

Sustainability Guide for the South Australian Hospitality Industry

JUNE
2024



THIS GUIDE HAS BEEN DEVELOPED
WITH THE GENEROUS SUPPORT OF



Government of South Australia
Green Industries SA

Foreword



Environmental sustainability has played a pivotal role in South Australia's history, driven by a commitment to protecting our pristine natural environment. Our state has been a trailblazer, being the first to ban plastic bags in 2009 and setting Adelaide on course to become the world's first carbon-neutral city. South Australia is home to the world's largest lithium-ion battery, and it is making considerable investments in hydrogen energy generation.

As a proud South Australian, I commend the successive South Australian Governments that have set ambitious targets, including aiming for a 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and achieving net-zero emissions by 2050. We are fortunate to have an advanced organics recycling industry at our fingertips as well as being the home of End Food Waste Australia, which continues to pursue opportunities for our industry to reduce its food waste.

So, what is the opportunity right now for members of the Australian Hotels Association (SA Branch)? We have developed this guide so that our members are well supported in their endeavours towards more sustainable options and can realise the real money-saving opportunities that come along with a more effective use of resources.

To achieve real savings and meet customer expectations, sustainability must be more than a mere checkbox—it should be ingrained in the ethos of businesses, guiding management, and staff towards responsible and lasting practices.

We have some incredible examples (many are included in this guide) where a truly sustainable philosophy has been put into action in the everyday operation of South Australian venues. Right here across our great state, we not only provide excellent venues and service with premium food and wine, but we have shown that we can do it with care for our people and our planet.

As you look through this guide, remember that you do not need to do everything at once. The operators and owners that we have included in here didn't start out as sustainable as they are today, nor will they stay at the level they are now. It's a journey, and (as the old saying goes) 'we are here to help'.

Enjoy the guide and embrace your sustainability journey.

Anna Moeller
AHA|SA CEO



I am pleased to introduce you to the *Sustainability Guide for the South Australian Hospitality Industry*, developed by the Australian Hotels Association – SA Branch through the support of Green Industries SA.

South Australia has long stood at the forefront of environmental stewardship, including as a leader in waste management and resource recovery. South Australia diverts more than 80% of waste materials from landfill, recovering them for higher value uses, and ultimately nurturing the growth of the circular economy.

A circular economy – where waste and pollution are eliminated, products and materials are circulated in the economy at their highest value and nature is regenerated – is needed for South Australia to achieve its net-zero ambitions.

Associations such as the Australian Hotels Association have a key role to play in supporting the transition to a circular economy and a sustainable future.

The *Sustainability Guide for the South Australian Hospitality Industry* is just one example of South Australia's dedication to sustainability, providing invaluable resources and educational materials to the Australian Hotel Association SA's members to guide them along their journey to environmental sustainability in their businesses.

The guide services members who have already begun this journey, while also serving as a starting point for those who have not. Through various case studies, it is demonstrated how a shift to sustainable practices can be beneficial, not only to the environment, but also to a business's profitability and marketability.

Everyday people, in their everyday actions and choices, can help steer us towards a more sustainable future. And this guide aims to assist everyday people – our local pub, bar, hotel and restaurant owners and managers – to do just that.

This guide was proudly supported by Green Industries SA, through a Lead-Educate-Assist-Promote Grant under our Business Sustainability Program.

Green Industries SA is committed to supporting and partnering with South Australian industry associations and businesses to champion resource efficiency, sustainability and the circular economy, driving positive change throughout our communities and South Australian businesses.

I commend the Australian Hotels Association – SA Branch for its commitment to a more sustainable future for South Australia and encourage all of its members to make commitments to sustainability through implementation of initiatives informed by the Guide.

Josh Wheeler
A/CHIEF EXECUTIVE, GREEN INDUSTRIES SA

Welcome to the guide

The Australian Hotels Association - South Australia has developed this guide with the support of [Green Industries SA](#). If you own or run a pub, bar, hotel, or restaurant and are just beginning your journey in environmental sustainability, then this guide is for you.

The term ‘sustainability’ is widely used and in this guide, it refers to environmental sustainability.

By using this guide, you will get an understanding of:

- Why environmental sustainability matters, as well as typical business drivers and barriers in the hospitality industry.
- Initiatives that will help to reduce your operating costs by improving energy, water, materials, and waste management.
- The importance of engaging with your suppliers, service providers and customers to improve environmental sustainability throughout your value chain.
- How to evaluate your current sustainable initiatives and areas for improvement.
- The importance of collecting data, monitoring performance, and evaluating your operations.
- How to engage and involve your staff on your sustainability journey.
- How to measure your successes and communicate your results.

A number of ideas or practices that are suggested in this guide involve replacing old or inefficient plant and equipment (for example, air conditioning systems), and installing new equipment, which may require upgrades to electrical systems, or which otherwise may be considered structural or capital works. We strongly recommend that members review the provisions of their lease (where the leasehold only is held) to ascertain (amongst other matters) who owns the relevant plant and equipment, who is responsible for replacing the plant and equipment and any costs associated with the same, whether the consent of the landlord is required for any works and who ultimately is responsible for the works. Legal advice should be sought where necessary. We also recommended that members seek financial and taxation advice before making a decision to replace or install any plant and equipment at the premises.



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Disclaimer:

This guide has been developed to help members understand environmental sustainability practices in the hospitality industry. The guide is for informational purposes only, and no guarantee is made that there will be any reduction in business costs, energy usage or environmental emissions from the adoption of any idea, practice or suggestion made in this guide.

While care has been taken to ensure the accuracy and currency of the information in this guide, the AHA|SA accepts no responsibility for the accuracy, currency or completeness of any information that may be included in this guide. Reliance on the information in this guide is at your risk, and the AHA|SA will not accept any liability, whether arising through negligence or otherwise, for any loss or damage sustained through the reliance of users of any information contained in this guide.

Users of this guide should seek legal, financial and taxation advice where required.

Acknowledgement of country

We acknowledge and respect the Traditional Custodians whose ancestral lands we live and work upon and we pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge and respect their deep spiritual connection and the relationship that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders people have to Country. We extend our respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their nations in South Australia and across Australia.

Section 1: Overview

Why does sustainability matter to your business?

At its core, sustainability is a concept driven by the desire to reduce humanity's impact on the world while ensuring prosperity for future generations. The importance to business lies in the holistic consideration of the well-being of the environment, society, and the economy.

Embracing sustainability in the hospitality sector is crucial, given its significant environmental footprint. It's estimated that commercial buildings, including hospitality venues, consume 25% of Australia's electricity, while the industry itself contributes 16% to the nation's total food waste. By adopting sustainable practices, hospitality businesses not only lessen their environmental impact but also enhance their overall success.

One way to approach environmental sustainability is through the lens of carbon emissions reduction. The South Australian Government has set ambitious targets, aiming for a 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and achieving net-zero emissions by 2050. While many organisations are setting their own net-zero targets, a comprehensive review of energy, waste, water, purchasing, and operating practices is a great place to start and can significantly benefit your business.

The concept of a 'circular economy' or 'circularity' is gaining prominence in sustainability discussions, it emphasises the reuse and regeneration of materials, keeping valuable items circulating in the economy for as long as possible and reducing our reliance on finite natural resources. South Australia's actions on reducing single-use plastics in favour of more sustainable and reusable options align with these circularity ambitions. Embracing circularity can start at a granular level, such as recycling bottles & cans and diverting food waste away from landfill.



Drivers for and barriers against sustainable action

DRIVERS



Environmental benefits

Minimise the depletion of natural resources, reduce pollution, promote nature regeneration, and mitigate the impacts of climate change.



Cost savings

Efficient use of resources and avoiding waste will reduce your consumption, as well as co-benefits of reduced maintenance, purchasing, transport and labour costs.



Enhanced reputation

Ethical business practices foster trust and positive relationships.



Risk mitigation

By using less and using it better, you can mitigate risks around resource scarcity, environmental regulations, and supply chain disruptions.



Economic & social benefits

Keeping materials circulating in the economy and supporting local business and industry boosts the State's economy, provides meaningful employment, and supports a healthy environment for improved social wellbeing.



Talent retention

A commitment to sustainability can set you out from the crowd and help you attract and retain staff. In fact, 71% of workers say that environmentally sustainable companies are more attractive.



Capitalise on emerging market trends

Integrate sustainability into your core values and operations to gain a competitive edge and have powerful differentiator in the marketplace.

