

FACTSHEET

Katoomba Resource Recovery and Waste Management Facility (RRWMF)

Past, present and future



The Site

The site occupies approximately 20 hectares at the northern end of Woodlands Road, Katoomba which is wholly owned by Blue Mountains City Council. It is zoned part E2 – Environmental Conservation and SP2 wmf – Special Purpose Waste Management Facility under Council’s Local Environment Plan 2015.

The facility receives around 31,000 tonnes of waste per year (generally from the upper Blue Mountains) for recycling, reuse or transport to Blaxland RRWMF for **landfill**.

Short Site History

Waste activities commenced in approximately 1906. The management and disposal of waste was largely uncontrolled, with the site being unfenced and was open to the public on a more or less continuous basis until the 1980s.

The burning of waste occurred regularly until the mid 1980’s until formal regulation occurred in 1985 when instructions and plans were put in place (such as covering the waste).

Thiess Services Pty Ltd operated the site under contract with Council until June 2010 and the site is now operated by Council.

The Present

The entrance to the site is equipped with a **weighbridge**. The disposal and payment of waste is by weight. This provides accurate information for waste management and environmental reporting.

The site has a small vehicle area incorporating drop off area for recyclables, scrap metal, timber, green waste and residual waste. This area includes secure collection of motor oil, gas bottles, household batteries and light bulbs as part of the Community Recycling Centre (CRC) funded by the NSW Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). It is also the area for the twice yearly Chemical CleanOut event where an industrial chemist is present for safe disposal of hazardous chemicals such as pesticides, poisons and acids.

There is a **Transfer Station** for large vehicles. The waste is sorted on the floor to remove any recoverable material and the residual waste is then transported to Blaxland RRWMF for **landfill**.

The Resource Recovery Platform is used for bulk recoverable materials including green waste, white goods, scrap metal and building and demolition waste. Materials are sorted and processed prior to reuse and **recycling**.

There is a TV and computer recycling collection point funded under Product Stewardship legislation by industry. Electronic waste is a huge waste stream with Australians generating more than 140,000 tonnes of e-waste each year. This legislation encourages the correct disposal of electronic materials which can contain toxic chemicals as well as precious metals that can be reused.



Katoomba RRWMF has a Reuse Shed for any materials that are in good enough condition for customers to take home and reuse. The Reuse Shed often has such items as bookshelves, lounges, tables and books.

There is also an educational facility for workshops and tip tours to promote waste avoidance.

The landfill has on-site monitoring for **surface water**, ground water and landfill gas as well as storm water and **leachate** management systems to protect local waterways.

Large volumes of **green waste** are mulched on-site and taken by Contractor to the New South Wales Coast for application to land (agriculture and farming). All **green waste** from the fortnightly garden organics collection is also taken to Katoomba RRWMF where it is bulked together and transported to ANL (Australian Natural Landscapes) in Blayney for processing prior to application to land (agriculture and farming).

The site operations comply with the Protection of the Environment Operations Act and has an Environment Protection Licence issued by the NSW EPA.

The landfill is formally closed and being rehabilitated. All closure works were undertaken in accordance with a Post Closure Management Plan (PCMP) approved by the EPA. A 2m high landscaped bund has been constructed around the perimeter for visual and acoustic screening of the Resource Recovery Platform operating on the closed landfill.

The Future

The transfer station and resource recovery operations will be ongoing services provided at the site. The onsite environmental monitoring will also continue.

Terminology

- **Landfill** – the engineered deposit or disposal of waste into or on to land
 - **Weighbridge** – a mechanical device used to weigh large loads eg cars and trucks
 - **Leachate** – liquid that has come into contact with waste and is contaminated with waste by-products
 - **Recycling** – reprocessing waste materials into new products
 - **Runoff** – water which comes directly from rainfall
 - **Green waste** – all vegetation - branches, trunks, stumps, leaves etc
 - **Surface water** - water that is on top of the ground
 - **Groundwater** – underground water sources
 - **Transfer Station** – an enclosed area where wastes are received, consolidated and transported for burial or treatment elsewhere
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