

## DPS Environmental Myth Buster—#10

**“Canberra people are known to be great recyclers, so we must be doing a good job at recycling at Parliament House...?”**

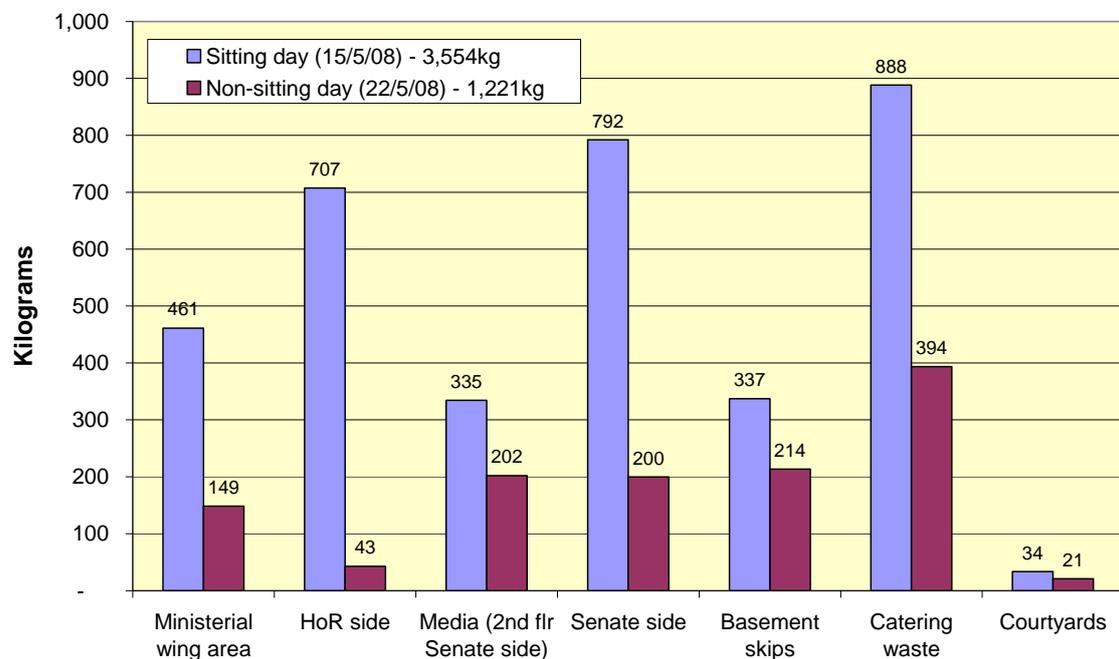
The reality is that we are not very good at recycling at Parliament House. Although recycling rates have improved since the last waste audit in 2005 we still have a long way to go.

### The 2008 waste audit

All the rubbish generated at Parliament House on one sitting day and one non-sitting day in May was weighed. Samples were taken from different areas to sort through and check that the correct materials were being put in the correct bin.

### The findings

The total waste generated in each area of Parliament House is shown below. Which area do you work in?



### Good news (and bad news)

Beginning with the good news, there is negligible contamination in the paper recycling stream and little in the co-mingled streams (less than 3% by weight).

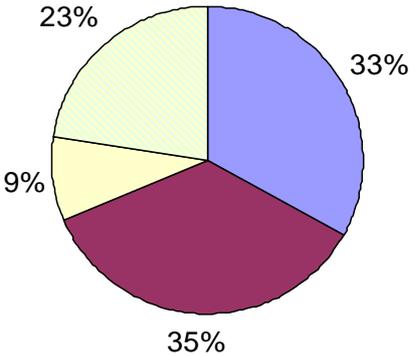
However, more than half the material in the general waste stream is recyclable, and therefore incorrectly going to landfill. The figures on the next page show the contamination in the waste samples from office areas.

Compared to the 2005 waste audit, the contamination in the office waste stream on a non-sitting day has decreased from 69% to 57%.

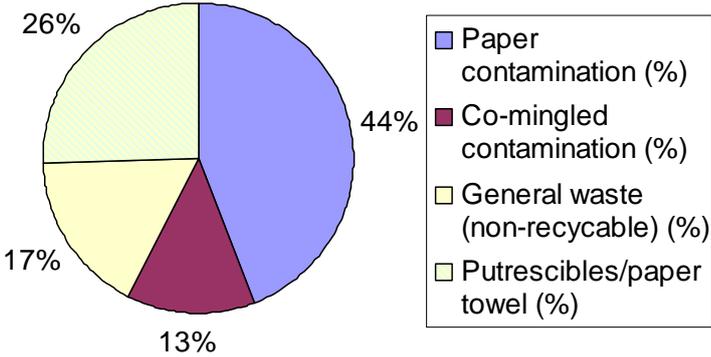
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**Sitting day 15/5**



**Non-sitting day 22/5**



**What can we do to improve?**

Please put all paper materials into the paper recycling bin. This includes coffee cups, post-it notes and unwanted books and publications—items commonly found in the general waste bin.

Join up to the co-mingled recycling scheme to get a bin for these recyclables (email [dps.environment@aph.gov.au](mailto:dps.environment@aph.gov.au) for more information).

Find out what is and isn't recyclable. There is information available on the Environmental Management webpage to help: ([www.aph.gov.au/dps/building/EMS/EM\\_Waste](http://www.aph.gov.au/dps/building/EMS/EM_Waste)). Provide advice to your colleagues.

*Strategic Planning and Policy*