



Department of Environment
Government of Western Australia

Keep Australia Beautiful
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

June 20, 2006

Media Statement

Awards Target Bag Reduction

Community groups, schools, businesses and government agencies committed to reducing the use of plastic bags are being urged to enter the Plastic Bag Reduction Awards.

In recent years, several successful initiatives have helped to reduce the number of plastic bags Australians use from 6.9 billion to about 4.5 billion.

WA's Keep Australia Beautiful Council chairperson Mel Hay said about 45 million plastic bags ended up as litter.

"That means about 45 million bags are out there on our streets, parks and beaches, across the country," he said.

"This has a huge impact on our environment and, clearly, we still need to reduce the number of plastic bags we're using."

Mr Hay said it was important to recognise the groups, businesses and agencies that had already made plastic bag reduction a strong focus in their day-to-day operations.

"There are a lot of groups out there that have taken this issue on board and are showing that it can be done," he said.

"They're doing a great job to raise awareness about the issue and educate consumers and we want to recognise their efforts."

Mr Hay said a good example was Bunnings Warehouse which had worked with Keep Australia Beautiful and had introduced a 10c plastic bag levy.

The levy, introduced in September 2003, had dramatically reduced the number of plastic bags being used by Bunnings' customers and had raised valuable funds for the KAB programs.

Australian cricketer Glenn McGrath and Commonwealth Games gold medallist Jane Saville have also thrown their support behind the campaign.

To enter the Plastic Bag Reduction Awards, an expression of interest form must be completed and returned by August 1, 2006. Completed entry forms are due by August 31, 2006. Education kits and entry forms are available at www.kab.org.au or by contacting the WA KAB office on (08) 6364 6461.

State/territory and national winners will be announced in October.

The Plastic Bag Reduction Awards program is sponsored by Collex (Veolia Environmental Services).

KABC in WA is supported by the Department of Environment.

Ends

For interviews:

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Glenn McGrath – Australian cricketer (telephone interviews only)
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