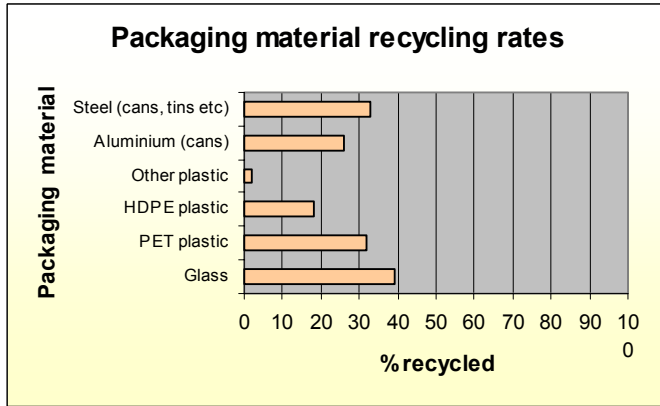


PACKAGING IS WASTING AUSTRALIA

As a nation, we've reached a waste watershed. Here's why:

⇒ **Recycling programs fail to recover the majority of our waste.**

Overall, we recycle only 20.1% of our packaging waste. That means a massive **2.7 MILLION TONNES** is dumped in landfill every year. This is an embarrassing result when some European countries recover up to 80% of their packaging waste.



⇒ **We're confused about what's recyclable.**

Our poor performance is influenced by the fact that 48% of the population is confused about what can be recycled.

⇒ **The cost is paid by rate payers, not producers or consumers.**

Kerbside recycling programs cost ratepayers a whopping \$294 million every year. Ratepayers and local government are unfairly wearing this cost while product producers and consumers avoid responsibility for the waste they create.

⇒ **Half of all product packaging is consumed away from home.**

This means it is consumed away from recycling services and is likely to be littered.

⇒ **Packaging is a major component of litter.**

Based on the items volunteers removed on Clean Up Australia Day in 2004, packaging related items represent over 85% of all litter. Aside from the health impact outlined below, packaging litter reduces the beauty of our natural environment and has a detrimental effect on tourism. Litter collection is also a huge cost – e.g. \$50 million per year in Victoria alone.

⇒ **Packaging waste harms humans and kills wildlife.**

Around 8,000 Australian children are treated in hospital each year (and more in private practice) for injuries caused by stepping on littered glass. Field research shows that up to 60% of platypuses become entangled in litter. Billions of plastic fragments are consumed by sea birds and other marine creatures. It's clearly a major health and environmental issue.

The problem is big, but you can make a difference. State environment ministers are currently considering ways to strengthen the National Packaging Covenant (NPC), the directive which guides Australia's treatment of packaging waste. Write to your minister calling for the NPC to include better and more effective waste management programs – a sample letter and contact information is available at www.boomerangalliance.org.