



WASTE MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

Energy from Waste Division

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Frequently Asked Questions

Energy from Waste Division of the Waste Management Association of Australia

Development of a Sustainability Guide for Energy from Waste in Australia

Who is behind this initiative?

We are the Energy from Waste Division of the Waste Management Association of Australia and we are running the Energy from Waste Sustainability Project to develop a Sustainability Guide for Energy from Waste Projects. Commonwealth Government funding through the Australian Greenhouse Office also supports this project, as does sponsorship from a wide range of private and government organisations. For a full list of sponsors of the project please visit www.wmaa.asn.au/efw/home.html

What is Energy from Waste?

'Energy from Waste' refers to a group of technologies or processes that use waste to generate renewable electricity or industrial heat.

What is sustainability?

The most frequently quoted definition of sustainable development suggests that:

"Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

(from the Brundtland definition of Sustainability).

Sustainable development focuses on improving the quality of life for all earth's inhabitants, without increasing the use of natural resources beyond the capacity of the environment to supply them indefinitely. In practical terms, this suggests that environmental sustainability can be promoted by stepping back from what we are currently doing and looking at the more complete (and often more complex) picture. Sustainability addresses environmental, economic and social issues in an integrated fashion.

Why are we holding these workshops?

There are a number of issues and concerns associated with energy from waste projects. On the positive side recovering energy from waste can generate renewable electricity, reduce the amount of waste disposed of to landfill and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. However, there are also potential negative environmental and human health effects associated with energy from waste projects. We are hosting these workshops to ensure that all interested parties can voice their support for and/or concerns about energy from waste projects.

Who can come to the workshops?

Anyone with an interest in energy from waste projects is welcome to attend. Attendance at workshops is free, but registration for the workshops is required before the day of the workshop. Registration can be completed online at the Energy from Waste Division website www.wmaa.asn.au/efw/home.html . We anticipate attendance by the general public, people involved in the development of government policy and planning agencies, government environmental regulatory agencies, environmental NGO's, residual waste generators / suppliers, technology vendors, project proponents, the media, the finance sector and energy converters and retailers.

What will the workshops produce?

A workshop report will be produced at each workshop and will be circulated to all workshop participants. A final workshop document, representing all of the issues raised by workshop attendees, will be produced at the end of the series of workshops and will be used in the development of the Sustainability Guide.

How will workshop outcomes be used?

The outcomes of the workshops will be used as a yardstick against which the Sustainability Guide will be measured, both to ensure that all issues have been addressed in the Guide, and to ensure that the philosophical basis of the Guide is correct.

How would the Sustainability Guide be used?

The role envisaged for the proposed Energy from Waste (EfW) Sustainability Guide is to assist in achieving the benefits of EfW while at the same time avoiding or controlling the potential disbenefits. This could be achieved by the Sustainability Guide acting as a commonly adopted reference point for Energy from Waste issues. If all the key stakeholders have a common view of the issues, proposals that are put forward for consideration or pro-actively developed can be assessed and evaluated more objectively. Thus the Sustainability Guide could support the development, assessment and operation of beneficial EfW projects and screen out any unsustainable projects.

Where do I go to register?

To register please visit: www.wmaa.asn.au/efw/home.html

Where can I get more information?

There is a discussion paper that addresses the issues of Energy from Waste and sustainability in greater detail available for downloading at the Energy from Waste Sustainability Project website: www.wmaa.asn.au/efw/home.html

More information can be obtained from:

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