
From: James Rowlands [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 30 July 2019 12:49 PM
To: ClimateChangeInquiry
Subject: Neighbourhood sorted recycling bins for volunteers

To the Committee Manager,

While I have already taken various steps to affect the impact of my own life on climate change, as I fear that Western, developed societies are still leading the charge towards a total ecological and environmental catastrophe, I believe I have some notions about voluntarism, community action and engagement that would be trivial to fund, and that would have immediate economic benefits, in areas that are also, coincidentally an enormous problem for the current State government.

The simplest, and most practical idea is to ask people on a block by block basis to volunteer to manage special, sorted recycling bins. I imagine these as regular wheelie bins with new, distinct colours on their lids, that could be described in TV advertisements. These volunteers would be responsible for ensuring that these bins only contain the sorted materials specified on the exterior. They could be provided with gloves and safety glasses, and be given leave to do what they like with the contents of the bins, as an incentive for their volunteered labour.

Let's consider, for a moment, how an aluminium bin might work. The individual in charge of an aluminium bin, with a light grey lid, might leave it out the front of their house, with instructions that only cleaned aluminium be put inside. They could also attach a magnet to the bin for people to check if the material they are putting in is aluminium or steel. If neighbours abuse the system and put contaminated waste in the bin, they could move the bin from the nature strip, and try to make arrangements with people who contact them in person, to have access to the bin. A network of hobbyists with needs for aluminium, or social media groups like "Hard Rubbish Melbourne" would make it completely unnecessary for this bin to require pick up by council staff, as aluminium is valuable enough to encourage someone to come and collect it.

Other kinds of bins and their community uses could include:

- Hard plastics, which can now be reprocessed by people who own machines like 3D printers, with only a handful of additional tools. Tools held on a council level could easily reprocess plastics into products like pots for gardening.
- Glass jars and bottles, with lids, which could be utilised by local home kitchen industries like beer brewers, people producing pickled goods, jams, etc.
- Coloured glass bottles could have separate bins on the same property for this purpose, as the different coloured glasses have different purposes.
- Paper, which can be recycled at home with minimal tools, or reused as mulch / compost for a garden.
- Green waste for community use; in this case the regular green waste bins could be put out on non-bin days and collected by avid gardeners who need more material for their composts.
- Soft plastics, to be taken to RedCycle collection points, or registered with RedCycle directly if enough material builds up on that street.
- Steel and other metals; less likely to be utilised in a local sense, but possibly still worth having individual bins for.

The key part of this scheme that I think is important, is that this would be based upon the desire of those involved to improve their behaviour. Many areas in Victoria already have individuals ready and willing to attempt to help with this problem, who may already be sorting and reusing material waste, from their own

consumption, and possibly even from their immediate neighbours, but having community level education about this being not only possible, but about how to identify where to get involved would be strongly incentivising. I already see a large amount of people taking plastics to RedCycle bins, at their supermarkets. If they could reduce the contents of their own bin, by separating out other items, they'd likely feel comfortable integrating the walk down their block to the specially marked bin into their lifestyle.

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James Rowlands

