
FRASER COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL
ORDINARY MEETING NO. 5/20

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2020

SUBJECT:	GET READY WEEKEND
DIRECTORATE:	WBW AND WASTE SERVICES
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	DIRECTOR WIDE BAY WATER & WASTE SERVICES, Mark Vanner
AUTHOR:	EXECUTIVE MANAGER WASTE SERVICES, Umur Natus-Yildiz
LINK TO CORPORATE PLAN:	Natural Environment Manage waste in a sustainable way Deliver efficient and sustainable waste management services

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present a review of the Get Ready storm season clean-up weekend, along with a recommendation to amend the event to minimise risk and better align with the purpose of the campaign.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Queensland Government runs a campaign to help Queenslanders prepare for natural disasters. This campaign includes an aspect of home maintenance in preparation for cyclones, storms and flooding. In line with this campaign, and to assist residents in reducing the risk associated with airborne hazards during storms, Council facilitates a Get Ready storm clean up weekend in September each year that allows residents to dispose of household waste at no charge.

Historically, the event has allowed for a wide range of domestic waste types to be disposed of with no charge, including fridges, freezers, air conditioners, tyres and mattresses. Past events have shown a significant increase in customers at all facilities, with a large portion of customers disposing of waste that is free to dispose of outside of this event including steel, mixed recyclables and green waste as seen in Attachment 1.

The major influx of customers causes an increased level of Workplace Health and Safety risk with traffic management and material movements onsite. Both the Hervey Bay and Maryborough Reuse Markets are required to be closed over the weekend in an attempt to reduce the risk associated with traffic management. The additional staff required along with the loss of revenue through tip fees comes at a high cost to Council, outlined in Attachment 3.

It has been identified that many of the items accepted for free over the weekend are outside of the original intended purpose of the event - to 'Get Ready' for storm season.

Following a review of past Get Ready weekends, and in-line with the State's Get Ready campaign, this report proposes that the event should allow for the disposal of outdoor household items that pose a threat during a natural disaster if left in residential yards around the region. These items may include damaged or unused play equipment (trampolines, swing sets, etc.), dog kennels, outdoor furniture, barbeques and green waste (trees and branches).

A number of options have been explored to deliver this service more efficiently to Fraser Coast residents as seen in Attachment 2 with the recommended action in section 5 of this report. A cost analysis of each option can be seen in Attachment 3.

3. OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Receive the report reviewing the structure and alternative options for the annual Get Ready storm season clean up weekend.
2. Approve the proposal to amend the event to become the *Get Ready Month* as presented in option 1 of Attachment 2.

4. BACKGROUND & PREVIOUS COUNCIL CONSIDERATION

The 'Get Ready' storm clean up event was previously held over one weekend in September and allowed for domestic customers to dispose of the following waste types with no charge:

- Un-gassed fridges, freezers and air conditioners;
- Tyres;
- Mattresses;
- Old furniture and other large items;
- General waste and builders waste.

Most of these waste streams are required to be processed prior to disposal/recycling, increasing Council's operation costs.

The key message of Queensland's Get Ready campaign is to get residents to maintain their homes and reduce the risk of backyard items becoming airborne. The waste items accepted in past years do not directly align with this risk.

The Council Resolution from 16 August 2017 - ORD 10.5.1 waived *'the scheduled waste disposal fees and charges, applicable to domestic waste only, as a community service obligation during the annual clean up event.'*

In order to streamline the event with the State's Get Ready campaign, reduce risk and increase efficiency, eight alternative options have been explored, as outlined in Attachment 2.

The options have been developed using examples from other Councils, data from past events and best practice waste industry principles.

Attachment 3 includes an approximate cost comparison for each of the options outlined in Attachment 2. It should be noted that these costings are based on past events, shared data from other local governments and predicted participation in future events.

5. PROPOSAL

With consideration to the triple bottom line, this report recommends that the event be amended to become the *Get Ready Month*, as presented in Option 1 of Attachment 2.

This option provides residents with the opportunity to get storm ready by waiving disposal fees on selected items that pose a risk to become airborne in a storm, reducing operational and health and safety risks apparent when operating the event over a single weekend, minimising the overall costs associated with running the clean-up campaign, and ensuring that the event is

consistent with the polluter pays principle and reinforces sustainable waste practices reflected in Council's Waste Strategy 2019-2029.

The proposed event would allow for residents to dispose of specific waste types that directly relate to getting ready for the upcoming storm season. This list may include damaged or unused play equipment (trampolines, swing sets, etc.), dog kennels, outdoor furniture, barbeques and green waste (trees and branches). The event would run throughout the entire month of October, eliminating the traffic congestion risk experienced during the past Get Ready weekends.

The proposed campaign would commence in early September, promoting the opportunity for residents to dispose of items that would pose a risk in the event of a storm, at no cost. A concise list of acceptable items would be included in the campaign to avoid confusion. Residents would be encouraged to separate items that can be diverted from landfill to ensure that optimum recycling rates are achieved, further reducing the cost to Council.

The majority of the items included in the fee exemption are free to dispose of throughout the year as per Council's 2019/2020 Schedule of Fees and Charges. Under the proposed option the amount of waste that would usually incur a fee (tyres, mattresses, refrigerants) would be reduced, therefore reducing the loss of revenue usually incurred from this event.

6. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

This event is funded through Council's Community Service Obligations budget.

7. POLICY & LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

In line with Theme 4: Natural Environment, Outcome 2 of Council's Corporate Plan 2018-2023, improved recycling rates and sustainable waste management services will contribute to minimising our impact on the natural environment. Polluter pays is an underlying principle of the Fraser Coast Waste Strategy 2019-2029. The structure of past 'Get Ready' storm season events contradicts this principle and provides little to no incentive for recycling.

The current structure of the event exposes Council to risks associated with the extreme increase in traffic and waste volumes received over a short period.

8. CRITICAL DATES & IMPLEMENTATION

In preparation for storm season, this event is required to be held between September and October each year. The proposed option would see the event run for the entire month of October.

Preparation of advertising and educational materials for this campaign will commence in late August. Staffing arrangements and additional resources required for the event will need to be organised in early September.

9. CONSULTATION

A consultative discussion was had with Council's Disaster Management Coordinator in relation to reinstating the purpose of the event – to get ready for storm season.

Discussions with Waste Management staff at Bundaberg Regional Council, Brisbane City Council, Ipswich City Council and Mount Isa City Council provided a better understanding of the alternative options considered in this proposal.

The proposal outlined in this report has been developed as an initiative of the Fraser Coast Waste Service team, and includes feedback from Council's waste contractors, following reviews of past events.

This report was presented to the Wide Bay Water and Waste Services Advisory Committee at its meeting held on 10 March 2020 where they resolved:

That the Wide Bay Water and Waste Advisory Committee endorses the proposed Option 1 'Get Ready -storm clean up month' campaign and event for Council approval.

The Committee also noted that once approved by Council a communication and engagement plan be developed for early engagement with the community on the Get Ready program.

10. CONCLUSION

The proposed changes to this event will assist in achieving the targets of Council's Waste Strategy and synergise with Council's Corporate Plan. It will allow for residents to prepare for storm season in a safe, cost effective way and reduce the operational risks associated with past events.

11. ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment 1 (Docs #3986796) - Get Ready Storm Clean-up Statistics 2019.
2. Attachment 2 (Docs #3990463) - Alternative Operations for Get Ready Storm Clean-up.
3. Attachment 3 (Docs # 3990558) - Alternative Options Cost Analysis.