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Sunday, June 22, 2008, 09:53 by Matthew Xuereb

Use of civic amenity sites rises significantly



Wasteserv Malta has collected 5,329 tonnes of bulky waste through its three civic amenity sites in the first five months this year, which represents a 241 per cent increase over the same period last year, The Sunday Times has learnt.

More than 32,500 vehicles brought bulky waste to the sites at Maghtab, Mrieħel and Hal-Far over this five-month period, according to the company that manages the sites.

Between January and May 2007, vehicles entering the Civic Amenity Sites amounted to 8,839, while the waste collected amounted to 2,204 tonnes.

The figures show that the most popular site is Mrieħel with 22,300 vehicles visiting the site to dump waste during the period under review. This increased by more than 1,000 per cent when compared with the same period last year. More than 63 per cent of the total waste was dumped at Mrieħel.

Wasteserv chief executive officer Vince Magri said: "Civic amenity sites are gradually becoming ingrained into our society and households are increasingly responding to our request to separate waste appropriately in order to reduce the amount of waste going to the landfill.

"While turning it into a sustainable exercise, with these sites we also managed to drastically reduce the amount of illegal dumping throughout the country."

The Wasteserv Civic Amenity Sites, or centres for bulky waste, are controlled facilities where the public may discard a variety of items separately.

They allow the public to drive through and separately dispose of different materials including electronic waste, used furniture items, garden waste, mattresses, expired medicines and waste oils.

The sites are open between 7.30 a.m. and 5.30 p.m. daily, including weekends and public holidays.

This project is being part-financed through the EU Structural Funds, with an estimated value of €4.6 million. The government is co-funding 27 per cent of the project.

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It is great to see that this service exists and is being utilised. All that needs to be seen is a modernisation of the household rubbish collection. My experiences, whilst on holiday and residing in Birkirkara really are unhygienic. A pile of rubbish on a corner or cats going through plastic bags is not the way. I ask the residents to take ownership of this issue and work with the authorities to improve the situation.
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