

Tohutohu Arotakenga Para

Instructions for Conducting your own Waste Assessment

Whakatauki | Proverb

Riro taonga mai, hoki taonga atu.

We receive valuable resources from Papatūānuku, we return valuable resources to her.

-Tuaiwa Rickard (Ngāti Koata, Ngāti Toa, Tainui, Taranaki)

Kupu Whakataki | Preface

Even the materials we use in our everyday lives have a whakapapa. They are made from resources taken from the natural environment. They connect to our atua Maori, and to all our whanaunga - all other living things on this planet. How we take them, how we use them, and what we do when we're finished with them is what we must consider carefully.

Purpose

To monitor what is ending up in your rubbish collection systems at school, and to determine how much of those materials could be avoided, reduced, reused, recycled, composted, or fed to animals.

Introduction

Waste Assessments are different to waste audits. They do not look at all of your waste systems at school like a waste audit would. We are not looking at your recycling bins, or your food waste buckets. We only look at what is in the rubbish bins, bags or skips at your school.

They show us how your waste collection systems are working and to what degree things are ending up in the right places - paper in the paper bins, food waste in food bins, etc. By doing these assessments, we determine how much of your rubbish could be diverted from landfill, otherwise known as 'divertable waste' - waste that could be recycled, composted, fed to animals, or reused. Waste assessments, therefore, highlight areas of your waste management systems that could be improved, which will in turn, lead to a reduction of landfill waste and cost.

More importantly, waste assessments show us what our waste is made up of. They show us what we need to reduce. They show us that if we developed reusable alternatives, we wouldn't have as much waste to landfill.

Process: Before the Assessment

PRINT the Waste Assessment Cards

These are found in your Oranga Kura Resources folder in Google Drive. You could also make your own on reused pieces of cardboard (and keep them for next time), or write up the categories on little individual whiteboards to save on the paper printing.

NOTE: There are more categories in this set of cards than you will be reporting on. You will not need to use the following cards:

- Papanga Pueru | Textiles (*If you find textiles, you could potential count them as items for 'reuse'*)
- Para Mōrearea | Potentially Hazardous
- Kongakonga | Rubble
- Kope | Sanitary
- Rākau | Timber
- Rapa | Rubber

Also note: There are no cards in this set for the following (you could make your own):

- Para Kai | School Lunches Waste (if applicable)
- Whakamahi Anō | Reusable

Final Note: "Reusable" means anything you find that could have been reused - library books, clothing, lunch containers, folders, textiles, pencils, etc.

FIND OUT WHERE the rubbish is stored

Where does it go after it leaves the classroom? Is it in a skip? Shed? Cupboard? In wheelie bins out the back somewhere? Some of these may even be locked. Ensure you have access to this place for the waste check day.

FIND OUT WHEN the rubbish is taken off site.

Plan your Waste Assessment appropriately. Consider when there will be the best sample of 'rubbish' to look at. It doesn't have to be a whole week's worth. Just make sure the sample you take would be a fair representation waste typically generated at school.

ARRANGE for a location to do the Waste Check.

Outside: Consider that any breeze or wind will easily blow and spread plastic wrappers, or bits of paper around. Inside: Ensure good ventilation, doors and windows to open, hard floors preferable (and easier to clean).

Depending on what time of day you do the assessment, it can be a good idea to do it somewhere public, where people will notice what you are doing over break times or at the end of the day when whānau are arriving to pick up their tamariki, or somewhere all the teachers will be walking by. The waste assessment process itself can double as an awareness raising exercise. Otherwise, sometimes it's better to conduct the assessment near to where the waste is stored on site to reduce having to move it around.

ORGANISE EQUIPMENT:

- Find some bins / boxes / buckets to sort your waste into (NOTE: Make sure you know the volumes of the containers you are using so that you can measure the waste to submit your report - See the Bin Volume Guide in the Waste Check Recording Sheet for guidance.
- First Aid kit
- Any tarps you can use on the day for doing the waste check on (if necessary), otherwise...
- Clean up equipment - broom, brush & pan
- Reusable safety gloves for everybody (*garden gloves can work too*)
- Remember:
 - Sunhats and water, if you're outside in the heat
 - Appropriate clothing for whatever weather conditions you are working in

Process: On the Day

SET UP the waste assessment area.

Put the waste check cards in front of each container, or in each space where the sorted pile will go.

PARA KŌRE

Oranga Kura



Helpful Hint: Line the Category Cards / sorting piles in the same order as they are listed on your 'Recording Sheet'. It'll make everything easier!



Health and Safety Tip: It can be a good idea to have a "Sorting Bin" to empty the rubbish into (e.g. in the photo above, empty the contents of the yellow bag into the empty bin in the middle). It is much safer for whānau to do the sorting from the open bin where you can see what you're picking out instead of reaching into bags unseen.



If you don't have any containers to put the sorted piles into, you can just create the piles on the tarp. Be aware of Tāwhirimātea though! Any slight breeze will start blowing things around if you are outside, including your category cards.



Helpful Hint: If you don't have heaps of containers around, you could find one bin/bucket/box to use for measuring all your sorted piles. Make sure you know the volume of the container.

