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MEDIA RELEASE

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This National Recycling Week, Win the War on Office Waste

Green Connect is putting out the challenge to all local businesses to overhaul their office waste system this National Recycling Week and has issued a new guide to help businesses win their war on waste.

Australia's **waste generation is growing**, causing pollution and impacting natural ecosystems, and office waste is a big contributor. Staff are either too busy to dispose of waste responsibly, or their offices are not set up for recycling and reuse. In NSW, the average NABERS (National Australian Built Environment Rating System) office waste rating in FY23 was just **3.2 stars out of a possible 6**, meaning the majority of businesses are not managing their waste effectively. Overall, the commercial and industrial sector generated **32.8 megatonnes of waste in Australia** in FY21, with reuse and recycling declining per capita from previous years.

Diverting 143 tonnes of waste from landfill last year, Green Connect is on a mission to support Sydney and Illawarra businesses to reduce their waste through auditing and consulting. Freyja Jorgensen, Green Connect Zero Waste Team Leader, says, "We often hear from managers that they want to tackle their office waste, but they just don't know where to start – generally they've not even thought to look in their bins! People are so surprised to find everything from printer cartridges to coffee cups, old electronics, and kilos of food scraps in their waste. It's a real eye-opener".

She says, "Once they see what they're working with, it all clicks into place. After that, creating a waste plan feels achievable and they really start to experience the benefits of a sustainable workplace, like reducing business costs, improving brand reputation, and increasing employee morale. After all, **consumers** and **employees** are increasingly considering sustainability when making a purchase or finding a job. Businesses that can tap into that will set themselves up for long-term success".

Robert Servine, Green Connect General Manager, says, "Having a sustainable waste plan that actually works can be the difference between a business that falls behind and one that really thrives. Plus, it means they can meet legislative requirements without needing to scramble to keep up. It's proactive and it's smart".

Freyja Jorgensen says, "Business leaders have the power to create real change, impacting everyone in the office and carrying through to staff's personal lives and choices. By taking the first step with an office waste plan, we see time and time again that the whole business reaps the rewards".

Businesses can download Green Connect's free guide – Greening Your Workplace: A User-Friendly Guide to Achieving Office Waste Sustainability – at this link: green-connect.com.au/zero-waste-services/#resources

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Background

Green Connect's Zero Waste Services team works with businesses and organisations in Sydney and the Illawarra to reduce waste and improve sustainability outcomes, offering waste audits, waste consulting, litter picking, and zero waste event management. Businesses can also hire Green Connect's NABERS Accredited Waste Assessor to provide a NABERS Waste Rating or Waste Verification Report.

<https://green-connect.com.au/zero-waste-services>



Green Connect is a not-for-profit social enterprise and registered charity based in Wollongong, NSW that grows fair food, reduces waste, and creates employment opportunities for people with barriers to employment, including young people, refugees, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.