



Positive environmental actions, for everyone.



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*For immediate release*

## **The road to recycling: From toner to tarmac**

The last thing anybody expects when they recycle their printer cartridges is to drive over them, but that's exactly what's happening in some Australian neighbourhoods, with the development of a new asphalt product made with used toner powder extracted from recycled toner cartridges.

TonerPave™ asphalt, created by Close the Loop® and Downer EDI Limited, uses recycled cartridges predominantly from the 'Cartridges 4 Planet Ark' program, which are shredded to separate raw materials for reuse. The toner powder is then further refined to make an additive called Modified Toner Polymer (MTP), which helps improve the performance of the asphalt, potentially leading to lower whole-of-life costs.

"Products using recycled materials such as TonerPave highlight how the green economy has the potential to lead the way in the embattled Australian manufacturing industry," said Steve Morriss, Founder and Executive Director of Close the Loop® Limited.

Millions of printer cartridges reach the end of their life in Australia every year and, if they are sent to landfill, they can take between 450 to 1000 years to break down. By recycling them through 'Cartridges 4 Planet Ark', the valuable resources they contain are kept out of landfill and can be put to new uses.

As well as toner powder, printer cartridges contain valuable materials such as ferrous metal, stainless steel, aluminium, ink, and many types of plastics, all of which can be recycled.

Campaign ambassador and seven-times World Champion surfer Layne Beachley explained the need to recycle these items responsibly.

"When cartridges break apart in landfill, the toner or ink has the potential to contaminate groundwater and eventually larger waterways," she said. "It doesn't make sense to throw cartridges into landfill anymore as there is a free, easily accessible and responsible way to recycle them into new products."

In addition to asphalt, the recycled materials can be turned into pens, rulers, and into eWood™ applications such as park benches, fencing and signs.

Over 24 million cartridges, equivalent to 11,000 tonnes of plastics, metals, inks and toners, have been recycled since the program began in 2003.

Participating manufacturers Brother, Canon, Epson, HP, Konica Minolta and Kyocera have partnered with Planet Ark to collectively ensure the responsible recycling of ink, laser cartridges, toner bottles and other items. It is free, convenient, independently audited and coordinated through a network of over 30,000 locations nationwide.

"This year we will be holding a competition for schools that register for a 'Cartridges 4 Planet Ark' collection box," said Ryan Collins, Senior Recycling Coordinator at Planet Ark. "Those schools already



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registered can also enter by completing the online competition form. A school from each state will have the chance to win a pallet of Reflex White 100% Recycled paper worth nearly \$2,800. Schools can enter at [Cartridges.PlanetArk.org](http://Cartridges.PlanetArk.org) by June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2014.”

Printer cartridges can easily be dropped off for recycling in ‘Cartridges 4 Planet Ark’ collection boxes, located at all Officeworks and JB Hi-Fi stores and participating Australia Post, Harvey Norman, Dick Smith, The Good Guys and Office National outlets. Workplaces may also be eligible for a free collection box.

To find your nearest drop-off location for printer cartridges, visit <http://cartridges.planetark.org> or call the Recycling Hotline on 1300 733 712. For workplace recycling options, visit [www.businessrecycling.com.au](http://www.businessrecycling.com.au).

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#### **About Planet Ark**

Planet Ark Environmental Foundation is an Australian not-for-profit organisation with a vision of a world where people live in balance with nature. Established in 1992, we are one of Australia’s leading environmental behaviour change organisations with a focus on working collaboratively and positively. We help people, governments and businesses reduce their impact on the environment in three key areas: sustainable resource use; low carbon lifestyles; and connecting people with nature. We promote and create simple, positive environmental actions – for everyone.

#### **About Close the Loop®**

Close the Loop® (CtL) is a high tech resource recovery company with Australian and US operations focussed on the imaging supplies industry. Established in Australia in early 2001, CtL pioneered and maintains a brand promise of zero waste, which drives innovation in taking the ‘waste’ from one industry and turning it into valuable inputs to another. TonerPave is the result of 13 years of dedicated R&D into the reuse of ‘waste’ toner powder.

#### **About Downer EDI Limited**

Downer EDI Limited (Downer) is a leading producer of asphalt in Australia, and has responded to the evolving road infrastructure market by investing in technology and forming strategic partnerships, for example the TonerPave partnership with Close the Loop®. Downer EDI Limited offers one of the largest non government owned road infrastructure services businesses in both Australia and New Zealand, maintaining more than 45,000 kilometres of road in Australia and more than 32,000 kilometres in New Zealand. Downer EDI Limited provides comprehensive engineering and infrastructure management services to the public and private Minerals & Metals, Oil & Gas, Power, Transport Infrastructure, Telecommunications, Water and Property sectors across Australia, New Zealand and the Asia Pacific region.

For more information, to schedule an interview or to arrange a photo opportunity at your nearest participating ‘Cartridges 4 Planet Ark’ outlet, please contact:

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