

10 November 2021

FREE GREEN WASTE DISPOSAL WITH A SMILE

Residents in Hepburn Shire Council can dispose of green waste for free at transfer stations in Daylesford, Creswick and Trentham throughout November. When you drop off your green waste, one of the friendly faces you may see is attendant Clem Nemeth.

Two years ago, Clem Nemeth decided to move out of a warehouse into the open air. Lured by an advertisement to work as a Transfer Station Attendant with Council, Clem relishes her new life outdoors in some of the most stunning scenery that Victoria has to offer.

Based mostly at Daylesford, Clem works in, “This amazing environment” and was on hand to assist Council’s Storm Recovery Team when they implemented their early firewood distribution trials.

From a role that mostly involved manual handling of warehouse goods, she now has a loader and a forklift licence and claims the loader to be her favourite.

“Training took four days. I was very nervous, but I picked it up quickly. I already had a Medium Rigid licence, so it wasn’t such a big stretch,” said Clem.

“We use the loader to push down the waste in the bins and to push up the green waste. It’s very slow, but powerful and you can get a lot done quickly as it’s so efficient.”

Clem enjoys the customer service aspect of her job and interacting with people.

At her home in Ballarat, Clem missed the severity of the storm event in June 2021 but the impact of the storm was not lost on her when she returned to work that week. As

she approached Daylesford from Ballarat, the roads were closed and there were many barricades.

“It was basically *Enter at your own risk*. I was surprised at the amount of damage that was done to the forest and it was quickly obvious why I was told to drive carefully, even though the roads were all cleared,” said Clem.

“I got to work at the Trentham Transfer Station and there were great holes in the view of the forest over the road. It was amazing, looking out the front gate at how the forest had changed with the huge trees that fell down,” she said.

One aspect of life that Clem has noticed is the rhythm of community life over the last year.

“Usually, people spring clean in spring. During the pandemic, everybody has done it throughout the year. We got really busy at the start of COVID lockdowns as people were cleaning up their houses and properties, but now it has died down. There’s been no spring rush like we’d normally expect,” she said.

The team have been busy in other ways now with vast amounts of green waste because of the storm.

To make the most of the free green waste disposal during November don’t forget to take along proof of residency in Hepburn Shire. For transfer operating hours visit www.hepburn.vic.gov.au/transfer-stations. Council will also open more timeslots for residents to collect up to two cubic metres of firewood for free. For more information visit www.hepburn.vic.gov.au/firewood.

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