

Sign off on Coldstream compost contracts

Over 750,000 people in the Eastern Region of Melbourne will benefit from a new facility processing green organics into environmentally appropriate products. WMAA member Least Waste has appointed Australian Native Landscapes, an experienced composter and marketer, to develop and operate a green organics composting facility at Coldstream. The facility will be used by the five Least Waste member councils - Knox, Manningham, Maroondah, Whitehorse and Yarra Ranges.

The signing of the contract between Least Waste and Australian native Landscapes at the Least Waste offices in Mitcham on August 2 is a significant milestone. Companion contracts between Least Waste and each of the five councils relating to use of the facility were also signed. In addition, licences to access and use the Coldstream site were signed by Boral Resources and Least Waste.

Least Waste chairman, Cr Bob Beynon, said: "Least Waste and its member councils have vigorously pursued this project and overcome significant challenges that could have stopped it becoming a reality."

At over \$3 million capital cost plus a further \$1.5 million worth of equipment, the project is significant. Establishment and equipment costs will be met by Australian Native Landscapes and recovered from users over seven years.

Green organics will be delivered to the Coldstream compost operation by Least Waste member councils, their contractors and some other contractors. Council kerbside collected green organics will be delivered directly to Coldstream.

Self-hauled green organics from the general public and small gardening contractors and the like will still be received at the network of drop-off centres and transfer stations throughout the Eastern Region. That material will then be transferred to the Coldstream facility in bulk haul vehicles.



Least Waste chair Cr Bob Beynon signs the Coldstream contract watched by ANL managing director Patrick Soars (l), Least waste executive officer Graeme Stewart and Boral Metro Quarries manager Paul Hillyer.

Minister stepped in

When tenders were being considered for this project doubt arose as to whether Least Waste could continue to be involved. However, Environment Minister John Thwaites recognised the significance of the project and provided specific approval to enable the process to continue, with Least Waste responsible for the contract.

At least 40,000 tonnes of green organics will be processed at Coldstream in 2006. Permits allow for this to increase to 120,000 tonnes per year in the future.

The Coldstream compost facility is located on part of the Boral Quarry. Paul Hillyer, General Manager Boral Metro Quarries, said he was "pleased to see the available land being put to the best use possible without compromising the quarry operations. This green organics composting facility is an operation compatible with quarrying that also will benefit a broad spectrum of the community".

Construction of the access road and site facilities commenced in August. That should ensure the first green organics being delivered for processing will be achieved by early January 2006 if not earlier.