

Eliminate the sale of bottled water in YHA Australia Operated Hostels



Our nature
Managing waste & water

National HI Association

YHA Australia

Hostels

All YHA Ltd Operated Hostels (17)

SDG Contribution

Summary

In mid-2014 all YHA Australia operated hostels stopped selling bottled water. Hostels installed water fountains for guest use and sold refillable water bottles.

Objectives

The main aim was to reduce the number of plastic bottles in landfill. We did this by educating guests that tap water in Australia is safe to drink, free and that by refilling a water bottle they can help the environment and save money. We estimate that YHA has prevented up to 40,000 bottles a year from going to landfill or our oceans and waterways.

Economic

- Decreased consumption
- Better value for money for guests
- Hostels sells a refillable bottle

Social

- Local collaboration
- Raising awareness about the bottle water industry

Environmental

- Kg of CO2 emissions saved:**
240kg in production of single use bottles
- Kg of non-recyclable waste saved:**
80kg annually
- Water saved:** 72.000 litres in production of single use water bottles



Methodology

Which steps did you follow to implement the activity? From the idea to the execution.

- Trialled at two hostel to gauge customer feedback and effect on vending sales
- Estimated the number of bottles sold annually in our hostels
- Sourced a refillable water bottle that was of good quality and an acceptable price for guests
- Renegotiated the vending contract to exclude bottled water
- Sourced and installed water fountains
- Gave hostels an end date for water bottle sales
- Communicated to guests why YHA no longer sold bottled water
- Communicated with school groups that had booked in house catering
- Check regularly that bottled water is not being sold in any YHA operated hostels

Technical details

Total overnights/year in the participating hostels: 953.382

Funding: 100% by the Hostels

Estimated cost: \$30,000 AUD one off installation of water fountains and \$80,000 annually in lost revenue on water sales

Target audience: HI Members/ Guests/ General Public/ Staff/ Differently abled people/ Children/ Families

Reach: National

Duration: Ongoing, daily

Partners involved: Sydney Water

Communication plan: eNewsletter/ Press release

Equipment necessary: Water fountains and refillable water bottles, posters and digital marketing.

Hostels & NA's satisfaction with the project: 100%

Participants' satisfaction: 80%

Risks: No risks



What would you change or do differently?

We would have started years earlier!



Would like to know more about this initiative?

Contact:

Robert Henke, Operations Manager

Email: robert.henke@yha.com.au

Helen Vine, Deputy Operations Manager

Email: helen.vine@yha.com.au

Follow YHA Australia on  and check out their [Backpacker Essential Magazines](#).

Also, read more about [YHA Australia's Sustainability projects and initiatives](#).