BARRIERS



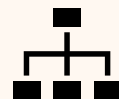
Financial

Having a clear return on investment is crucial. It is useful to prioritise your actions and start with the 'quick wins' – low effort, high impact. It is also important to recognise the return-on-investment beyond financial wins, such as meeting customer expectations for sustainable initiatives.



Commitment and engagement

New initiatives will always require changes in operational practices and behaviours, sustainability is no different. Involving and engaging your entire team will encourage ownership and determination. So, repeat your sustainability vision often, highlight this with the team, and encourage passionate individuals.



Control and ownership

If you do not fully control your assets, it can be difficult to make changes. Engaging early and often with owners and landlords can help bring them onboard your sustainability journey.



Knowledge

Some initiatives can be quite technical in nature; this guide aims to give you enough knowledge to identify potential opportunities and have informed conversations with your service providers.



Time

Hospitality owners, operators and managers are incredibly busy running their operations. Getting your teams onboard can help share the load.



Section 2: Sustainable Initiatives for the Hospitality Industry



South Australian pubs, hotels, and restaurants play a pivotal role in the pursuit of a more sustainable future. Now that you have familiarised yourself with how to use this guide and understand why sustainability matters to your business, it is time to dive into what can be done.

This is your roadmap to making a tangible difference in the sustainability journey of your establishment. There are three key themes for action:

THEME 1: Becoming more energy efficient

- Lighting
- Heating, ventilation and air conditioning
- Refrigeration
- Renewable energy
- Building envelope and materials
- Hot water

THEME 2: Tackling waste & water management

- Reducing food waste
- Minimising waste to landfill
- Water conservation

THEME 3: Working with your value chain

- Sourcing local
- Sustainable purchasing
- Customer engagement & sustainable options

Within each theme, several core operational areas are relevant to South Australian hospitality establishments. Each theme section contains an overview of the theme, why it is important, practical actions to take, and important implementation considerations. Also included are South Australian case studies to show how this is being done in practice.

So, let's roll up our sleeves and serve up a more environmentally sustainable and profitable future for your South Australian establishment and community.

Theme 1: Becoming more energy efficient



Lighting

Lighting can account for up to 15% of energy used in hospitality businesses in Australia. Lighting plays an important role in operational costs and guest experience. Harnessing the power of natural light through thoughtful design is a great way to reduce lighting consumption from the get-go, however, if this isn't an option there are other avenues to improve lighting energy efficiency in your establishment.

Upgrade to LED lighting

LEDs are 50-60% more efficient than fluorescent and halogen lighting.

Integrating energy-efficient LEDs into your business can offer a substantial reduction in energy consumption. Some benefits of LED fixtures include:

- Extended lifespan, leading to reduced maintenance costs
- Running cooler than other lighting types, alleviating heat load on air conditioning equipment and resulting in enhanced energy savings during summer months

Payback periods for upgrading fittings typically range from 1-4 years depending on usage patterns. Prioritise upgrading fittings with high usage patterns and replace low usage lights upon failure.



Lighting controls

Lighting controls can reduce energy use by 30 - 50 %

Even the best-intending staff will forget to switch off the lights, so scheduling your lighting is a good plan. A well-designed system can provide the flexibility to create different atmospheres throughout your venue, enhancing customer experience.

- Occupancy or motion sensor lighting are well-suited to infrequently used spaces such as storerooms, offices, back of house areas, bathrooms, cellars, function, and meeting rooms.
- Daylight sensors can be valuable when managing external lighting to ensure these lights are on only when required. Some sensors offer an automated way to adjust lighting levels based on natural light throughout the day.

Case Study

Novotel Barossa have upgraded most of their lighting to LED fittings. Remaining upgrades include the back-of-house run containing approximately 300 fluorescent tubes.

Upgrading these to LED can lead to some significant savings! The team has marked these for replacement in the near future.

If these fluorescent tubes are on for 6 hours per day they would consume about 23,600 kWh per year. Upgrading to LED fittings could result in up to **11,800 kWh** in savings per year! That's **\$3,540** per year (at 0.30 c/kWh)

Heating, ventilation & air conditioning



Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) can contribute up to 60% of overall energy consumption within hospitality venues.

Many zero and low-cost measures can be adopted to optimise HVAC efficiency and reduce operational expenses. Aside from the ‘low-hanging fruit’ there are also medium to high-cost innovative initiatives available for hospitality venues looking to enhance their energy efficiency.

Regular service & maintenance

Maintenance activities can be accomplished at a low cost and result in notable energy savings. To ensure proper maintenance, schedule routine check-ups with a qualified technician. Typical maintenance activities should include cleaning filters, checking refrigerant charge, adjusting control settings, and calibrating thermostats.

You can also review these items yourself (refer to **The Site Walk-through Checklist** included in the Appendix):

- **Dirty outdoor coils and indoor unit filters** – Dirty coils on your air conditioner means it needs to work harder to provide the desired cooling or heating. It is recommended these are cleaned at least every 6 months.
- **Damaged or missing insulation on pipework** – Effectively insulating refrigerant pipework prevents heat absorption and improves system performance.

A poorly maintained HVAC system can consume up to 30% more energy than it should.

Improving control and scheduling

The ideal settings for maintaining comfort and maximising efficiency are 20-22°C in winter and 24-26°C in summer. Of course, guest comfort is a priority but keeping to these ranges as much as possible is likely to yield significant savings. Each degree of variation can impact your HVAC costs by 2-4%.

Tips:

- Businesses with predictable operating hours can benefit from implementing schedules to control HVAC operation. Adjust times so that spaces reach a comfortable temperature as guest arrive and turn off as the venue begins to close.
- HVAC with more advanced control functions such as building management systems (BMS) can achieve significant savings by activating smarter control strategies.
- Venues with accommodation can retrofit control systems that allow staff to control/limit temperature setpoints, set schedules prior to guest arrival and monitor use.

Myth: Setting the thermostat to a lower temperature cools the space more rapidly.

In reality, cooling or heating occurs at the same rate, however, it will then overshoot using unnecessary energy.

Ask your HVAC technician what control upgrades or strategies might be possible at your site.

Case Study

Novotel Barossa have a large 177kW solar system on their roofs. To take full advantage of this, Novotel are optimising procedures to ensure staff turn ACs on during the day to make sure rooms are comfortable for guests in the afternoon and evening. Currently, staff are controlling ACs manually, however, Novotel are exploring control systems which will allow remote and centralised control – Ultimately, this will help save energy and time!



Installing a new system

Evaluate your current HVAC system to determine its lifespan and suitability for your venue. Consider a new system if:

- Your current one exceeds a decade in service.
- Your premises is undergoing expansion.
- Your equipment is running phased-out refrigerants such as R22. More information on refrigerants can be found here: <https://www.refrigerantsaustralia.org/>
- The system exhibits signs of physical deterioration.

Typically, new high-efficiency HVAC systems have an increased efficiency of 20-40% compared to older systems. Selecting high-efficiency units over 'minimum standard' units will enhance ongoing energy savings. The additional cost is typically recovered within the life of the unit. Energy Rating Labels are available for some equipment (including HVAC). This can help you make informed choices about the energy efficiency of products you buy. Ask your HVAC technician for best-practice features including variable-speed fans, variable speed compressors, natural refrigerant options, electronic expansion valves and intelligent controls.

Case Study

Barossa Novotel reviewed their heating and cooling systems as they came to the end of their useful life, which was around 15 years. Facilities Manager Daniel and General Manager Sarah went through a selection process to make sure their new purchase was the most efficient system on the market and that it would reduce their costs and greenhouse gas emissions.

Demand control kitchen ventilation

Demand controlled kitchen ventilation is an innovative system designed to optimise energy efficiency and ventilation performance in commercial kitchens. Unlike traditional ventilation systems that operate at a constant rate, these systems dynamically adjust ventilation based on the actual cooking activity and air quality in the kitchen. This can lead to significant energy savings. Retrofit installations are generally high cost, so consider implementing these systems during renovations or kitchen refurbishments as fans and ductwork may have to be upgraded to ensure compatibility.

Timers and sensors for outdoor heating

It is common for outdoor heaters to be left on continuously in open spaces during service hours to ensure guest comfort. Incorporating timers or sensors with outdoor heating systems is a low-cost initiative that can result in significant savings. It allows heaters to be activated on-demand for a set duration (generally 40-60 mins) while guests are present, after which they will turn off.

