



Media release – Monday 10 June 2019

Woodend school students learn waste not wasted at landfill

Woodend School student leaders have seen how methane gas produced by waste in the Kate Valley Landfill is used to generate enough electricity to power 2,000 homes.

It's one aspect of the visit and guided tour of the 37-hectare site that's an annual event for Woodend School student leaders.

Transwaste Canterbury Ltd Chairman Gill Cox says the visit is part of a 'Goodwill Agreement' with Woodend School. The primary focus of the agreement is on road safety particularly around trucks.

"Students at Woodend School see plenty of white trucks with their bright blue containers travelling to and from the Kate Valley Landfill", says Gill Cox. "This week the student leaders visited the landfill to see for themselves what happens to the waste."

The Goodwill Agreement was signed in 2005, making it one of the first school and trucking road safety agreements in New Zealand. Woodend School Principal Adrienne Simpson says the agreement is important for students to learn about safety around trucks.

"Through our relationship with Transwaste our students learn to be aware of the dangers around trucking, such as wind blasts", says Simpson. "We really enjoy the relationship and we've run competitions in recent years for students to create safety slogans that are displayed on the back of the waste trucks."

The student leaders from Woodend School visit the landfill most years. This year students learnt how the decomposing organic waste in the landfill produces methane, which is a greenhouse gas. Rather than let it escape into the environment, the landfill captures the gas and pumps it through a series of pipes to where it is used to run generators that produce electricity. Simpson says the students are intrigued to see where the waste goes and what happens to it.

"They're fascinated to see the positive side effects of the landfill, such as electricity generation", says Simpson. "It's a real exploration for them to learn that unwanted waste decomposing within the landfill can actually produce something as useful as electricity."

After their visit to the landfill the students will put together a presentation about what they learnt to share with the wider school community.

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What is the Woodend School Goodwill Agreement?

The Goodwill Agreement, first signed in 2005 and renewed since, is a special relationship between Woodend School and Transwaste. With trucks transporting waste driving past Woodend School, the agreement is a commitment to respect for each other's activities, and preparedness to work together to address any issues raised by either party.

Transwaste sponsors the "Thumbs Up" road safety programme held at Woodend School. This programme, run in conjunction with NZ Police, teaches young children how to be safe around heavy vehicles and includes visits to the school by Canterbury Waste Services (CWS) trucks and drivers. The CWS waste transport vehicles driving past Woodend School all observe a 40km/hr voluntary speed limit during school times and when children walk to and from school.