



Westpac leads the way with Earthworks recycled plastic for their cards

Solon, Ohio, April 30, 2010 – Westpac New Zealand Ltd is replacing its customers' ATM/EFTPOS cards with a product using plastic that is 100% recycled, manufactured by Earthworks System, Ohio USA, and printed by ABnote New Zealand.

"It's a brilliant use of existing resources, as there are well over 17 billion plastic cards, including gift, library, video rental and membership cards produced globally every year. We believe we're the first New Zealand bank to issue this type of transactional card," says Candice Collier, Westpac's Environmental Sustainability Manager.

"Over the past few months we have worked closely with our supplier to find a solution to reduce the environmental impact of the 1.2 million cards we produce annually. EFTPOS cards are the first cab off the rank and we are investigating rolling out this type of product for all our credit and debit cards over the next 18 months. By buying recycled plastic for our cards we're helping to reduce the manufacture of new Polyvinyl Chloride and reduce the levels of unnecessary plastic waste entering landfills."

Earthworks uses a simple process to recycle plastic that involves securely destroying the material by chopping it up and then melting the plastic down. There is no chemical waste because they don't use any chemicals in the process.

ABnote CEO Justin D'Angelo, says, "We are delighted to play a part in Westpac's sustainability strategy. ABnote congratulates Westpac for its initiative in being the first of our financial institution clients to utilise our recycled plastic substrate in the construction of its ATM/EFTPOS cards portfolio."

Rodd Gilbert, president of Earthworks System says, "We are pleased to work together with ABnote and Westpac in leading the way in the New Zealand banking industry. I know that Westpac's customers will be very receptive to the recycled cards and will appreciate the stance Westpac has taken in considering our planet."

Westpac is currently investigating opportunities for customers to recycle expired financial cards in New Zealand and hopes to overcome issues such as security and the removal of the magnetic strip in the production process. "In the meantime the overseas solution is a more sustainable use of existing resources and meets the quality and demand requirements for cards produced for this market," says Ms Collier.

The cards are now being issued to Westpac customers as their old ones expire.

ABnote New Zealand is a division of the ABnote Global Group, a provider of secure transaction products, services and logistics in New Zealand. ABnote produces commercial plastic cards, financial cards, identification and secure access cards, secure documents and related services. www.abnote.co.nz.

Earthworks manufactures and markets 100% recycled and recyclable PVC sheet material for plastic card applications. The company's EARTHWORKS SYSTEM, a comprehensive recycling system, offers retailers a way to keep cards out of landfills and save energy. The System recovers used cards and recycles them into sheet material that is virtually indistinguishable in performance from virgin PVC. <http://www.earthworkssystem.com>

Tips for re-using your old financial cards:

- Scrapers for frosted car windows – works better on thin sheets of ice.
- Used as a pallet knife for builders and plasterers – applying filler to walls and wood, and grouting in the bathroom.
- Used in art to replace a brush or create a nice mosaic - contact your local art colleges or schools.
- Can be used in the kitchen to clear breadcrumbs and other food particles from dinner tables and tablecloths.
- Use them as guitar picks.