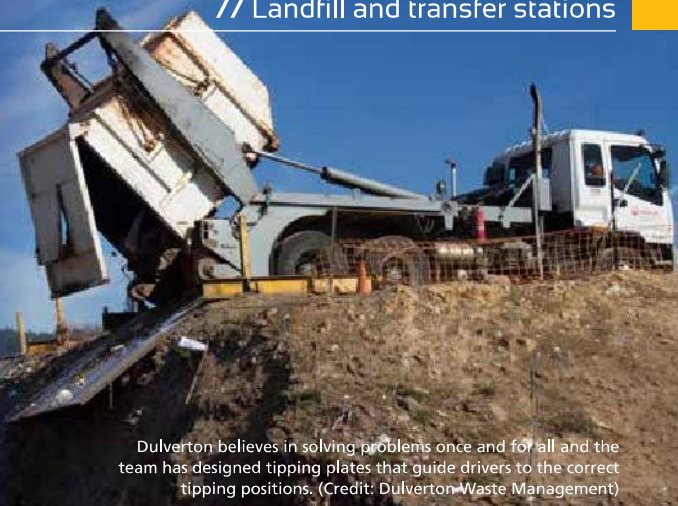


Problem solving - it's in Dulverton's DNA



Dulverton believes in solving problems once and for all and the team has designed tipping plates that guide drivers to the correct tipping positions. (Credit: Dulverton Waste Management)

By Jacqueline Ong

THE folks at Dulverton Waste Management have a lot to be proud of. Over the last 12 months, the Dulverton Waste Management Landfill near Latrobe in northern Tasmania has grown waste processing volumes by 9.24% to 75,000 tonnes, thanks to operational improvements. It is also home to Tasmania's largest composting facility, diverting more than 29% of waste into high quality compost.

And in March, its efforts were recognised at the Waste Management Association of Australia's 2017 Australian Landfill and Transfer Stations conference, when it won the Landfill Excellence Award.

"It felt fantastic that it was little old Dulverton that knocked over the big players so we were excited," Dulverton Waste Management CEO Mat Greskie said.

"I'm most proud of the staff and the contractors because that's the reason why we got to this point. We've got a really great culture of being innovative, a great culture of challenging the status quo, and a culture of just being prepared to contest the status quo."

The 35ha site boasts a number of firsts in the state, from being the first Tasmanian landfill to implement machine guidance for its landfill compactor, to being the first in the region to operate a landfill gas system to extract methane and assist in abating some 10,000 tonnes of CO₂-e.

When the landfill was constructed in 1995, it was built to rigorous environmental standards and today, the landfill, which receives close to 70,000 tonnes of waste a year, has an independently certified and audited Environmental Management System (EMS) that is embedded in operations and used daily by staff. This is backed by comprehensive environmental policies and processes.

"It's about constant improvement, about identifying problems and looking for the root cause and resolving those root causes - that's a big part of what we do at Dulverton. I always say, we

don't just drive around the pothole in the road, we find out why that pothole formed and what can we do to stop another pothole forming. It's in our DNA at Dulverton - solving things once and for all so we never have to come back and deal with that problem again," Greskie said.

When it comes to leachate management, Greskie said prior to him joining the organisation, the management made "a really good decision" to invest in a pump station and 7km leachate pipeline into the sewage system in the nearest town.

"These things have certainly helped but in a wet climate like Tasmania, with not very high evaporation, leachate's always an issue so our unique capping process that we've put in in recent years has really helped with that," Greskie said.

"Basically what we do is instead of completing a cell over four to five years and then coming in and capping, we cap progressively a few times a year and we're bringing our capping up with the waste profile itself. Doing so really reduces leachate generation which has been an enormous benefit to our leachate challenges on-site."

But it's not just a landfill that Dulverton operates. Its compost facility processes 22,240 tonnes of waste into high quality compost every year, certified to the voluntary Australian Standard for Composts, Soil Conditioners and Mulches (AS 4454).

"We've turned the compost facility into probably one of the most scientifically operated open windrow composting sites in the country. And we've just done that by looking at every part of the process of composting with a really objective and scientific view," Greskie said.

"Now, we don't allow any ingredients to come to our site without them being tested in the laboratory. We do detailed temperature, moisture, and oxygen readings to ensure our product is composted in accordance to the Australian standard."

Compost from Dulverton is sold across Tasmania to 12 nurseries, numerous vineyards, orchards, flower

growers, dairy farms and other farms.

"What we're really proud of is that we're actually selling it to quite substantial farms such as dairy farms that are in excess of 1000ha of dairy cows and they're making a business decision to use our compost. They're not just doing this because it makes them feel good or because it's good for the environment - it's those things as well - but they're doing it because it's better for their business. They've been able to reduce their reliance on synthetic fertilisers and reduce their overall fertiliser cost," Greskie said.

Four councils - Central Coast, Devonport City, Kentish, and Latrobe - own Dulverton Waste Management and looking ahead, Dulverton has engaged all councils in the region to determine the viability of a food organics garden organics (FOGO) collection service.

"There's no guarantee of the outcome at this stage. It's now being assessed by us and the councils but we'd like to think that there's a high likelihood that this project would proceed, moving up to potentially another 20,000 tonnes of organic product being diverted from landfill," Greskie said. **iw**

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