



Media contact: Natasha Farrell

Mobile: 0427 953 993

Email: natasha.farrell@audit.wa.gov.au

20 August 2020

WA not on track to meet waste recovery targets

The Auditor General today tabled in Parliament the [Waste Management – Service Delivery](#) report that assessed whether local government entities plan and deliver effective waste management services to their communities.

Waste management is a shared responsibility. All levels of government, business, industry and the community generate waste, and all have a role to play in adopting best practice approaches to manage that waste.

Auditor General Ms Caroline Spencer said kerbside waste collection in Western Australia at the local government level is largely effective and a valued community service.

‘However, inadequate local, regional and statewide waste planning, including for waste infrastructure, and a lack of tailored support for local government entities that manage household waste has limited the State’s ability to meet its Waste Strategy targets,’ Ms Spencer said.

Entities are not all effectively encouraging waste avoidance nor maximising waste recovery by reusing, reprocessing and recycling. As a result, the State is not on track to meet the 2020 targets of 65% household waste recovery in the Perth and Peel region and 50% in major regional centres.

Latest available data from 2017-18 shows that the waste recovery rate was 41% for the Perth and Peel region and 28% for the regional centres, well below the 2020 targets.

‘If entities are to progress the State’s vision to become a sustainable, low-waste society and have a better chance of meeting recovery targets, better practice waste management techniques we saw at a number of entities need to be more widely implemented than what we observed,’ Ms Spencer said.

The Waste Authority and Department of Water and Environmental Regulation have substantially improved their support to entities since our 2016 audit. However, both can do more to assist particularly entities in regional areas.

Ms Spencer said the Waste Authority flagged State infrastructure planning as essential back in 2012, but it has made little progress. It remains a key initiative that government, industry and the community need to progress to ensure waste truly becomes a valued resource.

‘Given recent international export bans on recyclable materials, the planning and development of local recycling facilities in the state is becoming increasingly urgent to help provide certainty to stakeholders, create opportunities for local recycling industries, and protect our local environments and public health,’ Ms Spencer said.

The audit contains a number of recommendations to ensure all levels of government work together towards achieving the targets and objectives in the State Waste Strategy. Making a concerted effort to use available practices to avoid and recover more waste, plus improved waste planning, is the key to continuing to lift the State’s waste and recycling performance.

All entities involved in waste management, not just those audited, should consider the report findings and recommendations.

Report resources

- [PDF version](#)
- [online version](#)
- [summary video](#)