

Monday 28 November 2011

How many recycled mobile phones equal a chicken?

Indigo Shire Mayor, Cr Alison Pockley, has urged the community to help both a struggling family in Laos and the environment this festive season.

“Not-for-profit organisations MobileMuster and *Oxfam Unwrapped* are asking Australians to recycle their old mobiles this Christmas to help the environment and a family in need,” says Cr Ali Pockley.

“For every two mobile phones recycled over Christmas and New Year, MobileMuster will purchase a chicken through *Oxfam Unwrapped* to help a family struggling against poverty in Laos. ‘*Old phones, more chickens*’ will run until the end of January 2012.”

In June this year, Indigo Shire won an Award for National Excellence for mobile phone recycling at the MobileMuster 2011 Local Government Awards in Canberra, for being second in both collecting the most mobiles and accessories by weight, and per capita over the previous 12 months.

“Winning the award earlier this year illustrates how passionate Shire residents are about recycling mobile phones. There are MobileMuster collection units at each of Councils four offices in Beechworth, Yackandandah, Rutherglen and Chiltern. Anyone who has an old mobile phone or accessory such as a charger that they no longer need, then can pop into any of our offices and recycle them free of charge,” Cr Pockley said.

Mobile phones aren’t biodegradable but they are nearly 100% recyclable. The recycled materials can be turned into new products such as plastic fence posts, batteries, jewellery and stainless steel.

For many families in Laos, life is a daily battle to obtain essentials, such as food and a source of income.

“For a family living in Laos, a chicken can be an invaluable resource. Chickens can provide eggs for food, and can be sold at the market to provide people with a regular source of income,” says Oxfam Australia Fundraising Manager, Leigh Stewart.

Oxfam Unwrapped also equips women in Laos with the skills to raise and keep the chickens.

“2011 is the third year that *Oxfam Unwrapped* has worked with MobileMuster. The partnership has already seen over 1000 chickens given to families in Laos and 1000 ducks to families in Mozambique,” Ms Stewart said.

“Recycling a mobile phone through MobileMuster is free, easy and safe. This Christmas it will also help to give the environment and a family in need a brighter start to 2012,” Cr Pockley said.

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About MobileMuster:

MobileMuster, is a not-for-profit program funded solely by mobile phone manufacturers and network carriers to collect and recycle mobile phones. All mobiles are recycled to the highest environmental standards. None are refurbished or sold for reuse.

About Oxfam Australia

Oxfam Australia is a leading international aid agency that works in 28 countries around the world to help people overcome poverty and injustice. Oxfam help people find their own sustainable solutions to poverty through giving them education, food, clean water and the chance to earn a living. Oxfam respond to emergencies, delivering essentials such as clean water, shelter and food, and help communities rebuild and be prepared for future crises. Oxfam also campaign for change, encouraging world leaders, companies and organisations to change the rules and practices that keep people in poverty.