

NEWS

Technology cuts risk of compost fire

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Photo by Reg Ryan: Mayor Peter Murrhly with Geelong Manufacturing Council CEO Jennifer Conley and Co-Directors of Sequence Digital, Patrick Blampied and Raj Pandita.

An innovative Geelong company is helping to reduce the risk of fires in garden organics facilities thanks to a Clean Technology grant.

Sequence Digital is today launching a fleet of its new 4G, weather-proof, solar-powered temperature sensors in a pilot program that will reduce the risk of fires at the City of Greater Geelong's Garden Organics Processing Facility in Anakie.

The \$26,000 grant was awarded in 2019 through Cleantech Innovations Geelong, a business and industry support collaboration between the City of Greater Geelong and the Geelong Manufacturing Council, with support from the Victorian Government.

The new devices will monitor 10,000 cubic metres of garden organics – the equivalent of four Olympic-sized swimming pools – collected from household green bins across Greater Geelong.

Mayor Peter Murrhly, chair of the Innovative Solutions portfolio, said the grant was used to develop the device, which can remotely measure and log the temperature of organic material.

“Compost can get really hot and ignite so using remote, round-the-clock monitoring means we can improve safety on site and process organics more efficiently,” the Mayor said.

“The data is available in real time so our staff know straight away if there’s an issue with higher temperatures and they can take action quickly to cool down the material.”

CEO of the Geelong Manufacturing Council, Jenn Conley, said the remote sensing solution – now being marketed as [Rhino Instruments](#) – was one of several ingenious outcomes of the GMC-supported Cleantech Innovations Geelong program.

“GMC is incredibly proud to have been able to support this and other start-ups to drive cleaner technologies,” she said. “Developing new products can be a long and difficult process, but early stage funding support, combined with the involvement of a key customer like the City of Greater Geelong – as Sequence Digital have shown – can make all the difference.”

Innovative Solutions Deputy Chair, Councillor Sarah Mansfield said the new Geelong Garden Organics Composting Facility between Anakie and Lovely Banks processes up to 35,000 tonnes per year of green organics collected from garden waste bins.

“Around 50 percent of the rubbish Australians put in the garbage bin could be put to better use as compost and mulch,” Cr Mansfield said.

“The temperature monitoring means we can safely and efficiently process organics while reducing our impact on the environment.”

Co-director of Sequence Digital, Patrick Blampied, said the industrial temperature sensor has a ground-breaking design with the ability to operate in remote areas where the internet signal is weak, and the weather conditions are extreme.

“These devices are tough as nails and send critical temperature data to the cloud in real-time, rain, hail or shine, even in areas with patchy rural internet connectivity,” Mr Blampied said.

“The Cleantech Innovations grant made it possible to redesign our earlier prototype from the ground-up to make sure it could be used in the most remote outdoor organics facilities across Australia.”

For more information visit [Cleantech Innovations Geelong](#).

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