Case Study

The Feathers Hotel have several outdoor heaters to ensure guests are comfortable while they enjoy their food and drink. They have cleverly incorporated timed switches for guests to use so heating is turned on only when required!



Refrigeration

Refrigeration in hospitality venues can account for up to 30% of total energy consumption.

Significant energy savings can be made by keeping on top of maintenance and upgrading systems that are at end-of-life.

Regular service & maintenance

Without maintenance, refrigeration system performance gradually deteriorates over time, increasing operating costs, reducing equipment life, and increasing risk of sudden breakdowns. Regular maintenance with a qualified refrigeration technician can prevent these issues. Typical maintenance activities include calibrating thermostats, reviewing setpoints, optimising defrost settings and checking refrigerant charge.

In addition to these items the following are also important. You can check these yourself (refer to **The Site Walk-through Checklist** included in the Appendix):

- **Dirty condenser and evaporator coils/filters** – Dirty condenser and evaporator coils mean your system needs to work harder to provide the desired cooling. It is recommended these are cleaned at least every 6 months.
- **Damaged cold room doors and refrigerated cabinet seals** – Poor seals allow warm air to infiltrate into the cooled space making the system work harder than it needs to.
- **Damaged or missing insulation on pipework** – Effectively insulated refrigerant pipes prevent heat absorption from surroundings and improve system performance.

Better-practice housekeeping

Good operational practices can result in significant energy savings, sometimes up to 10%.

Most of the initiatives below can be implemented at no cost and are a great way to engage staff in sustainability practices. Consider:

- **Keep cold room doors closed** – Typically 30% of heat gain in cold rooms comes from open doors. Significant energy savings can be achieved from keeping doors closed, especially whilst re-stocking.
- **Improve layout** – Where possible try to keep heat-generating equipment such as cooking equipment, ice machines and post-mix chillers well away from cold room openings.
- **Loading & unloading policy** – Avoid loading warm product, load upon arrival where possible. Don't overstock refrigerators, allow chilled air to circulate around products. Place high turn-over product near door for easy access. Ensure that stored stock does not block the airflow to and from the evaporators in the room.
- **Temperature set points** – Select the highest possible operating temperature for the product being stored. Typical ranges are 0-4°C for cool rooms and -15 to -18°C for freezer rooms. For every degree your operating temperature is raised, you can save 2-4% in energy consumption.

Case Study

Maintaining good operational practices can have a measurable impact on energy consumption. This is an example of a walk-in freezer that is overstocked – the business is paying an energy penalty as system is working harder than it needs to, also reducing its useful life.



Installing a new refrigeration system

Evaluate your current refrigeration system to determine if it is close to end-of-life or no longer fit-for-purpose. If so, it is an opportunity to explore alternative design options and implement a new system that optimises energy usage, reduces operating costs, and increases reliability.

Consider upgrading if:

- Your current refrigeration system is more than 10 years old - upgrading to a new efficient system could save up to 30% in energy use.
- Your system still uses phased-out refrigerants such as R22.
- The equipment is in poor physical condition indicating it is nearing end-of-life, i.e. signs of corrosion and damage.
- Your venue is expanding or there is a change in operations.

Technology in the commercial refrigeration industry is continuously improving, ask your contractor for best-practice features including variable-speed compressors, electronically commutated (EC) fans, natural refrigerant options, smart defrost control, electronic expansion valves (EEVs), automatic fault detection and alarm systems. Ongoing savings from investing in high-efficiency systems typically pays itself back within the life of the equipment

Case Study

This cool room evaporator is very aged and shows clear signs of corrosion damage on the coils. Upgrading to a new unit will reduce power consumption on the system and opting for additional energy efficiency features such as EC fans and EEVs can yield even more energy savings.



Renewable Energy

Renewable energy for business has the potential to reduce emissions, provide energy independence, and enhance brand image. If your business has set goals such as net zero emissions, it is likely that renewable energy purchasing is a key part of the strategy. You can buy renewable energy in several ways, including installing rooftop solar on your own buildings and buying GreenPower® from your electricity retailer.

Installing rooftop solar

Electricity costs make up a significant part of hospitality business operating expenses and installing a rooftop solar system on your facility may be a good investment. While the exact savings will vary depending on your situation and energy use, good projects generally yield a payback period around 2 to 5 years. Businesses can also benefit from government incentives such as the Small-scale Renewable Energy Scheme which offers benefits towards the purchase cost of renewable systems.

Your business's typical daily energy consumption and your electricity tariff are the two main factors that will determine the financial return on a solar system. Many hospitality venues experience peak electricity load in the evening (outside of solar generation hours), so you first need a detailed analysis of your consumption patterns.

Optimal sizing of your system is also a crucial factor that affects financial return. The financial reward for exporting energy to the grid is currently low, meaning you will receive the greatest cost benefits by 'self-consuming' the generated power. So, it is important that the proposed design matches your load to avoid an oversized system that could negatively impact your return on investment.

Case Study

The Old Spot Hotel has a large roof space and have invested in a large rooftop solar system – even incorporating panels on their car park shading structure! As a result, they are seeing a significant reduction in electricity costs.

Building improvements and refurbishments

Upgrading building insulation can result in up to 40% reduction in heating and cooling costs.

The building envelope (or 'fabric') is the barrier or shell of the building that separates the indoor conditioned spaces from the outdoor environment. Building envelope features like insulation and air tightness can significantly impact the energy footprint of your building.

Designing a highly efficient building envelope is most economical to do during a new build. However, existing buildings can also retrofit cost-effective solutions to increase efficiency. Hospitality establishments tend to renovate frequently, providing an opportune time to incorporate building envelope upgrades.

Upgrading insulation and draught-proofing

For older buildings, up to two-thirds of heat can be lost or gained through walls, floors, roofs, and windows. Insulation plays a key role in building energy efficiency. Look to evaluate current insulation, and assess upgrade options, especially during renovations.

In the South Australian climate, uncontrolled draughts can add significant load to your HVAC demand. Identify sources of draught in your venue and seal gaps. Common sources of draughts are gaps around windows, doors, walls, exhaust fans and evaporative coolers. Keep windows and doors closed where possible while heating or cooling your venue.

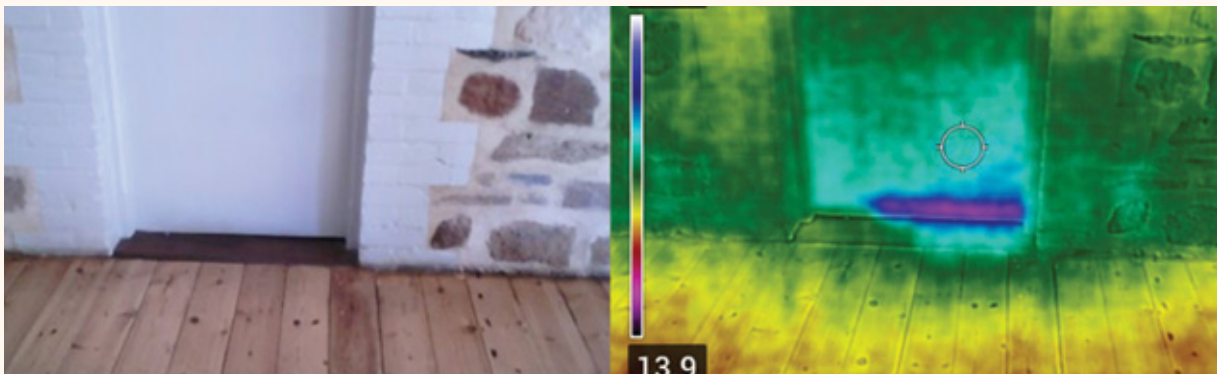
During summer, windows can allow up to 35% heat gain, while in winter they can amount up to 20% heat loss.

During summer months window shading can strategically block direct sunlight to reduce heat load. Adjustable external shading such as shades, blinds, louvers, or tints are a highly effective solution. Upgrading windows to double glazing is a sustainable solution, that not only enhances energy efficiency but also improves comfort levels. Double glazing upgrade can significantly reduce heat loss during winter and mitigate heat gain during summer by up to 30% (when compared to single glazing window performance).



