

Product Stewardship for Whitegoods overdue in Australia

360,000+
of large household appliances entered the Australian market in 2019.



At the end-of-life stage for appliances, this translates into **200,000+** of e-waste



The project **exposed the myth** that revenue from steel metal recovery covers the costs, yet it falls well short and **LOCAL COUNCILS AND THEIR COMMUNITIES are left to PICK UP THE TAB.**

Only a few appliance brands provide take back collection of old appliances. This means that many end-of-life whitegoods end up being placed in council clean up collections, **placing the financial and environmental burden on local councils.**



AN ESTIMATED

90% of used large appliances are being collected



YET ONLY

57% of the material (mostly metals) is being recycled

AND



43% of plastics and other materials is landfilled.

Ozone depleting refrigerant gases are also not always recovered.

RESEARCH into stewardship of large household appliances showed that transferring financial responsibility to the appliance industry for the collection and recycling costs would require an estimated average levy of \$37 per appliance.

*Yet to really increase repair and recovery, a levy of **\$49 PER APPLIANCE** would be needed. This investment could create an est. 496 repair jobs.*



OPPORTUNITIES

- The Federal Government should work with the appliance industry to **design and implement a producer responsibility regulation for large household appliances** under the *Commonwealth Recycling and Waste Reduction Act 2020*.
- Opportunities also exist for the NSW Government to **create a state-based producer responsibility regulation for large household appliances** under the *Product Lifecycle Responsibility Act 2025*.



PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP

for large appliances involves **designing out** waste and pollution, **prolonging the life** of appliances through reuse, repair and **taking responsibility for recovering** end of life appliances.

“ We favour a co-regulatory approach where there is **significant stakeholder engagement and industry involvement** while also preventing free-riders. ”

INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

“ Most consumers don't realise that **disposing of old refrigerant equipment isn't just about keeping it out of landfill** – it's about ensuring harmful gases are properly captured. Without awareness, refrigerants can be released into the atmosphere, causing serious environmental harm. ”

RETAILER

“ Whitegoods aren't great recyclable products because increasingly, they contain a lot of non-metallic materials...even dryers and washing machines with big metal drums don't yield much value. ”

RECYCLER