

Get involved in the Circular Economy

We are here to help.

Go to: darebin.vic.gov.au/sustainablebusiness



The Linear Economy

In today's linear economy, resources are extracted from the environment, processed into goods, used - and then discarded. It's a one-way conveyor belt, where natural resources are being depleted on one side and waste is building up on the other. This is not sustainable long-term.

The Circular Economy

In a circular economy, materials never become waste and nature is regenerated. Products are designed to last. Processes like maintenance, repair, reuse, refurbishment, remanufacture, recycling, and composting help retain economic value - and protect the environment.

Circular Design:

Circular design means:

- making it easy for the product or system to be part of the circular economy.
- making it easy for the item to stay at the highest value for as long as possible.
- including recycled content, but also ensuring that the content is easily recyclable again and again.

If you put the recycling out each week, you are already involved in the circular economy.

But there's much more to it - especially if you run a business.

In a world with finite resources, the circular economy is an approach to business that can help you save money, reach new customers - and protect the environment.



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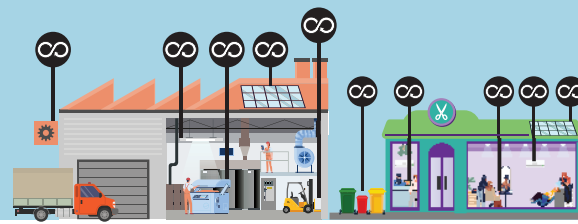
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Get involved in the Circular Economy



Circular Darebin

ACTIONS



Understand the Circular Economy



Audit Your Business



Rethink Purchasing



Extend Product Lifespan



Shift From Ownership to Access



Go Second-Hand, Reused or Refurbished



Offer Circular Products or Services



Improve Recycling Systems



Embed Circular Thinking Into Strategy



Collaborate & Network



Start Small, Grow Big

GOALS

Build awareness and commitment

Understand where you are now

Cut waste at the source

Keep resources in use longer

Increase utilisation of resources

Support circular supply chains

Make circularity part of your value proposition

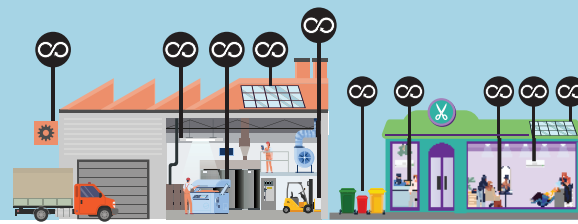
Maximise resource recovery

Make it core to how you operate

Join forces for greater impact

Don't try to do everything at once - celebrate your wins, and build momentum

Get involved in the Circular Economy



Circular Darebin

Look for opportunities to:

Understand the Circular Economy

1

Goal: Build awareness and commitment.

- **Learn the basics of circular economy principles:** reduce, reuse, repair, recycle, redesign.

- **Engage your team:** encourage feedback and ideas, solve problems together.

Information and resources - Australian

Circular Economy Business Innovation Centre
www.cebic.vic.gov.au

Australian Circular Economy Hub
www.acehub.org.au

Product Stewardship Hub
www.planetark.org/programs/product-stewardship-hub

Information and resources - International

www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org

www.circle-economy.com

www.circularity-gap.world

Audit Your Business

2

Goal: Understand where you are now.

- **Conduct a waste audit** (DIY or with a consultant):

- What are you throwing away?
- What are you buying that becomes waste?

- **Assess material flows** what comes in, what goes out, and where it ends up.

- **Identify “quick wins”:** waste you can easily reduce, reuse, or recycle.

Once you know what's going to waste you can find ways to keep it out of the bin.

Rethink Purchasing

3

Goal: Cut waste at the source.

Before you buy something, ask “do we really need to make this purchase?” Maybe you can:

- change a process to eliminate the need for something;
- find ways to reuse offcuts and scraps;
- borrow, lease or share a tool or product.

Many purchases are essential, but you can still reduce your impact:

- ask suppliers for reusable, bulk, or zero-waste packaging;
- switch to products made from recycled and recyclable materials;
- use the Sustainability Victoria Buy Recycled Directory
- avoid composite materials that are hard to recycle.

