

# SUSTAINABILITY NEWS

Environment Committee



## IN THIS EDITION:

### COMMENT FROM THE CHAIR

By Ally Hopwood

Welcome to the inaugural edition of our newsletter, a platform dedicated to fostering environmental awareness, promoting innovation, and sharing successes within the plastics industry. **Read more**

### OPERATION CLEAN UP WEEK

By Katy Constance

Plastics NZ is gearing up for its annual Operation Clean Up Week, taking place from November 11th this year. **Read more**

### FONKY SOLUTION

By Gavin Fong

Say hello to 'Fongky' - a range of reusable toothbrush handles and replaceable brush heads that promote a cleaner environment without compromising oral hygiene. **Read more**

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By Eartha Green

Our Environmental Agony Aunt answers all your Eco Enquires! **Read more**

# COMMENT FROM THE CHAIR

By Ally Hopwood - Plastics New Zealand Environment Committee Chair

## WELCOME

Welcome to the inaugural edition of our newsletter, a platform dedicated to fostering environmental awareness, promoting innovation, and sharing successes within the plastics industry. We, at Plastics New Zealand Environment Committee, believe that plastics, when used responsibly, can contribute positively to sustainability efforts.

## KO WAI TATOU? WHO ARE WE?

Our committee comprises passionate individuals from various sectors of the plastics industry, each committed to driving sustainable change. Our committee members are:

Ally Hopwood - Pharmapac  
Marc Gaugler - Scion  
Rodney Bennet - Bonson  
Andrew Sheerin - Azelis  
Gavin Fong - Pluspac  
Theunie Rushmer-Wiild - Extrutec  
Greer Larson-Compton - Regroup  
Gemma Burnside - 3R Group  
Vitalii Furt - TCL Hunt  
Michael Basagre - Hi-tech Packaging  
Katy Constance - Plastics NZ

## MOTIVATION

Like many in our industry, when I'm not at work you'll find me enjoying life with my family near the ocean. We love to spend our free time in nature, surfing, fishing, spearfishing, or simply walking our dog along the beach. Our best memories are made in nature providing motivation to protect it!

## OUR FIRST EDITION

This first edition explores exciting topics, including information on the 2024 'Operation Clean Up Week, an innovative solution from Plastics NZ's own Gavin Fong, and our first 'Ask Eartha' - an Q&A column on all things sustainable!

As we embark on this journey, we invite you to share your thoughts, ideas, and feedback, and questions to help us build a more sustainable industry for generations to come. Thank you for joining us in this endeavor, and we look forward to engaging with you in the upcoming editions.







# OPERATION CLEAN UP WEEK 2024


## A CALL FOR COLLABORATION

By Katy Constance

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Plastics NZ is gearing up for its annual 'Operation Clean Up Week' starting on the 11th of November. This is part of our [Operation Clean Sweep](#) (OCS) work, preventing plastics from leaking into the environment and keeping our waterways clean. We want members and non-members alike to participate. Keep an eye out for information on how to get involved!

## BRANCHING OUT



During the week-long event, our three Branch Committees in Auckland, Waikato, and the South Island will organise clean-up events targeting plastic and other waste materials from the manufacturing sector.

Last year, around 12 cubic meters of litter was collected. Building upon the success of previous years, Operation Clean Up Week 2024 aims to expand its reach by partnering with a diverse range of organisations. By working together, we can maximize our collective impact on New Zealand's environment and demonstrate the power of collaborative action.

## WATCH THIS SPACE



This year's Operation Clean Up Week coincides with an exciting refresh of our OCS program. We look forward to sharing new details and strategies to further strengthen our efforts in ensuring zero pellet loss within the plastics industry.

Stay tuned for more information on Operation Clean Up Week 2024, including registration details and event schedules. Let's unite to create a cleaner, greener New Zealand!

## THE 'WAI'

In Aotearoa, litter easily finds its way into waterways, impacting marine life and ecosystems. Rain and wind cause litter to migrate into stormwater drains, streams, and the moana. As a small island nation, it's crucial for Kiwis to be mindful of waste to mitigate this risk.



# FONGKY SOLUTION

## A SUSTAINABLE TOOTHBRUSH REVOLUTION

By Gavin Fong

### BRUSHING UP

As a father of two young daughters, I know firsthand the importance of teaching our children the value of sustainability. Brushing their teeth one night, I was thinking about the volume of material that traditional toothbrushes must contribute to landfills. This realisation inspired me to create 'Fongky' – a range of reusable toothbrush handles and replaceable brush heads that promote a cleaner environment without compromising oral hygiene.

