

*Submission from
The Rubbish Removers.com Pty Ltd
Toward the EAREC
Friday 2nd September 2011*

WHO WE ARE

A family owned private company removing rubbish and servicing Brisbane, Logan, Moreton, Redlands and Ipswich.

1984 Commenced commercial and domestic ground maintenance (Display Homes, Qld Housing Commission and private homes)

1988 Introduced Garden Bags (phasing out ground maintenance) removing green waste on a regular basis for Brisbane and Logan residents. We have approx. 1400 clients. (We lost a percentage of clients with the green waste bins introduced by the BCC last year)

2006 Started doing Skip bins. A new idea of skip bin, with a metal base and frame and corflute sides enabling a light weight bin to be used for the domestic market to remove household and green waste. Grown from the initial 10 to currently 91 bins doing approximately 40tonne of household rubbish per week.

Feb 8th 2011 we commenced a recycling operation in response to the Governments upcoming July landfill Levy. (Changed later to December) Bins are brought into our Underwood shed and decanted into green, metals, IT, cardboard, sale-ables, clothing and various charities. It's a "at the coal face" activity!

Some product is amazing, recently a locked box revealed a handful of letters between mates, the writer being a signal man in the 1940's. His letters touch a wide range of topics including the new game Monopoly and the technicolour movie "Gone with the Wind" and end not long before his ship HMAS Sydney went down. Product can also include asbestos (which is prohibited) and dirty nappies!

We employ four subcontractors, a permanent operations manager and various casual staff as required.

We are passionate about:

Recycling. Not only disposing of waste into the correct areas, but reusing and reinventing "waste" eg, Diverting a chair from going to the tip, and using local business (or DIY) to recover the chair instead of buying new, adding a heavier burden to our dependence on new resources from cheap international markets. Having the creed of trying to reuse items as being the better way. "Value Adding" to products already here, instead of filling our earth with our 'out of date' products.

Small Business Running efficiently and well, liaising with government bodies and meeting customers' needs. Employing local people and using local businesses to run our enterprise.

Charity We care about others. We consider ourselves a business with a charity heart. We support both local groups, (Loved Again Thrift Shop and Springwood Pumas Under11s) and overseas, Agape Children's home Gujarat and Rejoice Children's Home, Orissa India. Wendy goes to India annually to have input into Indian tribal women. She also wants to encourage micro business and antenatal education for the women there. We also support an organisation which helps schools and hospitals in PNG.

We would like to have input into the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill 2011 from a private business view. We are not in the realms of the educated, sitting in the proverbial "ivory towers" but as a business with a practical hands on approach to new challenges. We need to know that the changes are going to help us, using our business, to put into practice the waste legislation in an efficient manner. If we don't, we will not survive.

Our concerns about the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill 2011

Our main concern is that The Levy applies to C&I, C&D and regulated wastes and does not apply to MSW self haul waste.

For the record The Rubbish Removers believes that MSW self haul waste should be included under the waste levy as the governments data show that *"domestic waste generation 2007-08 was 40% higher than in 2003-04 but the population grew by only 10%"*

For the landfill levy to send a price signal to the consumer to recycle, then the domestic sector needs to have the levy applied to all rubbish despite the avenue in which it is taken to land fill. Every other Australian state which has a landfill levy applies it to all consumers, both the business and private sector. However under the bill that is proposed for Queensland this is not going to be the case. This proposed bill is sending mixed signals to the consumer. Depending on how you haul your waste away will depend on the amount of levies you will pay.

The Rubbish Removers believe that self haul waste should be a separate stream to local council bin collections and kerb side waste. (ie) Any person – private or business passing through the dump facilities should be levied at the same rate. Please do not make this levy another Business Only Tax.

Example- Mr Price Conscious Average is moving house. He has a few bits of old furniture and 10 years worth of odd junk. He calls us, the local skip bin company. We tell him our cost, and then add GST and the Govt. waste levy. He laughs and takes it himself to the dump. Or rings Joe who is busily doing cash only rubbish removals with his trailer and not charging taxes or levies.

