

Waste not, want not

Written by Peta Lee
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Reduce, reuse, recycle ... those are the guiding principles of any waste-management initiative. PETA LEE asks how the corporate world can get involved in reducing waste.

An astonishing 60 to 80 percent of solid waste generated in South Africa is recyclable.

“There are various waste streams, most of them appropriate for recycling,” says Suzan Oelofse, president of The Institute of Waste Management of Southern Africa (IWMSA). “By seeing waste as a resource, we can help protect virgin materials and aim to create a circular economy where very little waste is generated.”

Most people in business are familiar with the basics of recycling: print as little paper as possible, re-use if you can and separate plastics, cardboards and paper. There is, however, a lot more than can be done. There are also many people and organisations working to encourage recycling and make it easier.

One of them is the local website MyWaste, founded by Mark Gibson. This directs people to their closest drop-off and buy-back centres. It is also a platform where collectors, emerging small businesses, recycling facilities, small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs) and others involved in sustainability and waste management can register their services, free.

MyWaste has also developed functionality to help companies and manufacturers: a widget for their corporate website with no reference to MyWaste, which helps consumers find a recycling location/ collection service for their recyclable packaging/products.

Widgets are updated in real time as recyclers update, add, edit or verify their locations every three months.

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