



The Adelaide Shores Caravan Park at West Beach

Case Study

UPCLOSE

Zero Waste SA Industry Program



adelaide
shores
stay&play

Public focus for Adelaide Shores green program

Adelaide Shores is one of the city's most popular tourism destinations with its enviable coastal setting and numerous recreational facilities.

It's an idyllic environment and one which the Adelaide Shores team is keen to protect – and they are doing it with an impressive environmental sustainability program that covers just about every aspect of the multifaceted operation.

Initiated in 2008, the program is ambitious in scope and not without its challenges. Reducing waste to landfill is one of the key priorities and one of the most difficult to address because of the large number of visitors.

The complex covers over 135 hectares at West Beach and includes a resort and caravan park, boating facilities, two golf courses, cafés, skate and BMX park, sand dunes, reserves and sports grounds.

Every year an estimated 95,000 people stay on site and hundreds of thousands of others use the various facilities – and between them they generate tonnes of waste.

Recycling has been critical in cutting the amount of waste going to landfill but in 2010-11 progress had slowed.

To further improve its performance, Adelaide Shores had joined Zero Waste SA's Industry Program.

An Industry Program waste audit at the resort and caravan park in 2011 highlighted the extent of the problem – a high level of contamination with people placing waste into recycling bins and recyclable materials into general waste.

Educating the public to fully support the recycling program is now a major focus.

“In all of our environmental initiatives, Adelaide Shores needs the support of our staff, our customers and our local community. Over the past few years, we've seen the benefits of a strong environmental focus and a collaborative approach with organisations like Zero Waste SA and Keep Australia Beautiful.”

Kate Williams
CEO
Adelaide Shores



Government of South Australia
Zero Waste SA

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Alan Michelesen, Irrigation and Reserves Coordinator, oversees the Adelaide Shores composting program

“Progress in reducing our ecological footprint is significant but it wouldn’t happen without the support and enthusiasm of our staff – they are the real heroes.”

Dominic Fitzsimons
Recreation and Environment Manager
Adelaide Shores

Sustainability objectives

Continue to improve environmental performance through protection and enhancement of biodiversity and cultural heritage, using resources such as water and energy efficiently, preventing pollution, minimising waste, and communicating the value of the environment to all those who use the reserve and associated facilities.

Outcomes

- about 74% of Adelaide Shores’ solid waste was diverted from landfill in 2009-10, and this remains at over 70%
- Café Neptune and corporate services diverted over 90% of their waste from landfill in 2010-11
- the caravan park diverted about 64% and the resort diverted more than 75% of waste from landfill in 2010-11
- more than 70% of irrigation within the precinct uses recycled water
- waterless urinals and more efficient taps are being progressively installed in all amenities blocks, and energy efficient lighting and hand dryers are being progressively installed in all buildings
- in 2010 a 6kW solar system was installed on the roof of an amenities block in the caravan park
- in October 2011 the Adelaide Shores Green Team was established to further drive environmental sustainability initiatives.

Zero Waste SA support

As a member of the Industry Program, Adelaide Shores has received the following support:

- waste audit at the caravan park and resort
- waste contract review
- development of a case study.

Adelaide Shores has also received support through the Zero Waste SA Research Centre for Sustainable Design and Behaviour at the University of South Australia through an honours project investigating the feasibility of organic waste collection from caravan park guests.

Increasing diversion from landfill

Recycling schemes have been rolled out across the Adelaide Shores complex since the five-year environmental management plan was initiated in 2008.

Estimates provided by Environment Officer Iome Christa indicate that reuse and recycling jumped from a low 23% in 2008-09 to 74% in 2009-10 following the introduction of additional recycling systems that now cover just about every aspect of Adelaide Shores operations and waste streams.

The long list of materials being recycled or reused includes cooking and motor oil, e-waste, fluorescent lamps, batteries, printer cartridges, vehicle tyres, mattresses, building rubble and timber.

RECYCLING AT EVENTS

The task of keeping waste from landfill at public events has been made easier with a \$7000 community grant from Keep Australia Beautiful, administered in SA by KESAB.

Every year Adelaide Shores hosts major events such as sports carnivals and the start of the Bay to Birdwood car rally.

As a result of the grant, Adelaide Shores now has 60 clearly labelled portable ‘event bins’ for recycling and general waste.

The Keep Australia Beautiful Beverage Container Community Grants program is funded by the Coca-Cola Foundation to increase recycling away from home.



Bin bays at the caravan park and resort are clearly marked for recycling and general waste

A program was also introduced to mulch some of the green waste from the gardens and this has since been extended to cover all organic materials.

“A scoping report commissioned by Adelaide Shores in December 2010 found the single most significant improvement was the collection of mixed dry recyclables throughout the resort and caravan park,” says Iome.

According to the Industry Program waste audit in April 2011 the caravan park guest bins were achieving a landfill diversion rate of about 51% – considerably higher than the 38% average experienced by the waste auditors at other Australian caravan parks.

But it was clear that the rate could be improved if visitors separated their landfill waste and recyclables more effectively, and if visitors removed their recyclables from plastic bags before placing them in the bins. Plastic bags cannot be opened at the recycling depot and are therefore sent to landfill.

Research project explores food waste collection

Keeping food out of the waste stream is another one of the more challenging features of the Adelaide Shores sustainability program.

During peak holiday periods as many as 1800 people a day stay at the resort and caravan park and they throw away large amounts of food scraps. The Industry Program waste audit estimated that 17% of materials found in the audited bins was organic food waste that could be diverted for composting.

