

Waikato

ENVIROSCHOOLS



What's in my Rubbish Bin ?

A Waste Audit will help you find out how much, and what types of waste are being generated **in one day** at your place. It can also help you think about where your rubbish is ending up and what impact it might have on our beautiful environment. This can inspire us with some creative ideas that we can take action on.

You will need:

- Kitchen Scales
- Gloves
- Bucket
- Tarp or large piece of card to tip waste onto
- Cardboard boxes for sorting (not essential)
- Waste audit sheet (see below)
- Pencil



What to Do:

1. **First thing in the morning on the day you will be auditing**, empty all household bins (kitchen, bedrooms, office, bathroom etc...) into an outside rubbish bin and put a note on the bin **'Do not use'**. This is so you don't get yesterday's waste mixed in with the waste you will be auditing. 'Waste' is everything that would have been disposed of as rubbish. Don't worry about auditing any recycling or compost bins you have. You won't need to audit these as they are not going to landfill.
2. **Let everyone know what's happening** and ask them to go about 'life as usual' putting their waste where they would usually put it.
3. **First thing in the morning, after the day you are auditing (before any more rubbish is created) ...** Collect all the bins from the different areas of your home and empty them one by one on your tarp or cardboard. Take a good look at what waste is generated where ... Is there food scraps in the kitchen rubbish? Has writing paper been used on both sides? Where is the most plastic generated?
4. Put gloves on. Sort the waste into piles (or boxes) under the types of waste listed on the audit sheet below.
5. Use the Audit Sheet to record a visual estimate of the sorted waste eg: paper may look like 30% of the all the waste... this doesn't have to be totally accurate, it is your guesstimate.
6. Weigh each pile by putting it in the bucket on the kitchen scales (remember to take away the weight of the bucket or use the TARE function on the scales)
7. If the waste in any category is too big for the bucket then you can use bathroom scales. Get someone to hold the waste (in a rubbish bag) and stand on the scales, and then take the weight of the person off the weight of the waste.



| Home Waste Audit Sheet | | Date: | |
|---|---|--------|----------|
| Type of Waste | Description | Weight | Visual % |
| Things that could have been diverted from Landfill | | | |
| Paper & Card | <i>Clean and Recyclable – office paper/newspapers/magazines/cardboard boxes etc...</i> | | |
| Compostable Paper and Card | <i>Paper towels, serviettes, non waxy food bags, pizza boxes, egg cartons</i> | | |
| Plastics | <i>Recyclable Plastics with numbers 1-7 in triangles on the bottom</i> | | |
| Organics | <i>Anything that is biodegradable or can be composted eg: food scraps, garden waste</i> | | |
| Metals | <i>Steel or aluminium cans or tins /other pieces of metal</i> | | |
| Glass | <i>All glass bottles and jars</i> | | |
| Things that have to go to Landfill | | | |
| All other waste | <i>Anything that can't be recycled or composted eg: tetrapaks, most packaging, cling wrap. Including any hazardous waste – paints, chemicals etc...</i> | | |
| Total of All Waste | | | |
| <p><i>NB: Hazardous waste should not go to Landfill but disposed of in an appropriate way. To keep it simple we are including it in this section of the audit because it is not able to be recycled or composted.</i></p> | | | |

Reflection:

Think about the questions below, if you don't know the answer, see if you can find out:

(If you've been doing the 'Zero Waste at My Place' inquiry, record your thoughts on your compost heap of knowledge)

- Where is all this waste all going ? What effects might it have on the environment ?
- Are there any things being thrown away that could be used again ?
- How much of your bin could have been recycled or composted ?
- What percentage of the waste could go somewhere else other than landfill ?
- What items in the 'All other Waste' category could be avoided and how ?
- How much does disposing of rubbish cost your whanau each month ?
- How does waste at your place compare to an average household waste bin below ?

Share the results of the audit and your thoughts with your whanau.



Taking Action:

Think about what you discovered in this audit, and, if you have been using the 'Compost Heap of Knowledge' to collect your ideas ... reflect on all that you have learned over this inquiry into 'Zero Waste at my Place'.

- **How do you feel about the current situation of 'Waste at you Place' ?**
- **Brainstorm all the changes you could make to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill ?**
- **What have others done ?**
- **What will you do ? How will you do it ? Who might be able to help you ?**

