

Good morning and congratulations to Sheryl and her team at Wastebusters for organising this Zero Waste – Zero Carbon Sustainability Forum to coincide with World Environment Day.

I would also like to congratulate those of you present who care enough about our future that you have dedicated the time today to add value to this forum. I fervently hope that you will be able to provide valuable feedback on how the development in our district can continue at the current pace, without compromising the ideals of a sustainable future.

This forum is very timely as the solid waste budget is becoming a real concern within Council as the total budget for operations and maintenance has risen from \$2.66m (2006/07) — \$2.885m (2007/08) — \$3.199m (2008/09)

Solid waste contracts (5)

- Solid waste and recycling collection
- Solid waste management at Ashburton Resource Recovery Park
- Transport of residual waste to Kate Valley
- Waste minimisation
- Waste education

The quantity of residual waste has risen 15.33% in the past 7 years (6992 – 8064 tonne) and it is fair to say that the cost of transporting that residual waste has increased at a far greater rate. Fortunately the value of recyclables diverted from the waste shown and transported off site has risen from 1616 tonne to 3973 tonne, a staggering 145%.

While this is an outstanding achievement, there is much more we as a district can do in the disposal of putrescibles, unwanted farm chemicals and other hazardous waste. A domestic hazardous waste drop off service was opened in September 2007 and an annual programme to collect and dispose of unwanted farm chemicals has been initiated. This saw 2.8 tonne collected last year and over 5 tonne this year.

However, we should be making meaningful inroads into the volume of putrescibles transported to Kate Valley and the capital investment necessary will be the topic of discussion in approximately one hour when Council continues its Annual Plan deliberations following the public submission process last week. Despite a very successful trial two years ago, Council has not at this stage agreed to invest in the infrastructure required.

If being here today means you are really interested in making a difference and achieving a more sustainable future for our district, then

- you need to play a role in the decision-making process and support Wastebusters
- encourage the changes that need to take place
- promote sustainability options among your business colleagues and
- lobby manufacturers to amend their wasteful packaging habits

I trust the morning is of value to you, I know it will not be because of a lack of effort on Wastebuster's part.