Food that ends up in landfill creates methane, a greenhouse gas 21 times more damaging than carbon dioxide.

The challenge is not only to develop an effective collection system for food waste, but to educate the thousands of people that visit Adelaide Shores Caravan Park every year in its use.

To help Adelaide Shores find a solution, full-time honours student Kerrie Bell was awarded Zero Waste SA's annual \$10,000 Pam Keating Memorial Scholarship to undertake a study through the Zero Waste SA Research Centre for Sustainable Design and Behaviour at UniSA.

Kerrie organised a one-month pilot involving about one-third of the caravan park using a system of organic bins, compostable bags and extensive signage to encourage visitors to separate their food waste for composting.

It's estimated that about 20% of people who had access to the organic bins made the effort to use them, with about 265 kg of food collected during the trial.

One issue was a 20% contamination rate with people putting general waste into the organic bins.

“For such a scheme to succeed long-term, visitors need to be informed about it as they arrive, you need good signage and it needs to be easy for people to use,” says Kerrie

Iome. Christa says Adelaide Shores will consider the possibility of a more permanent solution after Kerrie has completed her report. The study is part of Kerrie's Bachelor of Sustainable Environments Honours degree.

Steps to improve recycling

Since the Industry Program waste audit, bin bays at the caravan park have been upgraded and Adelaide Shores is exploring various options for a visitor awareness program to provide:

- information on the park's recycling program presented to guests on arrival
- recycling advice and information in cabins
- clear signage at bin stations
- advice on not placing recyclable materials in plastic bags before disposal.

The service provided by waste contractors is also important to the overall success of the recycling program. Adelaide Shores has received support through the Industry Program to ensure its waste contractor meets the requirements for recycling and accurate reporting.

Cafés target food scraps

Keeping food out of landfill is also being targeted by two cafés at Adelaide Shores.

Thanks to the efforts of café staff and grounds staff, the caravan park's Café Neptune and Westward Ho Golf Club café are collecting between 250kg and 300kg of organic material every month.

This is taken for composting in 25 simple domestic-style compost bins which have been installed at the nearby Adelaide Shores maintenance depot.

In June 2011, Café Neptune achieved Green Table Certification* after receiving support from Zero Waste SA in a joint initiative with Restaurant & Catering SA.

The two organisations have established a partnership to encourage more businesses in the hospitality sector to improve their environmental performance.

Tracking improvements

Dominic Fitzsimons, Recreation and Environment Manager, and Iome Christa, Environment Officer, are responsible for developing and coordinating Adelaide Shores' environmental sustainability program.

One of the key initiatives has been developing a way to improve information management and reporting to track progress.

Data is currently kept on large spreadsheets that are updated manually and are complex to manage, but Iome is working on moving to an online database and reporting system.

The new system will allow the site to easily monitor its major environmental impacts and resource consumption, including water, gas, electricity and fuel consumption, as well as waste generation. Most importantly it will make this information accessible and usable for all staff.

"A lot of improvements have been made, particularly since the development of the Environmental Management Plan in 2008, but things tended to be done on a standalone basis," says Iome.

"Since I started we have been working together to become more systematic, integrated and better at communicating achievements internally."

* Green Table Australia is a national initiative of Restaurant & Catering Australia to improve sustainability in the industry. For more information visit www.greentable.com.au

Wide-ranging green program

Waste is just one area being targeted by the Adelaide Shores environmental sustainability program. Numerous initiatives have been introduced to lower the site's environmental impact in other areas.

Some of the larger projects either implemented or planned include:

Water

- recycled water from the Glenelg Wastewater Treatment Plant used for irrigation
- drought tolerant plants and extensive mulching used in gardens
- feasibility study for an aquifer stormwater recovery scheme at the golf course
- computer-controlled irrigation system.

Energy

- solar panels and solar hot water systems on some amenity buildings
- roof skylights to minimise powered lighting
- partner in a RenewablesSA trial of four mini wind turbines at Adelaide Shores' West Beach boating precinct.

Other initiatives

- rehabilitation and revegetation of the West Beach sand dune reserve with the help of schools, corporate and community volunteers, and support from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources through the Million Trees Program, and the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges Natural Resources Management Board
- indigenous planting guide for the Adelaide Shores precinct
- minimal chemical use and preference for low or non-toxic chemicals
- phased replacement of petrol-driven housekeeping and catering vehicles with electric alternatives (18 to present).

Iome Christa

Environment Officer, Adelaide Shores
8355 7356
iome.christa@adelaideshores.com.au

Aubrey Thomas

Senior Adviser, Industry Sustainability
8204 9046
aubrey.thomas@zerowaste.sa.gov.au

Tawni Jones

Manager, Industry Program
8204 1706
tawni.jones@zerowaste.sa.gov.au

www.zerowaste.sa.gov.au

Level 8, Statewide House
99 Gawler Place
Adelaide SA 5001

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Adelaide Shores

Adelaide Shores is a 135-hectare tourism and recreation reserve on Adelaide's West Beach. Its accommodation, golf, boating, sport venues, cafes and skate and BMX park attract an estimated 500,000 visitors to the precinct each year.

www.adelaideshores.com.au

Zero Waste SA

Zero Waste SA is a South Australian Government agency that advances improved waste management policies and the development of resource recovery and recycling. The Zero Waste SA Industry Program advises and supports companies to achieve sustainability goals in waste, water and energy.

www.zerowaste.sa.gov.au



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