Case Study

The wine storeroom at the Watervale Hotel is kept at a consistent temperature of 18°C by using a reverse cycle wall split air conditioner. Using thermal imaging, we found that cold conditioned air from the room was leaking out through gaps under the doors and uninsulated panels. The Watervale Hotel team is now onto sealing the gaps and saving power on their air conditioning bill in the process!



Hot Water

Efficiency of hot water systems can help to lower energy costs in addition to improving sustainability of business operations. Like many of the recommendations in this guide, regular maintenance is key to improving your energy use.

Maintenance and insulation

Regularly maintaining and servicing your hot water system will ensure that the system running efficiently and maximises the life of the system. Pipe insulation or lagging will reduce the heat loss from the hot water as it moves from the hot water system to the tap. A poorly insulated system located outdoors can lose as much as 3.5kWh per day (that can add up to about \$1 per day!).

Adjusting temperature setpoints

Adjusting the thermostat or set point of your water heater is a quick way to reduce energy consumption. Lowering the set temperature reduces the energy required to heat the water to higher temperatures. Consider the following:

- A system with hot water storage must be set to at least 60°C to prevent the growth of harmful bacteria such as Legionella.
- Continuous flow hot water systems can be set as low as 50°C.

Consult with your plumber before making changes to setpoints as some equipment (i.e. dishwashers) may require a specified input temperature.



Installing a new unit

Depending on the system type, the lifespan of a hot water system ranges from 10-15 years for a storage tank unit and 15-20 years for continuous flow unit. Since 2010, most states in Australia, have begun phasing-out energy intensive electric storage hot water systems for domestic use.

If you currently have an electric storage unit, upgrading to a heat pump hot water unit may be an efficient cost-saving alternative. Heat pumps are highly efficient systems and use **70% less energy than a conventional electric hot water heater**. In the case of continuous flow gas units, if it is old (greater than 10 years) you may gain efficiencies by installing a newer high-efficiency model.

If your business has goals such as running on 100% renewable energy or achieving net zero emissions, then transitioning away from natural gas or LPG is likely part of the plan. Switching from gas fired hot water systems to electric heat pumps is a common strategy.

If you have available roof space, you could also consider solar hot water systems. These systems typically complement the existing electric or gas hot water service. Solar hot water is low-maintenance, durable, and can operate efficiently for many years.

Case Study

As the Facilities Manager for the Novotel Barossa, Daniel has made sure his team regularly maintain the hot water systems to ensure reliable performance. He is aware the gas-fired hot water system on the central building is nearing its end of life and is investigating installation of efficient heat pump technology.

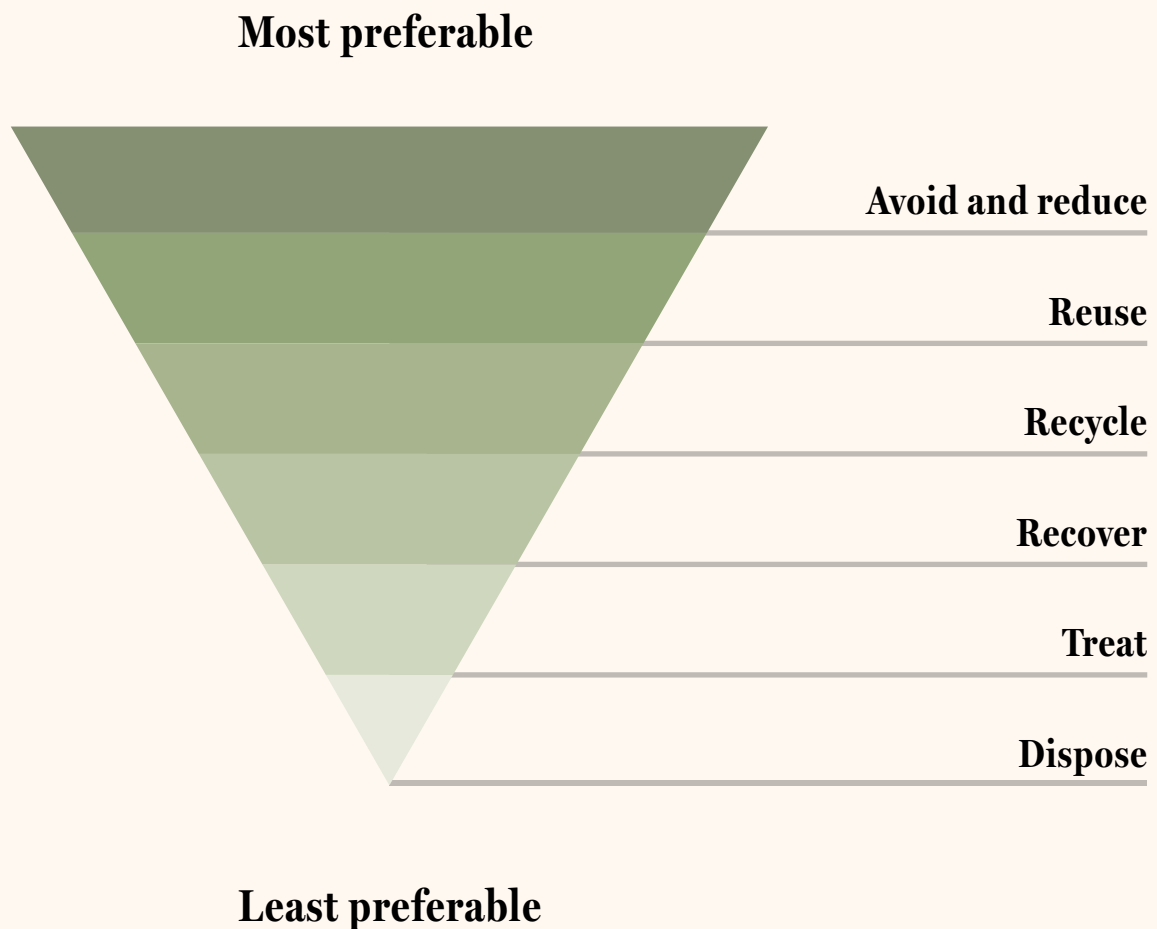


Theme 2: Tackling waste & water management

The waste management hierarchy

When it comes to waste issues and opportunities it is useful to consider the waste management hierarchy. The hierarchy gives us a way to prioritise how we tackle waste management. Essentially, we can think of it as three key concepts:

- **Avoidance** – Firstly, can we avoid creating the waste in the first place (then you do not have to deal with it)? Secondly, if we cannot completely avoid it then can we reduce it?
- **Resource recovery** – Next, can the waste product be re-used, recycled or recovered?
- **Disposal** – Finally, how can we dispose of the waste in an environmentally responsible way?



Minimising waste-to-landfill

South Australia continues its nation-leading approach to sustainability with a progressive approach to banning single-use plastic items.

With the constant flow of guests, diverse operations, and enormous amounts of purchased goods, hospitality venues generate significant amounts of waste materials, a substantial portion of which often ends up in landfill. The environmental consequences of landfill waste, especially the potent greenhouse gases generated, underscore the urgency for hospitality establishments to adopt comprehensive waste management strategies.

Using the waste management hierarchy, the first avenue to explore is waste avoidance and reduction:

- Consider purchasing non-perishable items in bulk to minimise the amount of packaging waste.
- Look for suppliers that use reusable or minimal packaging. Explore opportunities to partner with suppliers and participate in reusable packaging initiatives for food and beverage delivery.
- Consider minimising bottled water and soft drinks and providing beverages on tap instead to reduce single-use containers.
- Consider innovative technologies such as electrolysed water dispensers to replace traditional cleaning chemicals.

Next, how can we re-use, recycle and recover?

- Ensure you maximise the amount of waste streams in your venue i.e. food organics recycling, co-mingled recycling, paper & cardboard, e-waste, soft plastics, bottles and cans, glass.
- Ask your waste contractor what recycling services are available. If you increase your recycling services, there may be an opportunity to reduce your landfill bin size or frequency of collection.
- 10c containers can be collected informally by staff or through a collection service. This can be a way in which to engage staff in your recycling practices. You may look to hold a staff function with the refund collected or have staff select a charity they wish to donate the funds to.
- Strategise the best bin layout and optimise signage to ensure good waste segregation. Adopt signage that aligns with Australian Standard colours i.e. red for landfill, yellow for mixed recycling, green for organics, blue for paper and cardboard, white for 10c containers.

