

Empowering retailers to recycle better and save money at One O'Connell Street, Sydney

TIMELINE

March – August 2025

ABOUT

Cleanaway's NSW Sustainability team partnered with One O'Connell Street in Sydney to improve waste diversion and readiness for the NSW EPA Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) mandate. Rising general waste volumes, contamination, and upcoming compliance requirements prompted a proactive collaboration between Cleanaway and building tenants to enhance recycling, reduce costs, and embed a sustainability mindset across food retail outlets. Led by Resource Recovery Specialist Nicole Sinclair, the project delivered tailored on-site audits, training, and engagement programs supported by practical infrastructure upgrades - turning everyday waste habits into measurable environmental and financial results.

RESULT

- **Cost savings:** Weight-based excess charges reduced from \$369.63 in April to \$42 in July.
- **Contamination reduction:** General waste contamination dropped from 33.5% to 25%; organics bins achieved 0% contamination.
- **Staff engagement:** Surveys showed stronger knowledge, confidence, and interest in organics recycling.
- **FOGO readiness:** Tenants gained a clear understanding of their upcoming legal obligations and environmental impact under the FOGO mandate starting 1 July 2026.



HOW DID IT WORK?

Using Cleanaway's industry expertise and engagement tools, the initiative followed a clear process to deliver lasting change:

- **Visual waste audits:** Identified key contamination issues and gaps in sorting practices.
- **Toolbox talks and surveys:** Delivered concise, site-specific sessions and captured staff feedback to inform improvements.
- **Infrastructure upgrades:** Introduced organics bins, clear bin liners, and repurposed excess general waste bins into recycling streams.
- **Education and engagement:** Rolled out Cleanaway's Greenius e-learning and manager-led training packs to embed best practice behaviour.
- **FOGO preparation:** Guided tenants on compliance pathways and explained the environmental benefits of diverting food waste from landfill.

NEXT STEPS

Cleanaway will continue supporting One O'Connell Street through ongoing toolbox talks, Greenius modules, and updated signage. Future audits will track performance and recognise top-performing retailers, ensuring tenants reduce contamination, save costs and ready ahead of the July 2026 FOGO mandate.