It's not enough to just recycle, for the circle to continue there needs to be a market for the recycled products.

Extend Product Lifespan

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Goal: Keep resources in use longer.

- Repair instead of replace equipment or fixtures.
- Buy durable ‘built to last’ products that can be maintained or upgraded.
- Offer maintenance or repair services if relevant to your business.
- Encourage customers to return or reuse packaging or containers.

‘Built to last’ means it has been designed to:

- not have weak points or poor materials that will fail early
- be maintainable and repairable, with instructions and parts readily available
- be easily upgradeable

If you have any influence over the design of items, it is your responsibility to make sure they're ‘built to last’.

Shift from ownership to access

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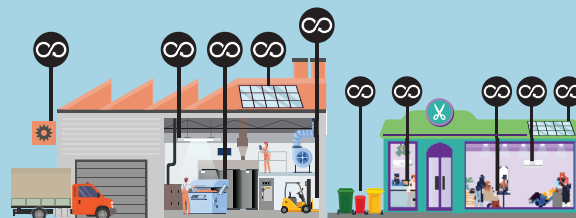
Goal: increase utilisation of resources

Instead of buying equipment, you might be able to:

- rent or hire equipment you don't use all the time - or borrow from others;
- explore Product-as-a-Service models (e.g. leasing lighting, heating or cooling, linen services);
- join or start a local resource / tool / equipment sharing network.

In a Product-as-a-Service (PaaS) model, the service provider has an incentive to provide products that are efficient, reliable and maintainable - as they are responsible for them for life. Instead of buying items or equipment, you buy the benefits it provides for you, only paying for what you use.

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Look for opportunities to:

Go Second-hand, Reused or Refurbished

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Goal: Support circular supply chains.

- Source second-hand or refurbished equipment.
- Sell or give away obsolete or broken equipment for parts or repair instead of scrapping.
- Be selective: choose items that are recyclable or reusable again.

Choose carefully to make sure your second hand, refurbished or recycled products are able to continue the journey. It's possible to take two materials that can be recycled many times and combine them into a material that can no longer be recycled.

Offer Circular Products or Services

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Goal: Make circularity part of your value proposition.

The importance of a circular economy is recognised at all levels of government - and, increasingly, by the people of Darebin and beyond.

Being a circular business is now a marketable asset. Your customers will love to know that you do things like:

- sell reusable, repairable, or refillable products;
- offer repair, refill, or trade-in services;
- encourage them to return packaging, or bring their own;
- support initiatives like the Wangim Cup Project.

Improve Your Recycling Systems

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Goal: Maximise resource recovery.

- Set up easy-to-use sorting stations for staff and / or customers.
- Work with local recyclers or specialist services.
- Track what gets recycled - and what doesn't - to improve over time.

Separating your waste benefits you and the circular economy.

By removing materials from the more expensive waste streams and sending them to a specialist recycler you have the opportunity to reduce your costs.

This also improves the efficiency of recycling by keeping waste streams simpler.

Embed Circular Into Strategy

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Goal: Make it core to how you operate.

- Review your business model: how can you move from linear to circular?
- Apply circular design principles if you make or sell products.
- Train your team in circular thinking.
- Set measurable goals
- Work with a consultant to build a circular strategy.

If you have any involvement in the design of products or systems then you are at the heart of the change. Around 80% of the environmental impact of an item is determined at the design stage.

There are some great training courses on circular design, find out how you can apply the principles to your work.

You can also download our Go Circular Plan for Business.

Collaborate & Network

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Goal: Join forces for greater impact.

- Partner with other local businesses to share resources.
- Join circular economy platforms like ASPIRE, MatX and Superyard.
- Tell your customers and suppliers what you're doing—and invite them to join in.

A circular economy relies on networks, we all need to take small steps together.

There are many opportunities.

- Can someone else use your leftover resources? It's better to keep things at a higher level before recycling.
- Can you save money on waste costs by giving something away for free, or can you make money by selling it?