- Make sure bulk bin sizes are appropriate to minimise spillage of waste streams into one another, yet not so large leading you to incur higher collection fees for bins that are routinely partly full when collected.
- Ensure your business is using suitable alternatives to single-use plastic items, many of which have been phased out in South Australia. See www.replacethewaste.sa.gov.au for more information.
- Use cleaning products that are more environmentally friendly and do not contain micro-beads.
- Explore other innovative ways to repurpose waste, it could be anything from using coffee grounds in the garden to donating old linen to animal shelters.

Not all waste can be re-used, recycled, or recovered. Residual waste will need to be disposed. The question is - are there ways to dispose of these items in a more environmentally friendly manner?

What waste streams should you have at your site? We have prepared a list of what constitute *minimum-standard* and *better-practice* waste service levels for the hospitality industry.

Minimum-standard services cover common business waste streams and materials banned from landfill. Services should be available in all SA metropolitan areas.

- Organics recycling
- Comingled recycling or 10c containers
- Paper/cardboard recycling
- Used oil
- Printer/toner
- Fluorescent light recycling
- E-waste
- General waste

Better-practice refers to continual improvement of waste and recycling management for a business. It responds to changing community and customer expectations, available services, changing regulations, and technology. This is opposed to 'best-practice' which suggests that no further improvements are possible. Better-practice service levels include minimum services and additional recycling streams for other items, such as:

- Battery recycling
- Hard waste recycling/reuse
- Soft plastics recycling

Case Study

Food and beverage products can come in a range of packaging formats. If there is a particular product you use in bulk, speak to your supplier about a dispensed option rather than single use. This will reduce packaging waste and enable simpler distribution.

The Lion Hotel recently partnered with McLaren Vale producer Diana Olive Oil to create reusable stainless steel olive oil kegs. Oil was previously delivered in 50L single-use plastic drums, now the venue receives 1200L of oil per month in reusable kegs, avoiding plastic waste altogether!



Tackling food waste

An Australian study found that on average restaurants throw away 23% of food they purchase. This equates to almost a quarter of your food budget! (Watch my Waste RMIT 2024)

If food waste were a country, it would be the third largest emitter of greenhouse gases after U.S. and China. In Australia 7.6 million tonnes of food is wasted, with an approximately 70% of it being edible. The hospitality sector is responsible for an estimated 16% of the country's total food waste (National Food Waste Feasibility Study 2021).

In a hospitality business, food waste usually comes from food that is thrown away during preparation, food that is damaged or has expired, and leftovers from the plate. There may be other sources such as food that was ready to serve but not eaten (i.e. food from functions or buffet service).

As all business operations are different, depending on where your food waste manifests will determine how you can act to reduce your impact. The first step is therefore figuring out where your food waste comes from. The best way to do this is to measure it!

You may already have a good idea of where your food waste comes from and where it may be avoided, however, measuring it will give a deeper understanding of what, where and how food waste is generated. Measuring also provides an opportunity to involve your staff and accurately communicate your efforts once you make improvements.

So, what are some actions that can be taken? We have included some ideas below to get the creative juices flowing. It's important to point out that these are not one-size-fits-all solutions, you and your team have the skills and know-how to create your own solutions and implement what works best for your business.



Spoilage:

- Check stock regularly and ensure you are ordering only what you need.
- Store new items at the back to ensure older items are used first.
- Label items with purchase and use-by dates where possible.
- Add menu specials to use up ingredients that have been over purchased.
- Partner with organisations to redistribute useable excess food such as Foodbank or OzHarvest.
- Ensure refrigerators and freezers are set to appropriate temperatures to prevent spoilage.

Preparation waste:

- Explore using the same ingredients for different dishes.
- Explore creative ways to use preparation leftovers, peelings and off-cuts for stocks, soups, or garnishes, minimising overall waste.
- Collaborate with suppliers: is there a way you are able to order products already prepped to specification (meats, fish, vegetables cut to size) to minimise on-site wastage?

Plate waste:

- Consider reducing portion sizes or offering a range of portion sizes for certain dishes if you notice plate waste returning from customers. Chips and salads are classic culprits for being left on a plate, experiment with offering half serves or make sides an opt-in.
- Proactively offer and encourage customers to take-home what they cannot finish.
- Actively engage customers, train your front-of-house staff to have meaningful conversations about how food waste is managed at the venue.
- Digital menus have increased in popularity in recent years – it is a great way to visually show portion sizes.

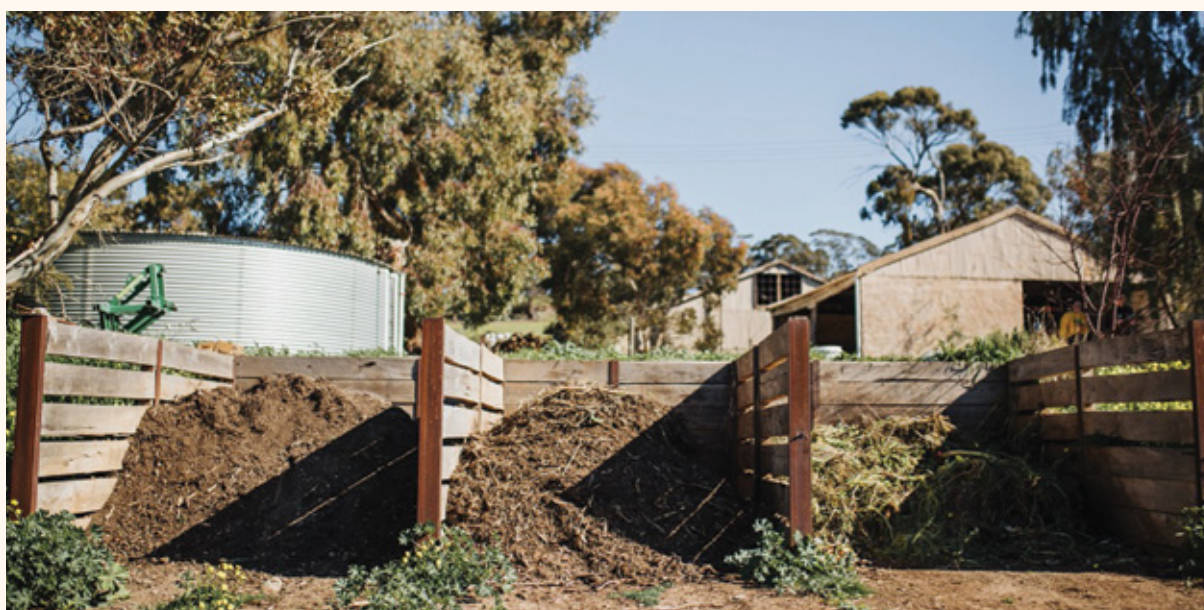


Case Study

Watervale Hotel owners Nicola and Warren are incredibly skilful and knowledgeable when it comes to managing food waste in a commercial kitchen.

Experienced and passionate chef Nicola looks for every opportunity to reduce waste. From using vegetable offcuts such as corn husks for stock and watermelon rinds for jams and preserves. The extent of innovation and skill in extracting value from all parts of the produce is truly remarkable. Amongst all their notable ways of reducing food waste, perhaps one of the most distinct involves turning unused animal parts into items for their “Doggie Degustation” menu for our canine companions.

With their pub and farm within minutes of each other, the food waste from the pub goes to the farm into a three-stage compost system - eventually being used to grow fresh produce. It’s circular, regenerative, and impressive.



Realistically, there will always be food left over. If it is available in your area (metropolitan areas of South Australia, and in certain regional areas), ensure there is a organics waste collection stream for all your food waste to go in to. All major waste service providers offer an organics collection service option. In SA, organics collections are taken to commercial composting sites to be processed into high-value compost and soil amendment products that are used on vineyards, crops and home gardens. By your venue recycling food waste, these nutrients regenerate agricultural land and remain circulating within the food production chain.

In the case where an organics waste collection service is not available, consider composting on-site if possible or investigate installing a food waste processing unit. While on-site composting is a time investment and food waste processing units can have high energy demands, processing your own food waste is a great sustainability initiative. Composts and high-nutrient output material from food waste processing units can be sent to local producers, used to fertilise your own on-site garden or perhaps even a local community garden!

Hopefully this has given you ideas of how you can tackle food waste in your establishment!

