



*Media release*

*Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2015*

### **Kareela Public School wins national prize in cartridge recycling competition**

Kareela Public School has won the national prize for the 'Cartridges 4 Planet Ark' and Officeworks Schools Competition, receiving an eWood Garden Bed made from recycled printer cartridges worth \$1,000 and a \$300 gift voucher from Bunnings for soil and plants.

Planet Ark and Officeworks will present the prize in the schools grounds where the garden bed has been installed on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> August.

Kareela Public School was judged by Officeworks and Planet Ark to be the winner with the best answer to the question: 'Why is it important for your school to recycle printer cartridges?'

The students' winning entry to the competition explained that the school recycles all allowable components from its networked printers and photocopiers, including cartridges, because the staff and students know that the chemicals contained within them are potentially hazardous to the environment.

"As a school community, we place a high value on recycling," said School Principal David O'Connell, on behalf of the students. "We know reducing the amount of electronic waste that currently goes into landfill is important as it is the fastest growing form of generated waste. The ability to recover materials used in cartridges is also a great way to reduce our impact on the environment."

The 'Cartridges 4 Planet Ark' program is one of the longest-running examples of an extended producer program in Australia.

Printer cartridges collected through the program are sorted and, depending on their condition, returned to the manufacturer for reuse or dismantled, with plastics, metals, toner and ink collected and refined for recycling. They are turned into a wide range of items including commodities like aluminium, ferrous metal, stainless steel and over six different plastic types, as well as new products like cartridges, pens, rulers, asphalt additives, and eWood™.

Officeworks has been proudly involved with the 'Cartridges 4 Planet Ark' program since 2003 and is the largest collector of printer cartridges for recycling in Australia having collected over 5 million cartridges through its retail network across the country.

If they are sent to landfill, printer cartridges can take between 450 to 1000 years to break down, which is why Planet Ark and Officeworks are calling on everyone to recycle their printer cartridges responsibly. Over 27 million cartridges, equivalent to 12,000 tonnes of plastics, metals, inks and toners, have been recycled since the program began in 2003.

"We ran the schools competition, supported by Officeworks, to help teach students the benefits of recycling," said Ryan Collins, Recycling Programs Manager at Planet Ark.

The 'Cartridges 4 Planet Ark' program is made possible through the ongoing support of the Participating Manufacturers - Brother, Canon, Epson, Konica Minolta, Océ and Kyocera.





To find your nearest retail drop-off location or for information about workplace collection options visit <http://cartridges.planetark.org> or call 1300 733 712.

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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 promote and create simple, positive environmental actions – for everyone.

#### **About Officeworks**

Established in Richmond in 1994, Officeworks is Australia's leading retailer and supplier of office products and solutions for home, business and education needs. Officeworks is ranked as the No.1 online retailer by Power Retail. With three easy ways to shop - in store, online or by phone, you'll be sure to find exactly what you need with our widest range, when you need, and all at the lowest prices. Plus, you'll enjoy friendly expert advice and helpful services. Officeworks offers customers more than 20,000 products on its new and improved website, which is Officeworks' largest trading store, and operates a national call-centre and a team of expert account managers to cater for micro, small and medium business customers. As part of the Wesfarmers' group, Officeworks has an extensive national footprint operating more than 156 retail stores and employing more than 6,000 team members. Together with Bunnings, Officeworks forms the Home Improvement and Office Supplies division within Wesfarmers. Join Officeworks' online communities on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube as well as at its blog, The Office Space for inspiration to achieve your big ideas.

For more information, please contact:

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