



Household Problem Waste Education Grant
Program:

Guide for preparing a Communication and
Education Activity Plan

Purpose of the Communication and Education plan

The Household Problem Waste Education Grants Program Communication and Education Plan sets out the activities that you plan to deliver from July 2026 to June 2027 to encourage use of the CRC and safe battery disposal, especially for embedded battery products, where collection points for embedded batteries are available. The plan also explains how and when you will deliver these activities.

All education and communication activities need to contribute to achieving the key objectives of the CRC program:

- Use of a CRC for household problem waste is a social norm for NSW householders by 2040.
- By 2030, 60% of NSW householders can correctly identify paint, oil, batteries, gas cylinders and fire extinguishers, fluorescent lights and aerosols as waste that can be safely disposed or recycled for free at Community Recycling Centres across NSW.
- By 2030, there has been an 5% year on year increase from 2020 in the weight (tonnes) of household problem waste collected at NSW Community Recycling Centres.
- By 2030, there will be a 20% increase from 2023 baseline data in active and informed community participation in disposing of household problem waste at Community Recycling Centres across NSW.

Key messages

The key messages about CRCs can be summarised simply.

- Some household items do not belong in bins – particularly paint, gas cylinders, oil, fluorescent lamps, batteries, smoke detectors and aerosols. The most appropriate way to dispose of these items is to take them to a CRC.
- There is a CRC in your local area, which is free and easy to use. Include details of the location, opening hours and any other information for people to plan their visit.
- Acknowledge and congratulate the community on their use of the CRC and highlight their contribution to larger recycling and sustainability outcomes.

Key messages can be customised to particular waste types, types of household or scenarios e.g. moving home or renovating.

Preparing customised messages

When preparing customised messages for your community, consider the following principles.

1. Think about the target audience for this communication – Who are they? What would they want to know? How do they source their information? What are the barriers and benefits to their participation?
2. Link the message with an opportunity to act (e.g. posters about disposing of old paint placed in the paint section of a hardware store, or brochures in information packs from a real estate agent dealing with people selling a house)

3. Give people all the information they need to act – location of the CRC, opening hours, waste types
4. Be mindful that different target audiences have differing levels of knowledge and awareness. Some differences may arise from cultural backgrounds, education or experience. Messages should generally be **positive*** and pitched at the appropriate level.

*The EPA is currently doing some work with BehaviourWorks (Monash University) to understand how best to drive behaviour change, especially for batteries, and this is likely to include some testing of messaging about battery fires.

Principles for behaviour change

There is an extensive field of literature and practice relating to behaviour change and there is no one single theory or approach that will achieve all outcomes. Below are some key considerations about behaviour change to think about when determining your activities.

- Consider the steps people need to take to get to the ultimate behavioural outcome i.e. consider all the smaller behaviours to change the larger behaviour.
- Understand how and why people do what they do (their behaviour) to provide valuable insights when designing education programs.
- Try to understand individual motivations and differences in behaviour rather than assuming a single 'right' or 'best' behaviour.
- Education can be social, collaborative and can support learners to create change.
- Best practice education for sustainability considers: capacity building, futures thinking, partnerships, is on-going and adaptive, identifies complex linkages, involves a diversity of stakeholders and prioritises monitoring and evaluation.

Target audience

Primary target audience

The primary target audience for the CRC program is NSW homeowners aged 35-55 years in CRC locations. There are almost 1.4 million homeowners living in NSW who are 35 – 55 years of age.

Social research results highlight that homeowners, within this age demographic, are more likely to have household problem waste. This is reflected in the participation data from the CleanOut program.

Results from the CleanOut program show that:

- 7.73% of users are aged between 18-34 years
- 18.12% of users are aged between 35-44 years
- 27.21% of users are aged between 45-54 years
- 27.43% of users are aged between 55-64 years

Participants aged 56 years plus, are more likely to be repeat users of the service i.e. they have used it more than once. It is important to continue to re-engage this audience, but our priority is to continue to engage with new and younger audiences and encourage their use of the service.

Secondary target audience

Community needs for the problem waste service are diverse. The service is not just relevant to particular ages, demographics or segments. There are times and situations when people are more likely to have problem wastes, and people in these situations are an important target audience.

The secondary target audience for the CRC program is NSW renovators and home movers living in CRC locations.

Moving home is a key point in time when householders will need to dispose of old and unwanted goods. EPA social research identified that renovators are more likely to generate a wide range of problem waste types.

The focus on 'occasions' like moving or renovating will help to ensure that the advertising is reaching people who are actively thinking about problem waste and household chemicals, helping to improve the saliency of our message.

Children and schools are not a target audience for the CRC program. Children are not responsible for making decisions about the purchase or disposal of household problem wastes.

Reaching our target audience

The EPA's advertising strategy is driven by an 'occasions, places and time' approach. This aims to focus the communication activities on the people who have household problem waste, at a time when it is relevant. CRC operators are encouraged to take this into consideration when planning activities. Examples include:

- **Occasions** – focusing on communication to people who are moving house, renovating or buying a property. These are common situations when people need to dispose of problem wastes.
- **Places** – focusing on places that are associated with activities that generate household problem waste (such as hardware stores or homemaker centres)
- **Time** – focusing on the weeks following the launch of a CRC, and then other times when waste and recycling may be a focus, such as National Recycling Week.
- **Seasons** – focusing on waste that may arise or be more prevalent from seasonal activities, such as gas bottles from BBQs in summer or smoke detectors and batteries at daylight savings change over.

