all five material sectors covered in the Accord (aluminium, glass, paper, steel and plastic) have achieved or exceeded their five year targets for collection (as a proportion of consumption) a year ahead of schedule.

Until recently, commodity prices for recyclable materials improved the economics of recycling and helped the early achievement of the recovery targets. This shows that responsible management of packaging resources makes good economic sense. However, the very recent collapse of commodity prices may present a challenge to future progress.

The 2004 Packaging Accord ends in July 2009. Discussions are underway on how to replace it. For more information on the Packaging Accord please visit: [www.packagingaccord.org.nz](http://www.packagingaccord.org.nz)

## LoveNZ – a network of public recycling bins

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The LoveNZ – Recycling in Public Places Initiative supports local councils and businesses across New Zealand to get recycling bins into public places. This three year initiative, which ends in June 2010, aims to have at least 600 bins in place in the busy streets and tourist hot spots of New Zealand. By June 2009 LoveNZ bins will be located across New Zealand from the Far North to Invercargill.

Local councils are eligible to apply for funding through the LoveNZ initiative. The third and final funding round will open in March 2009. Specific dates and information for applicants will be posted on the Ministry for the Environment website in early 2009.

Businesses wanting to participate are encouraged to contact their local council.

For further information on the initiative please contact Caroline Read by emailing: [LoveNZ@mfe.govt.nz](mailto:LoveNZ@mfe.govt.nz)



## Closing the loop – a 'cradle to cradle' approach

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Currently waste management in New Zealand is very focused on 'end of pipe' solutions for the recovery and disposal of waste. However, there is a bold new concept gaining international momentum which goes beyond reducing environmental impact and in to the realm of 'front-end' product and system design. This approach is known as 'cradle to cradle' and was developed by a German chemist Michael Braungart, who visited New Zealand in early 2008.

This approach focuses on designing products that are made from biological or technical nutrients. Biological nutrients are safe and healthy materials and create food for natural systems, while technical nutrients are products or materials that can be continuously and safely recycled into new materials or products.

You can hear [Kim Hill's interview with Michael Braungart](#) about moving towards a waste-free world, or view a 49 minute [documentary on the 'cradle to cradle' philosophy](#).

## Wanted: your good news stories on waste minimisation!

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We want re:source to be used as a vehicle to promote best practice by highlighting how organisations and communities are tackling waste minimisation. So, if you have a success story to tell, please let us know by emailing it to: [waste@mfe.govt.nz](mailto:waste@mfe.govt.nz)

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