If you're hungry for more, here are some excellent resources for all things food waste, hospitality, and business:

[Business Sustainability Program – Green Industries SA](#)

[Catering Food Waste Action Plan – Summary 2024](#)

[South Australia's Food Waste Strategy 2020-2025](#)

[Guardians of Grub – WRAP UK](#)



Case Study

The Maylands Hotel collaborated with their waste service providers to analyse their waste composition, revealing that organic food waste comprised approximately 38% of their general waste. By implementing an organic waste management service, the hotel successfully diverted significant amounts of waste from landfill, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and lowering weekly waste management costs.

Following the introduction of the organics service, the venue decreased their general waste collection frequency from twice per week to once, resulting in a net weekly savings of \$50 and annual savings of **\$2,600**.

Matthews Hospitality Group, the hotel's parent company, has since extended the organics waste service to all their venues as part of their new waste management policy. Simon from Matthews Hospitality Group says the venue teams have enthusiastically embraced the program, aided by an educational initiative highlighting the environmental and social benefits of reducing waste-to-landfill.

Case Study

Novotel Barossa have a large restaurant kitchen that generates a high amount of organic waste. Currently, there are no commercial organics services in the area. To deal with this Novotel installed a worm farm to process some of this waste on-site. However, the worm farm can only process a portion of the total organic waste generated. The Facilities Manager Daniel is considering purchasing a food waste processing unit, where the high-nutrient output could be used to maintain the grounds around the resort.



Enabling better-practice waste management

As always, your people are critical to your organisation's ability to effectively manage waste. Opening the conversation early is key and no doubt will generate some unique ideas on how to tackle waste in your venue.

Some tips for implementing waste initiatives:

- 'Walk the talk' and be enthusiastic about the opportunities (and realistic about the challenges) for your team to reduce waste. If this is important to you, people will realise that.
- If you are looking for motivation, then visit one of the case study venues in this guide and see for yourself what they've done and how it has made a positive difference to their operations.
- Keeping your team onboard, this includes training on correct food storage, portion sizes, food preparation, and putting in place collection systems and signage to segregate waste.
- Letting your customers know that reducing waste is an important part of your venue's sustainability program, the actions that are being taken and how they can help.

Water conservation

Water is one of our most important resources. South Australia being the driest state means sustainable water use has even greater importance. Water is used in various operations such as guest services, food and beverage, and facility maintenance. Implementing water conservation practices not only helps in reducing environmental impact but also contributes to cost savings.

Maintenance & monitoring

A tap that drips 1 drop per second can waste up to 7,000 litres per year.

Regular maintenance in commercial kitchens, pubs and hotels plays a crucial role in reducing water consumption and promoting sustainable practices. It is common for leaks to go unnoticed due to lack of inspection or simply not being reported. Toilets, tap fittings, shower heads, piping joints, hose nozzles and shut off valves are common areas where leaks occur. Encourage staff to proactively report and repair leaks quickly.

Checking the water meter monthly after-hours is an effective way to detect leaks. If there is a change in the meter reading when the site is closed, then this may indicate a leak.

Water-saving practices

Water savings can often be achieved by working with staff to improve everyday procedures and practices. Here are specific water-saving measures that hospitality businesses can implement:

- **Don't use running water to thaw frozen goods** – Although a common practice, it is an incredibly water intensive process. Large items can sometimes take up to 2 hours to completely thaw out using this process. That can translate in up to 1000L of potable water used! According to the Australian Institute of Food Safety, it is also the least preferred method to thaw food safely.
- **Wash up efficiently** – Hand scrape dishes to avoid excessive rinsing before loading the dishwasher. Use dishwashers and glass washers only when the racks are full.
- **Encourage mindful guest practices** – Encourage guests to take shorter showers by providing educational material and signage. Give guests the option to reuse towels instead of washing them every day.

Case Study

Novotel Barossa have implemented policies to save water and energy by giving guests options to reduce cleaning and laundry loads. For example, beds are not always changed every day and towels aren't taken unless guests require it. The team appreciate it is a fine balance between giving their guests the opportunity to be more sustainable while also providing them with the guest experience and service they expect.



Upgrade fittings and equipment

Upgrading water fittings in hospitality venues, such as installing low-flow faucets and water-efficient toilets, is an effective strategy to reduce water consumption and save costs. For fittings that use hot water, lowering hot water consumption also has benefits in reducing energy consumption. Staff training is crucial to maximise the benefits of these upgrades.

In Australia, there is a compulsory water efficiency standards and labelling scheme (WELS) that covers a range of products including showerheads, washing machines, toilets, dishwashers, urinals, and some tap types. WELS labels have 1 to 6 stars, the more stars the more water efficient the product. The star rating allows you to easily compare products water efficiency and make informed and sustainable choices.

Here is a list of common fittings and appliances that can be upgraded to reduce water consumption:

- **Low-flow taps (aerators and diffusers)** – Designed to mix air into the flow, lowering water usage from the standard 15-18 litres per minute to as little as 2 litres per minute.
- **Pre-rinse valves** - A traditional pre-rinse valve uses between 11 and 22 litres per minute. Six star rated pre-rinse valves use as little as 4 litres per minute.
- **Dual flush cisterns** - Installing dual flush cisterns is a requirement for all new buildings in Australia. Dual flush toilets use significantly less water compared to single flush toilets.
- **Water-saving shower heads** - In hotel rooms, shower heads account for up to 50% of water used. Water efficient shower heads use approximately 9L per minute compared to older less efficient shower heads use 19 L per minute.
- **Dishwashers** – Newer high-efficiency dishwashers use significantly less water and energy compared to standard models.



Theme 3: Working with your value chain

The value chain encompasses the complete spectrum of activities undertaken by your business to deliver and support your service. This includes aspects like sourcing food and beverages, selecting equipment, and engaging in marketing activities.

Collaborating with partners along the value chain is crucial for minimising the environmental impact of your business. The power to create widespread positive change lies in working together with your business partners. This could mean collaborating with suppliers to explore alternative packaging materials or reusable systems. It may mean looking closer to home for local businesses you can support or engaging customers in your sustainability journey.

Case Study

Warrick from the Watervale Hotel always looks for new ways to support his local community. He buys goods from the local bakery to stock in his General Store, not to be in competition with them but to support them as he knows that there is a large chain petrol station being built in Auburn that might make it a challenge for the bakery.



Sustainable purchasing

Hospitality businesses, with their extensive procurement needs spanning food, beverages, cleaning products, consumables, uniforms, decorations, and crockery, wield significant purchasing power. By leveraging this power, businesses can actively contribute to a sustainable economy by prioritising environmentally and socially responsible products and services. Purposeful and conscious sustainable purchasing decisions have the potential to generate substantial positive impacts.

A great way to begin is by conducting a thorough audit of your supplier list. Identify those suppliers who already incorporate sustainability into their agenda. If a supplier does not meet your sustainability goals, actively seek out alternative suppliers. The next step involves initiating conversations with major suppliers, questioning them about the actions they are taking and their future goals and targets. These discussions hold the potential to inspire action or foster collaborative efforts. Embracing this approach not only aligns your business with ethical practices but also sets the stage for positive change within your industry.

One simple way to consider your value chain impact is through the lens of ‘food miles’, i.e. how far does your food have to travel to get to you? The further your food must travel, the greater the carbon emissions associated with that product. For fresh produce this is more pronounced as it usually means keeping it stored in the energy-intensive cold supply chain for longer.

Therefore, why not look local? Your food spends less time in storage and local suppliers often have more flexibility to deliver exactly what you need.

Today, there is a vast range of packaging options available. Lower cost options have traditionally meant cheaper materials with greater environmental impact. However, that pendulum is shifting as more innovative and sustainable options become available. Consider how the product can be disposed at the end of its life, how long the product may last and how many uses you can get out of it compared to similar products. Regularly assess the options available to you, the next innovative solution could be around the corner!

Your venue fit out is another opportunity to support sustainable action. Consider looking for second-hand or refurbished furniture and décor. Recycled building materials are also gaining popularity, consider using reclaimed wood and steel in your next renovation.

The cold supply chain is responsible for approximately 12% of Australia’s national GHG emissions. (Cold Hard Facts, 2021)

Customer engagement & sustainable options

A growing proportion of Australian consumers are engaging in sustainable choices. Younger demographics are continuing to advance the sustainability conversation, they also represent a growing customer base for hospitality businesses. Engaging with your customers will enable you to tap into what they are asking for and tailor your service accordingly. This may mean offering varied portion sizes for menu items (as explored in Theme 2), plant-based options, electric vehicle charging facilities or a spot to store bicycles. Of course, there may be a whole host of other initiatives you discover - but the key is to start the conversation!

