



# Councils

CASE STUDY

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It's amazing how many people are keen to do the right thing, but if you can't provide the infrastructure then you won't be able to get what you want.

**“Open Plan Recycling was the catalyst to engage the 120 people on [our] floor with what else we were doing in the council. Now everyone is aware of the broader sustainability program we’re working on, which encourages them to support it.”**

- Tim Ey, Sustainability Officer, Mackay Regional Council

Six weeks after the implementation of Method’s 60L Office Recycling Bins in one of their buildings, Mackay Regional Council have seen a significant reduction of waste to landfill. “The system we had was not working,” said Tim Ey. “Staff were disengaged, and it was inconsistent.”

After forming a working group with the waste and property services departments, Method was chosen with a unanimous vote. Mackay Regional Council favoured its modern look, size, functionality, simplicity in terms of scaling up, and the philosophy of Open Plan Recycling. However, Tim Ey faced a challenge before their implementation.

Neighbouring Ipswich City Council had opted to cancel their recycling program, a decision which sent shockwaves around Queensland.

Emergency meetings with waste contractors were held to manage the crisis should Mackay choose to do the same.

What followed was a testament to a change in public opinion. Due to the reaction of Ipswich residents, Ipswich Council overturned their decision and forced the state government to accelerate their plans to resolve the issue. Ipswich City Council had misjudged their community interests in recycling and the community support for councils to do it, even at additional cost.

With this in mind, Mackay Regional Council look forward to introducing Method bins to the rest of their council buildings.





Meanwhile, Palmerston North City Council have seen incredible results in New Zealand, reducing their landfill waste by 62% in three months between September and November 2017.

In May 2017, after an initial audit, it was discovered that collectively they were sending 200kg of waste from their single facility to landfill each week - 40 kg a day. With 277 permanent employees, and approximately 300 people in the building at any one time, they knew they could be doing more.

Before implementing their new system of 20 Method Recycling Stations, they met with their cleaning company to tell them what they were planning to do. It was written into contracts to ensure that cleaners would work efficiently to keep the waste separated once employees had made the effort to use the correct bin.

After their successful internal communications campaign, they enlisted floor champions to help Battman further promote behaviour change. Each individual employee received a treat in exchange for the removal of their individual desk bin.

**“It’s amazing how many people are keen to do the right thing, but if you can’t provide the infrastructure then you won’t be able to get what you want.”**

- Samantha Battman, Behaviour Change and Education Coordinator, Palmerston North City Council