

Graeme Lowe Belfast

Target Sustainability Programme

About the Company

Graeme Lowe Belfast is a tanner of animal hides for the local and export market.

Introduction to the Project

Graeme Lowe Belfast joined the Christchurch City Council Target Sustainability Programme in late 2008.

The Target Sustainability Programme supports businesses to reduce waste and to be energy and water efficient.

Graeme Lowe Belfast's objective at the time of joining the programme was to reduce waste sent to landfill and to become more energy efficient.

Graeme Lowe Belfast implemented a range of projects to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill and to improve energy efficiency. However, due to the 2010 and 2011 Canterbury earthquakes, there was damage to the premises and the company's services which forced considerable changes to the site operations. As a result, the impact of the energy efficiency initiatives are not able to be evaluated.

Key Achievements

- **Reduced waste sent to landfill by 67% (400 tonnes) per year**
- **Saved approximately \$70,000 per year on waste disposal costs**



Graeme Lowe Belfast entrance and office building © Copyright

Waste Reduction Initiatives

Graeme Lowe Belfast has reduced its waste sent to landfill by an estimated 67% based on an average of seven 10m³ skip bins being collected per month being reduced down to an average of two 10m³ skip bins per month. This results in an estimated 400 tonne reduction in waste sent to landfill per year, saving approximately \$70,000 per year on waste disposal costs.

Graeme Lowe Belfast implemented the following initiatives to reuse and recycle waste:

- Processing plants were identified to take salt and hide trimmings so these could be diverted from waste sent to landfill. The processing plants purchase these materials as raw product for their processes so Graeme Lowe Belfast was able to generate revenue from this waste stream. This waste stream was a significant contributor to the site's total waste sent to landfill by weight.
- A recycling collection system was implemented for plastic packaging waste.
- Broken pallets are diverted from waste sent to landfill. If the pallets are repairable they are repaired and returned to suppliers, otherwise they are used for firewood if they are made from untreated wood.



Christchurch City Council collection wheelie bins for office waste © Copyright

- The Christchurch City Council kerbside organic waste collection system is used for food waste from the staff offices and lunch rooms.

The waste collection service provider did not provide weight-based monitoring data to Graeme Lowe Belfast but instead provided waste estimates based on skips collected. It is important to ensure that weight-based monitoring data is collected so the effect of waste reduction initiatives can be monitored and success measured.



Ear trimmings separated for delivery to processing plants © Copyright



Plastic recycling collection unit © Copyright



Waste sent to landfill collection unit © Copyright



Pallets set aside for repair before being returned to suppliers © Copyright

Summary

Since joining the Target Sustainability Programme, Graeme Lowe Belfast has implemented a range of projects that have resulted in a significant reduction in waste sent to landfill.

“The waste audit performed as part of the Target Sustainability Programme helped us to identify the potential we had to separate our waste streams to minimise cost and enabled us to even generate income from a waste stream we had previously paid to dispose of.”

Anthony Nonis, Technical Manager, Graeme Lowe Belfast

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