

# MDC Waste Services

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For more information please contact:

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Nelson Marlborough Public Health Service -Te Whatu Ora (NMPHS) is a key organisation involved in the health and wellbeing of the people within Te Tau Ihu. NMPHS appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback from a public health perspective on Marlborough District Council's Waste Services consultation.

## Specific Comments

1. Are you in favour of Council's proposal to expand the kerbside collection area?  
 **Yes**  No – Please explain why:
2. Are you in favour of Council's proposal to introduce wheelie bins into the kerbside collection service?  
 **Yes**  No – Please explain why:
3. Are you in favour of the bin size (140-litre) for recycling being emptied fortnightly?  
 **Yes**  No – Please explain why:
4. Are you in favour of the bin size (140-litre) for refuse being emptied fortnightly?  
 **Yes**  No – Please explain why:
5. Are you in favour of the crate size (55-litre) for glass being emptied fortnightly?  
 **Yes**  No – Please explain why:

6. Have you used the waste calculator on Council's website to estimate your annual cost for refuse and recycling?

Yes  No – Please explain why:

7. The annual targeted rate charge for the kerbside collection service from 1 July 2024 is estimated at \$160 including GST. What do you think of this price?

Less expensive than my current cost  More expensive than my current cost

8. Do you approve of the introduction of remote transfer stations to replace the current coin skips?

Yes  No – Please explain why:

**Do you have any other comments to make on the proposed changes to the level of service?**  
Yes

NMPHS recommends MDC use this change in kerbside recycling as an opportunity to engage with the local community around what and how to recycle correctly to ensure the risk of contamination is reduced. Approximately 16 per cent of all materials placed in household kerbside recycling bins are contaminated – nationally, that is around 70,000 tonnes each year<sup>1</sup>. Equally, 13 per cent of all materials placed in household kerbside rubbish bins (108,000 tonnes) could be recycled. In other words, collectively Aotearoa New Zealand homes are incorrectly disposing of 178,000 tonnes of material at kerbside each year. Clear and concise messaging that is available in different languages e.g. Te Reo Māori, and different forms e.g. pictures and large, contrasted print is essential to ensure that all people understand expectations of recycling. NMPHS is aware that the government proposed to start their planning for a national education campaign for standardised materials this year.

NMPHS recommends that Marlborough businesses who sell packaged goods should be encouraged to at least move towards the standard set of recyclable materials to minimise non-recyclable grades of plastic being put into landfill.

NMPHS recommends that MDC consider making it more affordable for people to drop-off green waste at transfer stations. If the public consider the green waste fees to be high, they might either divert their waste to landfill or burn it, each of these options have environmental ramifications.

NMPHS appreciates this consultation is focused on 'recycling' but we would like to take this opportunity to mention the 'rethink/redesign' and 'reduce' components of the Waste Hierarchy.

NMPHS recommends MDC consider how to promote and incentivise the uptake of refillable beverage containers and a fillable and refillable market in order to first 'rethink/redesign' the system to therefore 'reduce' the amount of packaging consumed. Increasing the number of businesses offering a fillable/refillable option will normalise this 'redesign' of the system and support consumers to 'reduce' their packaging consumption. It is advisable that MDC work with key manufacturers and businesses to develop capacity and provide advice, support, and education in the benefits of transitioning towards producing refillable products<sup>2</sup>. Funding upfront costs to transition business models also needs to be considered, particularly for smaller businesses that may not be able to manage the upfront costs but be otherwise willing<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Yates S, 2019. Rethinking rubbish and recycling. Prepared for the WasteMINZ TAO Forum by Sunshine Yates Consulting. Auckland: WasteMINZ

<sup>2</sup> Patwa, N., Sivarajah, U., Seetharaman, A., Sarkar, S., Maiti, K., & Hingorani, K. (2021). Towards a circular economy: An emerging economies context. *Journal of business research*, 122, 725-735.

<sup>3</sup> Coelho, P. M., Corona, B., ten Klooster, R., & Worrell, E. (2020). Sustainability of reusable packaging—Current situation and trends. *Resources, Conservation & Recycling*: X, 6, 100037.

Educating consumers and providing clear communication around the benefits of refilling products as opposed to buying a new product off the shelf will also be needed, along with education that ensures people are aware of the need to thoroughly wash containers before filling to maintain hygiene and food safety. There is already some familiarity with refillable products and processes in Aotearoa New Zealand, primarily through bulk bins and refillable stations that are in some supermarkets and specialty stores. Consumers should be further encouraged to support the refillable market through price incentives and reduced cost of products.

NMPHS supports the investigation of a solution for organic material including green, animal and food wastes. The proposals to divert household and business food scraps from landfill are expected to reduce annual emissions by around 50 kt CO<sub>2</sub>e in 2030, representing approximately 9 per cent of the required 2030 emissions reductions under the Climate Change Commission's demonstration pathway for waste<sup>4</sup>. NMPHS recommends MDC consider the following points in the development of the food collection scheme;

- There should be no additional cost to ratepayers. If there is a cost, consideration should be given to ensure there are equitable options to access the service.
- The service should be flexible accounting for the fact that some households and businesses will have differing proportions of food waste and therefore require different service needs, whilst considering the implications of maintaining hygiene and food safety. e.g. frequency of pick up.
- The community should be aware of the schemes development and have knowledge and understanding of exactly what items they should place in their bins before receiving their bin, rather than a rushed implementation where people get into bad habits from the start.
- In addition, alternative solutions should be promoted such as low-waste native gardens, as this supports local ecosystems, and the promotion of the Compost Collective's Sharewaste programme<sup>5</sup>. This programme connects people who wish to recycle their food scraps and other organics with their neighbours who are already composting, worm-farming or keeping animals.

## Conclusion

NMPHS thanks Marlborough District Council for the opportunity to comment on the Waste Services consultation and we would welcome the opportunity to discuss this further.

Ngā mihi



**Vince Barry**  
**Regional Director Public Health Te Waipounamu**  
**National Public Health Service**

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<sup>4</sup> The demonstration pathway is outlined in the proposed [emissions reduction plan](#), pg 108 the appendix.

<sup>5</sup> ShareWaste NZ