

JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT

3-bin FOGO trial a winner!

15 June 2018

The trial of a Perth metro first, 3-bin Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) system has yielded higher than anticipated diversion from landfill and strong resident satisfaction.

The Southern Metropolitan Regional Council (SMRC) alongside three of its member councils – the Cities of Fremantle, Melville and Town of East Fremantle has been working towards the implementation of a 3-bin Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) system.

Commencing in October 2017, the new bin system was rolled out to approximately 7,000 households across five areas in the City of Melville and is producing some of the best results in the country.

As part of the rollout, residents received a brand new 240L lime-green topped bin for FOGO material, along with a kitchen caddy to help them separate food waste in the kitchen. The kitchen caddy contained educational materials for the residents, along with a year's supply of compostable liners to line the caddy with.

Residents also received a brand new smaller red-topped 140L bin for general waste items that can't be composted or recycled. The red bin is collected fortnightly. Residents kept their existing recycling bins with collections changing from weekly to fortnightly. For households who required more room to recycle, larger 360L bins were made available free of charge. The old general waste bins were removed and sent for recycling into new bins.

In the first six months of the project, 66.5% of all household waste generated from the trial areas was recovered as compost or recycled into new products, above the State Government target of 65% of all household waste diverted from landfill by 2020. This process has prevented valuable resources from going to landfill and has been accompanied by strong participation and support from residents.

In April, a resident survey was undertaken by independent research company Catalyse. All residents participating in the trial were asked for feedback on their experiences with an impressive 30% of residents responding and having their say on the new system.

The findings showed strong support towards the new system with:

- 79% of respondents wanting the 3-bin FOGO system to continue
- 94% of respondents rating weekly FOGO collections positively
- 87% of respondents rating fortnightly recycling collections positively
- 69% of respondents rating fortnightly general waste collections positively
- 80% of respondents satisfied that they received the right amount of information about the new system

Many residents highlighted the need to reduce landfill, create compost and increase recycling as their key reasons for wanting to keep the system moving forward. One resident said, "It makes sense to produce compost 'en masse' if individual households are not providing their own. We need more good soil, not landfill".

Residents were also asked to make suggestions as to how the system could be improved, and between 10-22% of respondents suggested improvements could be made by investigating the size and collection frequency of the red and yellow bins, odour management and sourcing more robust compostable caddy liners.

Many of these issues highlighted by residents are being addressed on an ongoing basis rather than a 'one size fits all' approach. To date, more than 17% of residents have already opted for a larger 360L recycling bin and approximately half of the 4% of households who requested additional capacity have been provided with more room following a

needs assessment. Alternative compostable bags have been sourced with many residents now reporting improvements in the strength and durability of the bags.

City of Melville Mayor Russell Aubrey said, “This survey has verified that given the right tools and information, most people can see the clear benefits in taking a small extra step to separate their waste in moving to a FOGO 3-bin system”.

“With mounting global pressures to better manage waste services our surveyed community has expressed a desire to move to an improved, more sustainable waste management model. The results show the FOGO 3-bin trial by and large has been a fantastic success for everyone involved, noting there are some areas for improvement”. Mayor Aubrey said.

There is also strong support from those not in the trial areas, with 74% of all residents who took part in a survey across all five SMRC member councils expressing a desire for a third bin for FOGO waste.

The food and garden waste collected through the FOGO bins is currently processed at the Waste Composting Facility (WCF) located at the Regional Resource Recovery Centre (RRRC) in Canning Vale. The trial so far has produced more than 1,200 tonnes of FOGO compost, equivalent to approximately 120 waste trucks’ full worth of material which could otherwise be rotting in landfill, producing harmful methane gas.

While 3-bin FOGO systems have been implemented in a range of councils across Australia and several councils in the state’s south west, all other 3-bin systems in the Perth Metropolitan area currently only offer residents a third bin for Garden Waste (GO), excluding valuable, nutrient rich food waste.

By being fully aligned with the State Waste Hierarchy, adoption of the FOGO system is designed to increase diversion from landfill, improve recycling rates and generate a high-quality compost while significantly reducing processing costs. The State Waste Authority recently threw its support behind FOGO, stating that a 3-bin FOGO system is the preferred kerbside collection system and most suitable for achieving State Government targets.

Chairman of the SMRC Cr Doug Thompson thanked residents and officers involved in the process for their efforts so far. “We would like to congratulate those residents involved in the trial on their participation and encourage them to keep up their efforts in ensuring they put the right thing in the right bin. The support and foresight of the participating councils is also to be commended and continues to position the SMRC and the participating councils as leaders in resource recovery in Western Australia”.

Further analysis and reporting will continue over the coming months to help formulate the decision-making process for participating councils.

To read more about the survey visit www.melvillecity.com.au/FOGO and for more information on which bin to put it in, visit www.recycleright.wa.gov.au.

This project is part funded by the State Government through the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Account, and administered by the Waste Authority.

Image: 3-Bin FOGO Trial at the Tinsely Household

Video Release: What goes in what bin <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FJhonOd2ITQ>

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