

Guide



**ecostar**  
gold award



## Introduction

The Far North District Council is committed to waste minimisation in the region and has set targets for the area to reach in its Waste Minimisation Strategy.

To help reach those goals the Council has initiated the ecostar award for businesses, to promote and recognise achievements in this area. The ecostar provides organisations with a structured process for the development, implementation and maintenance of a waste minimisation plan. The ecostar can then be gained by successfully passing an on-site audit from the Council's approved, third-party verifiers, CBEC EcoSolutions.

Current and certified members can then use their ecostar credentials as proof of their progress in implementing an effective waste minimisation plan and working towards sustainability.

## Criteria

The Council's criteria for the award are that a business or organisation:

1. has put in place systems to reduce waste to landfill, documented in a waste minimisation plan, and
2. has less than 10% (Gold), 20% (Silver), or 30% (Bronze) of it's refuse composed of materials that can be reused, recycled or composted.



The expectation is for none or very minor amounts of the following to be found in their rubbish: untreated timber, metals, glass bottles and jars, recyclable plastic containers, paper, cardboard, organic compostable material, or electronic waste.

An audit will be carried out by CBEC EcoSolutions to assess the business's waste minimisation practise. The application fee will be just \$25.

Following the award, records of the business' waste stream will need to be kept by the award holder for twelve months to verify that they continue to meet the criteria and submit with renewal application for certificate one year from award date.



## Benefits of waste minimisation in the workplace

There are a number of benefits of implementing a waste minimisation strategy and obtaining ecostar status. These include:

- Meeting procurement expectations: Many New Zealand businesses, councils, and Government Departments are starting to ask sustainability related questions as part of their tender process.
- Improved brand value and recognition: A businesses' environmental improvements can be used as an effective marketing tool.
- Meeting consumer demand and Marketing Advantage: Sustainability issues are now becoming mainstream. Colmar Brunton Better Business, Better World research show that consumers are willing to pay more for ethical and sustainably produced products. People want to feel good about what they purchase and where it comes from.
- Provide a platform for innovation: Social and environmental issues present new business opportunities for companies that recognise the new revenue sources.

## Increase efficiency

Introducing waste minimising practices is a great way to increase the efficiency of your organisation in how it uses resources. This can then save your organisation money, reduce your organisation's environmental risks and impacts, and through credible certification present itself in a more responsible and forward-thinking manner. Increasingly, this approach to good business management is becoming an essential 'ticket to operate' for organisations.

## Support and Resources

CBEC Ecosolutions will support businesses through the process of preparing for the award for no cost. They will work with business to assess where they currently are, and to collectively come up with goals that are tailored to how each business works. They will then support the business to meet those goals. EcoSolutions waste minimisation team can be contacted by email or phone to answer any queries that businesses have.

Resources have also been developed to help businesses meet the criteria of the award. CBEC EcoSolutions can provide:

- A business guide to reducing waste including information on local providers.
- Waste audit guide with calculating spreadsheet so businesses can assess themselves.
- Sample Waste Minimisation Plan – a waste minimisation plan is a way of embedding in your organisation ways to reduce waste and can lead to improved environmental outcomes for your community.
- Self-assessment check list.

## Process

Businesses will be visited to discuss how the scheme works and what is required. A walk through would be arranged to look at the current business practices. EcoSolutions would then draft a report which provides step by step recommendations for the business to reach the criteria of the Award. They will also be provided access to any resources they require.

### STEP 1

EcoSolutions meets with each business to discuss award

### STEP 2

They are provided with a resource pack

### STEP 3

EcoSolutions conducts a walk through audit, drafts report and recommendations and presents back to business

### STEP 4

EcoSolutions follows up to assist development and implementation of waste management plan

### STEP 5

EcoSolutions advises organisation that they are ready to apply for award

### STEP 6

EcoSolutions formally audits business

### STEP 7

Business gains award and is recognised for being awesome



Businesses would then be followed up to check progress. Once it is considered that they are ready, they will be advised to apply for the award and audited formally.

## Contact us

For more information call us on 09 438 8710 or email [ecosolutions@cbec.co.nz](mailto:ecosolutions@cbec.co.nz) or check out our website at [www.ecosolutions.org.nz](http://www.ecosolutions.org.nz).