The rise of plant-based options

An increasing awareness around animal welfare, environmental and human health impacts of animal products is driving the popularity of plant-based foods with about 2.5 million Australian’s following a plant-based diet. Australia currently sits as the third largest growing vegan market in the world, so it’s no surprise the selection of vegetarian and plant-based options is expanding year-on-year.

So how can hospitality establishments cater for this growing market?

- Gradually introduce and increase the variety of plant-based dishes on offer.
- Reorder your menu, place meat-free options at the top of your menu. Simply changing the order can influence how customers relate to options.
- List plant-based or vegetarian options in the main body of the menu. Avoid having a ‘vegetarian’ menu section, it is more likely for meat eaters to choose a plant-based option if it’s not highlighted as vegetarian or vegan.

This playbook by the World Resources Institute is an excellent resource to explore in more detail. [*Playbook: Guiding diners toward plant rich dishes in food service*](#)

The electric vehicle transition

Electric vehicle numbers in Australia are projected to reach approximately 35% of new car sales by 2035.

Electric vehicle (EV) uptake is rising rapidly with a 269% increase in sales in 2023 compared to 2022. Hospitality venues such as hotels, pubs and restaurants are prime locations for EV charging infrastructure, especially in regional locations. How might hospitality venues benefit from installing EV chargers?

- EV charging facilities differentiates your venue and can attract new customers.
- Demonstrating your business's commitment to sustainability and future proofing your establishment
- Depending on the business model chosen for charging infrastructure, there is a potential for it to become an additional revenue stream.

Case Study

Together with the South Australian Government, the RAA are building South Australia's first border-to-border network of EV charging stations. Novotel Barossa is part of this game-changing network, with two public charging points set up at the entrance to the resort. General Manager Sarah has noticed an increase in the usage of these charging points and is pleased to hear from guests that they appreciate being able to access the facility.



Supporting sustainable transport options

Sustainable transport options refer to modes of transport that are sustainable in terms of their social and environmental impact, for example public transport, cycling or walking.

Consider if there are ways to support these modes of transport. Perhaps this could mean creating a safe space for patrons to lock bicycles or simply having readily available information on public transport schedules. Much like EV charging, adding these features to your venue could attract new customers.

Section 3: Key Enablers for Sustainable Change

With your shopping list of possibilities across energy, waste, water, and your value chain, it is now time to act. However, to implement these changes successfully there are a few key ideas to consider.

Collect your data

To identify sustainability initiatives and associated cost savings it is critical to know what, and how many resources you are consuming. Collecting data on electricity, gas, water, and waste is essential to managing resources, costs, and productivity in your business. Understanding current resource consumption and waste generation allows you to build a baseline to track and report improvements. Without this it is difficult to see whether your actions have been effective.

Monitoring these resources on a site-wide level is a great start, however, it is possible to gain further insights by installing gas, electricity, or water meters to understand usage at a system level. For example, measuring electricity use of your refrigeration or water consumption in your accommodation. By checking and monitoring this data regularly, you may observe some abnormalities presenting potential opportunities to fix issues and improve efficiencies. For example, monitoring water use in the kitchen may lead to timely identification of leaks or poor water management practices.

Armed with this information you can start to communicate positive results with your stakeholders, whether it be customers, staff, management or even suppliers.

Set goals

With the opportunity for some real savings on the bottom line, it is worth taking the time to set some goals over the short, medium, and longer terms. With your team, agree on an action plan detailing a schedule of improvements that need to be made and when, along with who will be responsible for them.

Like most businesses, you won't have a bottomless pot of funds for these changes, so you will need to be realistic about when funds will be available and keep an eye out for government grant programs that may help you fund some initiatives. Once you know your budget, an easy way to prioritise the actions is to first focus on resource intensive areas or those that are performing poorly.

Get to know your venue

Developing a keen awareness of how your venue operates enables you to make informed decisions, implement sustainable initiatives, and create a more resource-efficient and resilient business environment. So, in addition to the data you have collected, you should gain an understanding of how these resources are being consumed or generated through observation.

Start by conducting a comprehensive assessment of your resource consumption, identifying areas where energy, water, and materials are utilised. Analyse operational practices to streamline workflows, minimise waste, and enhance productivity. Familiarise yourself with the status of equipment and machinery, ensuring regular maintenance and prompt repairs to prevent inefficiencies and breakdowns.

Conducting a regular housekeeping walkthrough with a checklist is a great way to understand your venue better. Refer to the Appendix at the end of this guide for our **Site Walk-through Checklist**.

Engaging your team

Implementing sustainable change at your venue is not something you can do on your own, engaging your team is critical. Underpin your sustainability leadership by:

- **Communicating your ‘Why’** - Explain how sustainability is important to your business and how it aligns with the business’s values. Your team needs to be aware of a problem and/or the opportunity for action before any engagement can occur. You could provide high level summaries of what the waste of resources is costing your venue each month/year.
- **Defining your goals** - Define specific, measurable goals for the business and communicate them clearly, for example “reduce waste-to-landfill volume by 30%”. Be clear about the benefits and try to bring it to life by developing a business case.
- **Make action an everyday task** - Connect sustainability initiatives to everyday tasks. Show teams and individuals how they can contribute through their respective roles. Start small, this could be as simple as making it standard practice to turn-off storeroom lights or clean fridge seals weekly.
- **Encourage collaboration** - Encourage feedback and suggestions, communicate clearly why certain suggestions are actioned. Remember to champion those who are especially engaged and acknowledge good practice! Before you know it, your team will be finding their own ways to contribute and create impact!
- **Maintain momentum** - Keep everyone informed about progress of sustainability initiatives, regular updates whether through newsletters, meetings or internal communications will help ensure sustainability stays relevant.

Case Study

Nicola from the Watervale Hotel won’t hear that it is ‘too hard’ to do things sustainably. Whether this is about sorting plate waste directly into the multiple bins by the kitchen, or making sure she learns from all of her staff about new opportunities to do things better. For her, engagement of her team is critical, they know how important this is to her and to the Watervale Hotel.

Share your success

Use the data you collected to tell your story and track your progress. Compare figures on a six-monthly or annual basis (i.e. has your waste volume reduced this year compared to last year?). Note that your consumption may lower due to other factors such as milder weather or reduced patronage not only due to initiatives you implement. When communicating your progress, the key is to be transparent, highlight the direct benefits as well as the co-benefits that stem from your actions.

Communication is key not only for keeping your team (and you) engaged but also so you can adjust your action plan, 'tick' off what is completed, review and potentially reprioritise as you progress.

Some simple and effective ways to communicate your success includes:

- Be enthusiastic yourself! Make obvious your motivation for a more sustainable operation.
- Encourage your staff to talk about and highlight your actions with customers.
- Consider putting your sustainability goals up on the wall, be proud of what you are doing.
- Showcasing your day-to-day actions is a great way to include your team, customers, and suppliers on your sustainability journey. Regularly post updates on your social media or in your newsletter when you have a win, feature your staff (with their permission) so it is everyone's success.
- Don't be afraid to be vocal across your industry or in your local community. You can speak at conferences, talk on the radio, be proud of your progress.
- If you prepare an Annual Report for stakeholders and investors, highlight your sustainability work as it all comes down to better risk management.

Appendix

The Site Walk-through Checklist

Undertaking a regular housekeeping walk-through of your hotel, pub or restaurant can lead to several benefits, including:

- Identifying maintenance issues and opportunities for improvement
- Identifying areas where energy, water, and materials are utilised and where some of these resources may be used unnecessarily
- Discovering improvements to operational practices to streamline workflows, minimise waste, and enhance productivity
- Picking up on staff concerns and inefficient behaviours
- Demonstrating commitment to actioning your sustainability goals

Varying times of the walkaround will allow you to get a holistic perspective on how resources are being utilised in your business.

A checklist to help you with your walkthrough can be found on the following pages. Not everything may be applicable to your business – feel free to create your own checklist! Perhaps you already do a regular walk-through, if so, fantastic! This may give you some ideas for additional items to include in your own version.

