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Think Globally, Act Locally!

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MEDIA RELEASE

Re: National Recycling Week 2026 — Start With What You Throw Away

National Recycling Week returns from 9 to 15 November, marking 30 years since Planet Ark first brought a national focus to recycling in 1996. This year's theme, Join the Cycle, asks Australians to look beyond the bin — at what they buy, use and eventually throw away — and to see waste as a chain of decisions rather than a single moment at the kerb.

Since the campaign began, Australia's recycling rate has climbed from around 7 per cent to more than 60 per cent, and the country now recycles over 43 million tonnes of material a year, up from 1.5 million tonnes in 1996. It's a genuine shift in national habits — but Planet Ark's own research shows recycling confusion is still one of the biggest reasons good material ends up contaminated or sent to landfill.

Householders' Options to Protect the Environment (HOPE) Inc. is marking National Recycling Week by encouraging our local networks to treat the week as a prompt, not just a reminder. HOPE has long argued that the most effective environmental action starts at home — and recycling correctly is only the last step in a much longer chain that starts with what we choose to buy in the first place.

Reducing waste before it reaches the bin makes the biggest difference. Planning meals around food already in the fridge cuts down on what gets thrown out. Repairing an appliance, donating unwanted clothing, or choosing a reusable option over a disposable one all keep materials in use for longer and out of landfill altogether.

Recycling itself still needs care. Accepted materials and collection rules differ from council to council, so an item that's recyclable in one area may not be accepted in the next. Checking local council guidance before sorting is one of the simplest ways households can stop usable material from being rejected at the recycling facility — and stop non-recyclables from contaminating a whole batch.

For National Recycling Week 2026, HOPE is asking households to try just one action: check your council's recycling guide, plan a meal around food you already have, or set aside one item to repair or donate instead of bin. Small habits, repeated, are what moved the national recycling rate from 7 per cent to 60 per cent in the first place.

HOPE to see fewer bins overflowing this November!

Learn more about National Recycling Week 2026 and find household resources at recyclingnearyou.com.au.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Frank Ondrus". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name "Frank" and last name "Ondrus" clearly distinguishable.

Frank Ondrus, Office Manager – HOPE Inc., ph 07 4639 2135
Written by Mst Anika Tabassum Oyshi – HOPE Media Officer (SA)