

MEDIA STATEMENT

Friday 27 March 2009

New resource recovery facility wastes less waste

The environment will be a major beneficiary following the official opening today (*Friday March 27 2009*) of a new \$80 million household waste treatment plant in Neerabup designed to produce about 40,000 tonnes of compost annually and divert some 70,000 tonnes of waste from landfill.

The plant is owned and operated by BioVision 2020 Pty Ltd under a 20-year contract with the Mindarie Regional Council, the State's largest waste management authority.

Mr Paul Miles, MLA, Member for Wanneroo, officially opened the plant.

The MRC manages the disposal of some 350,000 tonnes of waste it receives each year and generated by about 500,000 people living in the MRC's seven member Councils comprising the Cities of Joondalup, Perth, Stirling, and Wanneroo, and the Towns of Cambridge, Victoria Park and Vincent.

The MRC awarded BioVision 2020 the contract to build, own and operate the plant in late 2006. Construction of the facility started in May last year.

BioVision 2020 engaged waste management specialists SITA Environmental Solutions to operate the plant and Canadian company Comporec to supply the aerobic composting technology.

BioVision 2020 Pty Ltd is owned by WA-based superannuation fund Westscheme and SembSITA Australia Pty Ltd.

The plant employs an aerobic digestion process to convert household waste to compost, with the solid inorganic residue sent to landfill.

The new plant will play a major role in reducing the volume of waste sent to the Tamala Park landfill by up to 20 per cent each year, with additional environmental and economic benefits.

The compost generated will help enrich Perth's nutrient-deficient soils, reduce the need for artificial fertilisers, and slow and lessen the leaching of chemicals into the groundwater.

The plant's output will also contribute significantly to environmental sustainability, by lessening the volume of greenhouse gas created within the landfill, thereby lessening the impact on global warming.

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Further, the plant's operation delays the inevitable and expensive process of developing more landfill sites to service the community's future needs.

MRC Chairman Cr Rod Willox told about 200 guests at the official opening ceremony that the commissioning of the resource recovery facility was a major milestone, and one that had taken some 3000 days to accomplish since the organisation responded in 2001 to the State Government initiative, Towards Zero Waste 2020, with an investigation into waste treatment alternatives to landfilling.

"For the next several years, the management team, Councillors, member council technical officers, the project management team, members and representatives of the region's community, and consultants, were involved in a mammoth investigation, consultation and negotiation effort into alternative process technologies and possible site locations," Cr Willox said.

"We believe this intense investigative and consultative effort has resulted in a world-class resource recovery facility that is supported by stakeholders and the community."

"Members of the community, and most particularly the MRC's independent representative body, the Community Engagement Advisory Group, played a significant role in advising the Council of the community's views on various significant aspects of the project, including the location of the facility, the preferred process technology, and in developing the unique Community Partnership Agreement," Cr Willox said.

Mr Philippe Maillard, Chairman of SITA Australia, which will operate the plant for BioVision 2020, said his company was pleased to be part of the BioVision 2020 project.

"This plant signals a significant step forward in the pursuit of environmental sustainability in Australia," Mr Maillard said.

"Future waste management initiatives will see an integrated portfolio embracing new technologies, resource recovery, and a massive reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by keeping organics out of landfill," he said.

Community Open Day

The community will have the opportunity to visit the new facility in Pederick Road, Neerabup, tomorrow (*Saturday March 28*) between 10 am and 4pm.

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The MRC is inviting the community to a Community Open Day to view the facility and learn what people can do to reduce, reuse, recycle and dispose wisely, as well as enjoy the entertainment and a free sausage sizzle.

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