CHECK	CATEGORY	OBSERVATION	NOTES	ACTION
	<i>Equipment Type or Category</i>	<i>What should I be looking out for?</i>	<i>Note down your observations, locations, quantities, and any other relevant details. This may help when you engage your service providers!</i>	<i>Is there an opportunity to take action? (Yes or No)</i>
LIGHTING				
	General lighting	Note any non-LED light fittings. What type of fittings are they?		
	General lighting	Observe and note areas where lighting is used infrequently. Are lights often left on unnecessarily? (i.e. storerooms, offices, back of house areas, bathrooms, cellars, function, and meeting rooms)		
	General lighting	Is the outdoor/external lighting on a timer or daylight sensor? Are these lights on during the day unnecessarily? (i.e. carpark lighting, external building lights, beer garden, outdoor areas)		
HEATING, VENTILATION AND AIR CONDITIONING				
	Air conditioners	Inspect indoor unit filters and outdoor unit coils, note if there is a buildup of dirt, dust, or grease.		
	Air conditioners	If accessible and safe to do so, inspect air conditioning pipework and note any damaged/missing insulation		
	Air conditioners	If accessible, see if you can find the date of manufacture on your unit(s). Note the age of your system(s).		
	Evaporative coolers	If accessible, inspect cooling pads - these should be cleaned and serviced before use in the hotter months		
	Controls	Note your current AC temperature set points. Are they within the ideal range? (i.e. 20-22°C in winter and 24-26°C in summer)		
	Controls	Can you implement schedules on your AC system(s)? If so, have any been set? Are they reflective of your open/busy times?		
REFRIGERATION				
	Under bench cabinets, upright fridges/freezers	Inspect condensing filters/coil. Note if there is a buildup of dirt, dust, or grease.		
	Under bench cabinets, upright fridges/freezers	Inspect door seals, note any signs of damage. Do the doors seal effectively?		
	Under bench cabinets, upright fridges/freezers	Is the temperature setpoint appropriate for the type of product being stored? Can the temperature be safely set any higher?		
	Walk-in cold room or freezer	Inspect evaporator unit. Note if there is a buildup of dirt, grease or ice.		
	Walk-in cold room or freezer	Check that airflow to the evaporator is unobstructed by stock or other objects.		
	Walk-in cold room or freezer	Inspect the condition of the door and door seals. Does the room seal well? Are there signs of wear and tear on the door seals? Is there ice formation on the door frame?		

CHECK	CATEGORY	OBSERVATION	NOTES	ACTION
	<i>Equipment Type or Category</i>	<i>What should I be looking out for?</i>	<i>Note down your observations, locations, quantities, and any other relevant details. This may help when you engage your service providers!</i>	<i>Is there an opportunity to take action? (Yes or No)</i>
	Walk-in cold room or freezer	Note if the walk-in cold room/freezer doors are commonly left open.		
	Walk-in cold room or freezer	Does the room feel colder or warmer than what it should be? Are items freezing in the cold room when they should not be? What does the temperature dial say?		
	Refrigeration plant (outdoor units)	If accessible, see if you can find the date of manufacture on your unit(s). Note the age of your system(s).		
	Refrigeration plant (outdoor units)	Assess if the unit is in a well-ventilated space. Is the surrounding air noticeably warm? Are there objects around the unit obstructing airflow to the space?		
	Refrigeration plant (outdoor units)	Note any signs of wear and tear (i.e. general damage, corrosion, excessively noisy compressor/fans, etc.)		
BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS & REFURBISHMENTS				
	Insulation & draught-proofing	Inspect your building to identify any obvious sources of draught. Common sources of draughts are gaps around windows, doors, walls, exhaust fans and evaporative coolers.		
	Windows	Note any external shading features or double-glazed windows. Is there potential to install these features to help heat load in peak summer?		
HOT WATER				
	Hot water unit	Note the type and age of your system. See if you can find the date of manufacture on your unit(s).		
	Hot water unit	If visible, note the setpoint(s) on your hot water units.		
	Pipework	Inspect hot water pipework and note any damaged/missing insulation.		
WASTE & WATER MANAGEMENT				
	Waste & recycling bins	Note the bin size and collection frequency per waste stream. Do you have more bins than you need (e.g., bins are less than half-full on collection day)? Are there other recycling services that your waste contractor provides?		
	Kitchen bin layout	Note how waste is segregated in the kitchen. Is the current layout of kitchen bins optimising or hindering workflow and the sorting of recyclable materials? Are there signs present to help identify the recycling bins?		
	Food waste	Ask your chef and floor staff where most of the food waste comes from at your site. Can food waste be easily sorted in the current kitchen setup? How are food ingredients labelled and organised to optimise their use?		
	Single-use plastics	Note where single-use plastics are being used at your site. Are these items being phased out in the upcoming single-use plastic legislation?		

CHECK	CATEGORY	OBSERVATION	NOTES	ACTION
	<i>Equipment Type or Category</i>	<i>What should I be looking out for?</i>	<i>Note down your observations, locations, quantities, and any other relevant details. This may help when you engage your service providers!</i>	<i>Is there an opportunity to take action? (Yes or No)</i>
	Water maintenance	Inspect taps, toilets, shower heads and other fittings for signs of leakage. Check your water meter after hours – is it still turning over?		
	Water-saving practices	Note any inefficient water practices at your site. (i.e. defrosting with running water, excessive rinsing, large usage in accommodation)		
	Efficient water fittings	Inspect water fittings around your site. Do they have a high WELS rating? Are they water-saving?		

SUSTAINABLE PURCHASING & CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

	Local suppliers	Note how many of your suppliers you would consider to be 'local'		
	Packaging	Note where single-use packaging is being used at your site. Is there an opportunity to ask your supplier to use reusable containers instead (e.g. swap system)?		
	Sustainable menu options	Note how many plant-based options you are offering. Is the menu layout and labelling optimised? Engage your customers, would they appreciate more plant-based options?		
	Electric vehicle charging	Note if your customers are driving EVs. Are there any charging stations in the area?		
	Alternative transport facilities	Note if your customers are biking or taking public transport to your location. Is there a spot for them to safely lock/store their bicycle?		

Date:

Person who conducted walk-through:



Useful resources

Note: these are provided as general guidance. Any specific decisions made by your business should be done in consultation with the relevant experts.

Energy

[Our electricity supply and market | Department of Energy and Mining](#)
[Audit your business energy use | sa.gov.au](#)
[HVAC | Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water](#)
[Refrigeration | Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water](#)
[Sun control and shading devices | Whole Building Design Guide](#)
[Building fabric guide | Carbon Trust](#)
[Green roofs and walls | Australian Government](#)
[Driving down energy bills and emissions | Beyond Zero Emissions](#)
[Guide to installing solar PV | Clean Energy Council](#)

Water

[Commercial water prices | SA Water](#)
[Saving Water: Make it your business | SA Water](#)
[Hot water systems | Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water](#)
[Water efficiency | Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water](#)
[Water transformed: sustainable water solutions for climate change adaptation | The Natural Edge Project](#)
[Do-it-yourself: Insulate hot water pipes | Energy Saver](#)
[Net energy analysis of solar and conventional domestic hot water systems | Crawford et al \(2004\)](#)
[How to buy the best hot water system | CHOICE](#)

Waste (including food waste)

[Food waste strategy launched | Green Industries SA](#)
[Catering food waste action plan | End Food Waste Australia](#)
[National food waste feasibility study | Food Innovation Australia Ltd](#)
[Guardians of Grub | WRAP UK](#)
[Solid waste management in the hospitality industry | Pirani & Arafat \(2014\)](#)
[Waste management in the hospitality industry | Waster.com.au](#)
[Methods for defrosting food safely | Australian Institute of Food Safety](#)
[Food preparation and catering | Carbon Trust](#)
[40 percent of Australian restaurant food wasted | Hospitality Magazine](#)

Working with your value chain

[Procurement and Contracts | Green Industries SA](#)
[Guide for business on greenwashing | ACCC](#)
[How to counter greenwashing with transparent communication | The Carbon Trust](#)
[Playbook: guiding diners toward plant rich dishes in food service | World Resources Institute](#)
[State of electric vehicles | Electric Vehicle Council](#)

General

[Waste and Recycling: Cafe and Restaurant Basics | Green Industries SA](#)
[Your guide to sustainable business in food | Green Industries SA & Food SA](#)
[Sustainability Plan | US National Restaurant Association](#)
[UK Net Zero Pub Guide | Net Zero Now](#)
[Use resources efficiently in your hotel | Invest Northern Ireland](#)
[Hospitality | Carbon Trust](#)
[The guide for the brewing and hospitality sector | Zero Carbon Forum](#)



