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Australia's recycling behaviour under the spotlight

New research reveals a startling gap in the waste recycling practices of Australian households.

An independent study, conducted for Planet Ark by Pollinate, has found correct recycling practices for printer cartridges, mobile phones, computers and other electrical equipment, significantly lag behind those of paper, plastic bottles and aluminium cans.

"The research found more than 90 percent of Australians correctly dispose of everyday household recyclables but when it comes to recycling e-waste (electronic waste) such as printer cartridges, almost 50 percent of people are getting it wrong," says Planet Ark's Campaigns Manager, Brad Gray. "It's really encouraging that most Australians recycle their paper and plastic packaging but when it comes to e-waste recycling we still have a long way to go."

The research also revealed 14 percent of people put their used printer cartridges in their council provided recycling bin.

"Printer cartridges are complex items which are unable to be recycled alongside everyday household waste," says Gray. "When we put the wrong items in a household recycling bin, we contaminate the entire contents of the bin and reduce the effectiveness of the whole recycling process."

Printer cartridges can easily be dropped off for recycling in '**Cartridges 4 Planet Ark**' collection bins, located at participating Australia Post, Officeworks, Harvey Norman, Dick Smith and Tandy outlets and now JB HI-FI and The Good Guys. The campaign has already recycled 12 million cartridges, giving new life to what would otherwise become complex waste.

"And with over 32,000 Australian businesses participating in the program, individuals who have a collection box in their workplace also have the option of recycling their household ink cartridges at work," says Gray. "We also encourage any business that uses more than three printer cartridges a month to register for a free workplace collection box."

Printer cartridges collected through '**Cartridges 4 Planet Ark**' are either returned to their original manufacturer for reuse, or recycled into new products by Planet Ark's resource recovery partner Close the Loop.

'**Cartridges 4 Planet Ark**' is an example of an effective extended producer responsibility program with the participating Manufacturers, Brother, Canon, Epson, Konica Minolta and Lexmark, taking end-of-life responsibility for the cartridges they produce.

To find your nearest drop-off location, visit Cartridges.PlanetArk.org or call the '**Cartridges 4 Planet Ark**' hotline on 1800 24 24 73.

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

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