### THE PRODUCT

The goal was to reduce waste. The solution was to create a toothbrush with replaceable heads. Fongky's handles are made from 100% recycled plastic. A-top of these, are removable heads that can be safely replaced whilst keeping the handle in action. This results in an 85% plastic saving each time a head is replaced. A great example of positive plastic use to reduce waste!

### MAKING IT HAPPEN

Over the past two years, I've worked closely with mentors, designers, and industry experts to develop a product that appeals to consumers and aligns

with our mission to reduce waste. With the recent launch of Fongky in New Zealand and Australia, we're excited to bring this sustainable, affordable solution to a wider audience through e-commerce and retail stores.

The hope is to inspire others to make conscious choices for our planet's future, starting with a simple daily routine like brushing our teeth. Together, we can make a difference and create a greener world for generations to come.

To get your Fongky Toothbrush, visit: <https://fongky.co.nz>

## TEETHING ISSUE

According to a report by the World Health Organization, around 29 billion plastic toothbrushes are used worldwide each year. These toothbrushes eventually end up in landfills or, worse, as pollution in our oceans and natural environments. Since plastic takes hundreds of years to decompose, this poses a significant environmental challenge.

# ASK EARTHA

## OUR ENVIRONMENTAL AGONY AUNT ANSWERS ALL YOUR ECO-ENQUIRES

By Eartha Green

### Q. WHERE DO I BEGIN?

*'As a business, it's important to show our customer base that we are committed to reducing our environmental impact. However, it can be a minefield trying to manage budgets, regulations, product quality and safety, and ensure that 'green' claiming options are in fact sustainable. How do we know where to begin?' - Anonymous*

### A. TAKE SYSTEMATIC STEPS

Navigating towards sustainability can be complex, especially when considering budgets, regulations, product quality, and false claims.

Taking these achievable steps helps you move forward with confidence:

#### DEFINE GOALS AND PRIORITIES:

Identify your company's sustainability objectives, focusing on areas where you can make the most significant impact. Some focus areas include energy reduction, product design, resource efficiency, and pollution mitigation.

#### ASSESS YOUR CURRENT PRACTICES:

Thinking about your chosen goal, evaluate your supply chain, production processes, and products to establish a baseline for measuring progress. If budgets allow, you could use a consultant for an in depth review - this can often result in long term savings.

#### EDUCATE YOUR TEAM:

Once you have identified goals and opportunities to work towards these, ensure everyone on site understands the actions they must take to work towards these. For example, if you are moving towards reduced energy consumption, make sure staff have clear guidelines around machine use.

#### COLLABORATE WITH PARTNERS:

Reach out to others in the industry and stay connected through Plastics NZ. This can help to identify opportunities to streamline efforts and avoid reinventing the wheel!

#### STAY UP TO DATE

The landscape is constantly changing. Keeping up to date with regulations, technologies, and success stories can help to ensure that follow best practice and stay inspired! Plastics NZ's newsletter, Monday Morsels, Lunch and Learns, and Sustainability News are here to help!

## CONTACT US:

To ask Eartha a question, make a suggestion for an article, or for general enquiries and feedback contact:

[Katy@plastics.org.nz](mailto:Katy@plastics.org.nz)





# WHAT'S ON:

## KEY EVENTS COMING UP

### CONVEX TOUR: 22ND AUGUST

The Waikato Branch's next technical event will be a tour of Convex on 22nd August.

### LUNCH AND LEARN: 5TH SEPTEMBER

At 12:30 pm on 5th September Plastics NZ's CEO shares updates on the Global Treaty

### DDSP AUCKLAND: 6TH SEPTEMBER

DDSP Introduction will be held in Auckland on 6th September

### DDSP AUCKLAND: 10TH - 11TH OCTOBER

DDSP Polymers will be held in Auckland on 10th - 11th October

### WEEK OF 21ST OCTOBER: GO-KARTING

Auckland go-karting social will take place during the week of 21st October. More details to be announced.

### DDSP CHCH: 22ND/23RD OCTOBER

DDSP Level 3 Processing will be held in Christchurch in October.

### DDSP AUCKLAND: 7TH - 8TH NOVEMBER

DDSP Processing will be held in Auckland on 7th - 8th November

### OPERATION CLEAN UP WEEK: 11TH - 15TH NOVEMBER

Plastics NZ will lead a week of nationwide clean ups organised in partnership with the PNZ branch committees and environment committee.

### DDSP AUCKLAND: 21ST - 22ND NOVEMBER

DDSP Design will be held in Auckland on 21st - 22nd November