EPA advertising program

In addition to the local CRC education and communication initiatives, the EPA implements an advertising strategy to promote the correct disposal of household problem waste. This strategy is for the Household Chemical CleanOut and Community Recycling Centre programs. In summary, the key elements of the strategy include:

- **Programmatic display:** Uses behavioural targeting and audience targeting technology for display advertising
- **Social (Facebook and Instagram):** Uses geo and demographic targeting capabilities to engage community and widen reach within Facebook and Instagram

- **Digital search:** to be present when the service is needed i.e. when residents are searching for the service
- **Press:** to engage local audiences in an environment that is trusted and community specific.
- **Out of home:** Shopping centre, bus stop and petrol station displays are being used in 2023-24
- **Radio:** Radio performed well in our evaluation research, and it will continue in 24-25

If you would like to know more detail about the EPA's advertising strategy, please contact the Community Recycling Unit at recycling.centres@epa.nsw.gov.au

Resources

The EPA provides a range of resources for communication activities. You can use any of these resources. You can co-brand and adapt these resources, or develop your own resources, but they must align with the CRC style guide and EPA approval is required prior to publishing.

Resources	Examples
Signage	CRC entry sign, CRC sign, material icon signs
Print	Brochure, poster, newspaper ads
Digital	Web tiles, videos
Social	Facebook posts, videos
Launch	Invitation, pull up banners
CALD materials	Brochure, poster, newspaper ads,
Evaluation	Surveys

The EPA resources are available at: <http://epa.metrographics.com.au> (Resource Hub). The Resource Hub is password protected. Please email recycling.centres@epa.nsw.gov.au if you require a login or have misplaced your login details.

Communication methods

There are many forms of communication, including advertising, that can be used to promote the CRC.

- Public relations: e.g. media publicity, events such as National Recycling Week, or major CRC milestones.
- Direct marketing activities: e.g. rates notice mailout or including CRC information in existing targeted communication such as newsletters and email updates.
- Sponsorships/partnerships: e.g. opportunities to work with local hardware stores, real estate agents, and other organisations to promote the CRC service.
- Community engagement and events: e.g. workshops, presentations, stalls at community days or tours of the CRC.
- Social media: Partners can post organically on social accounts (Facebook, Twitter) and also implement paid advertising. Facebook has excellent resources to assist in planning and implementing Facebook advertising.
<https://www.facebook.com/business/help>
- Digital marketing: The EPA provides online digital marketing (Google search and Google display) across NSW.

Evaluation

A large amount of effort and time is spent on planning and delivering projects, so it is important for you to know what worked (and why), and what did not work and how to adapt your strategies to ensure you have a successful result. When you monitor and evaluate your project, you can learn from your experiences and adjust your project for the future. Evaluation uses monitoring data to provide a feedback mechanism for continuous improvement of your effort. It should contribute to decision-making at every stage of the project, and it should encourage you to reflect on your outcomes so that you can consider future actions.

Many of the communication activities can be monitored by using common measurement metrics e.g. Google Analytics and Facebook Insights. The more challenging piece of evaluation is determining how your activities have impacted on people's intent to use and their use of the CRC. For this evaluation, we need to engage with our target audience and seek feedback from them directly.

Three basic surveys have been developed to help you monitor and evaluate your CRC communication and education activities. These are available on the Resource Hub.

Survey 1: This survey is designed for you to use before the launch of your CRC. The survey results provide a benchmark for community knowledge, attitudes and behaviours. When the survey is done again (i.e. after 1 year of operation), the new results will help you to evaluate your education and communication activities.

Survey 2: The questions in this survey are for people who use your CRC. The survey can help you to understand more about the experience your customer has had at your CRC. Use this survey to get direct feedback on how the community heard about the CRC.

Survey 3: This survey is designed as a follow up to the benchmark questions (Survey 1) for community knowledge, attitudes and behaviours. You can compare the results with survey 1 to help

you to evaluate your education and communication activities. A wide range of questions have been included to cover a variety of information needs. You may add, delete or amend questions to tailor the survey to meet your specific needs.

The survey templates are available on the Resource Hub. These can be customised to meet your needs.

Risk management

There are risks that could influence the delivery of the planned communication activities. The main risks are listed below, with options for managing these risks. You are not required to submit a risk management plan to the EPA as part of the communications plan, but you are expected to consider the risks and be prepared to manage them if they arise.

Risks identified	How will the risk be managed?
High levels of incorrect materials being delivered to CRC	Develop and distribute targeted educational materials identifying materials that can be taken to the CRC and those which should be taken to CleanOut events.
Unexpectedly low use of the CRC	Survey householders to identify barriers to using the CRC and adapt Communication and Education Plan to address the barriers. Evaluate existing communication channels and refine strategy based on results.
Unexpectedly high use of the CRC	Refine staffing methodology and systems to manage extra demand. Review, refine and update traffic management plan. Review communication and education plan and the timeframe for delivering activities. Notify the EPA.
Traffic problems caused by people accessing the CRC.	If peaks correlate with advertising and promotion of the service, review advertising schedule. Review site layout, including entry and access points and traffic movements around the site. Consider additional signage or changes to site operations. Communicate any changes in educational materials and signage.