HEALTH & SAFETY BRIEFING:

Your health and safety while doing the waste check is paramount. Allow time to run through the health and safety tips with the team before starting.

- Pick up bags from the top, not on the sides of the bag.
- Never allow a bag to touch your body, your legs (there may be something sharp in the bag that you can't see).
- Pick up all bags slowly and carefully. Take your time and check that the weight is manageable for you.
- Nominate who will bring the rubbish into the centre for sorting. Depending on your sorting team, it may be the teacher / adult / staff member who is responsible for controlling the amount that is being sorted.
- Does anyone have any food allergies? Advise these people to watch from the side and not participate in touching items as they could be contaminated with food they are allergic to.
- Be careful of slippery areas, please keep the area around the waste check clear.
- Make sure you are wearing suitable footwear, covered shoes, not jandals.
- Be careful of sharp items and broken glass. Wear glass proof gloves when available. If students encounter something they consider too dangerous for them to touch, they can alert the teacher.
- Do not try to step OVER any bins or buckets, always walk around them.

COLLECT THE RUBBISH SAMPLE (if you haven't done so already).

There are a couple of different ways to do this - depending on the time of day, when bins were last cleared, how much time you have, how big your school is, or how long it's been since rubbish was last collected or removed off site. You don't have to sort ALL the rubbish at school - just ensure it's a good mix and a representative sample including lunch areas, toilet blocks, admin areas, after school care, etc.

If it's later in the day and the classroom bins will have been used, an impacting way to announce to everyone that you're doing a waste assessment is to send waste assessment team members off around the school to retrieve every single rubbish bin in every single place of the area you are doing the waste assessment for, and bring them back to the waste assessment area. Name the places you will find rubbish bins but also remember where they came from, so you can return the correct ones to the correct places.

Note: for bigger schools, such as colleges and area schools, you might nominate one specific part of the school that you'd like to do the waste assessment for.

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If it's the beginning of the day, and there is no waste in the classrooms or any bins, then you could take a sample directly from where the rubbish is stored on your site (skip bin, wheelie bins, sheds).



BRIEF THE TEAM on the categories of waste and what they mean.

In order to do the waste assessment correctly, it is imperative that everyone understands what the different waste streams are. Before you begin any sorting, read through each of the categories and clarify what they mean and give examples. Walk through the set up with your team, point out where things go. Do a few practice ones together. Note the waste category cards have descriptions and examples you can refer to.

There are a few categories that need explicit checking and clarification, otherwise, you will not have the correct materials in the correct categories, and your totals, and therefore results will be incorrect. A few that need mention are:

Pepa Mā | Paper for Recycling

Does not include eftpos receipts, tissues, paper towels, food paper, wipes, or painted paper.

Pepa Kāri Mārō | Cardboard

Does not include tetra paks, milk, juice or soup cardboard cartons, take-away coffee cups, cardboard ice-cream tubs.

Pepa Paru | Dirty Paper

This is NOT the paper that goes into paper recycling bins. It is paper that has been used to wipe something (tissues, paper towels), or food contaminated paper packaging. This is counted as landfill waste (and not compostable).

Kirihou Hangarua | Recyclable Plastic

ONLY plastics with the triangle recycling symbol and the number 1, 2 or 5 inside the triangle can go in this category. So, no lamination, glue sticks, old whiteboard pens, broken toys.

Kirihou Ngohengohe | Soft Plastics

Even if you are not in the practice of separating out your soft plastics, or you don't have a location nearby to drop them off, it's interesting data to see how much of your rubbish is made up of plastic wrappers. (It also informs you on the food you are consuming at school). We are tracking this on your waste tracker dashboard.

Kirihou Hangarua - Kore | Non-Recyclable Plastics

This category is basically everything else that none of these other categories, then it goes here, and is basically your actual landfill waste, aka rubbish. It's great to examine this pile because this is where the higher actions on the waste hierarchy come in, such as avoid, reduce, reuse, repair, repurpose. What could we do or buy differently to reduce this pile?

SORT THE WASTE according to the category cards:

Sort the classroom rubbish bins first and return them as soon as you can. If a further sample is needed, take more from your rubbish storage area (wheelie bins? skip?). If you have outside rubbish bins, don't forget to check them, as well as any toilet areas. Usually the cleaners bag everything. Open the bags carefully so you can reuse them. Finish when you feel you have sampled a fair and representative sample of the rubbish that would normally be generated at your site.

PARA KORE

Oranga Kura



MEASURE EACH CATEGORY AND RECORD YOUR RESULTS:

Use the Waste Check Recording Sheet to record your totals. Enter your results into the Waste Check Data (Google Form) - the link is at the top of the Waste Check Recording Sheet.

CLEAN UP: Wherever possible, now dispose of the sorted waste to the correct place if you have the facilities to do so (e.g. clean recycling to a recycling bin, clean paper to a recycling bin, food waste to a food waste bin). If those options aren't in place yet, then you will have to return the waste to the rubbish collection it came from. Clean the equipment you used, wash your hands, and send in your results!