Of course, being elderly, not having a trailer or a car, being time poor or handicapped in anyway will make certain that disadvantaged groups will be required to still use skip bins. And pay the penalty.

Being in the industry allows us to see firsthand the wastage at the dump face as 'mums and dads' bring in the debris of their lives. White goods, household items, children's toys, the wastage of both recyclable and resalable items is tremendous.

Council facilities have tried to help (Logan with their Recycling Centre and Brisbane with their metal etc containers) however due to consumer laziness, lack of time, and physical inability (eg to move a fridge to the metal bin) they are not supported as well as they should be.

Of course – many of these reasons above would change rapidly with the introduction of a fair across the board waste levy that the domestic market was part of.

How this bill in its present form will affect our business.

This bill will ensure the consumer discriminates against the smaller skip bin companies who service mainly the price aware household market.

The Landfill levy will be a hidden cost. It will not be a specific cost on an invoice. The consumer will not be aware of the cost of the levy, but only aware that the charges for a skip will have gone up.

• *Impacts on the skip bin industry: Excluding domestic self-haul waste from the levy has the potential to impact the domestic clientele of skip bin operators. This will depend on whether householders will choose to self-haul their waste or to use council kerbside services instead of paying the increased price of a skip bin” 1*

The main danger that we see for our company is the leakage from the C&I and C&D (The Leviaible market) to the MSW market (the none leviaible market) because of the loopholes that will be exploited should the bill pass in its present form.

Example.

If a builder hires a company to place a skip on a project then he will have to pay the service fee , GST and the waste levy. However, if he parks a tipping trailer onsite and hauls it to the dump on the way home in his unsigned four wheel drive then no levy will be applied and significant savings made.

Our company will be undercut in the market place by operators who can use the MSW loophole in the bill to exploit the market place by undercutting and dumping as MSW self haul.

Our option as a small business? Put our prices up to a depleted consumer base to pay the Landfill levy, become uncompetitive and potentially go out of business as we give a huge percentage of our revenue to the government for BAS, taxes and landfill levy. Small business is an integral part of the economy, employing local people and using local businesses to service their equipment and provide supplies.

The key policy objectives of introducing a levy on waste disposal are to provide:

(a) A price signal to change waste generator’s behaviour and provide a disincentive to unnecessary landfill disposal The levy will be a price signal to encourage waste generators to improve their waste management behavior.¹

The Rubbish Removers are at loss to see how behaviours will change for a domestic waste generator. There is no disincentive to change behaviour towards recycling, however there is a large incentive to change the way waste is taken to a facility. It should be noted that neither our company nor our industry

¹ Regulatory Assessment Statement and Cost Benefit Analysis for a waste disposal levy proposal Pg 5 & 10

opposes a landfill levy; we do however fail to see how a reversal of the current wasteful trends can be achieved by excluding most of the Queensland population from the landfill levy.

Solutions , answers and winning the war against waste.

What we need is a solution that will satisfy the Government, the waste industry and also Queensland residents when it comes to MSW self haul waste.

By charging the waste levy to all who pass through the land-fill gates will encourage all, both business and private to recycle.

We see a change in the future to positively encourage Queenslanders to recycle. The creation of Community Recycling Stations as being the first port of call to dispose of unwanted product. If the consumer avails themselves of this facility they are rewarded with a voucher waiving the landfill levy for the disposal of the rest of the unrecyclable product.

Imagine a warehouse drive through facility for only recyclable and re-saleable product . Community training programs to allow job seekers to get training skills to repair the goods that are repairable. Job creations as the recyclables are broken down into their basic forms. Helping move the product from trailer/car to facility . Resale-ables sold in a retail environment. Creation of jobs in media, advertising, ebay, accounts, in trades, restoring and upholstering furniture, creating original items repurposed from it's original use.

We are seeing unlimited opportunities in our small operation which is serviced only by the product from our own skip bins.

We believe that this recycling system has the potential to create a green economy with employment, trades training and an overflow to businesses throughout the state of Queensland whilst funnelling thousands of tonnes of reusable waste away from landfill.

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