

THE Greenhouse News

A program for growing and nurturing green minds



PRIMARY SCHOOLS ENVIRONMENTAL NEWSLETTER

TERM 4 2008

REDUCE BEFORE RECYCLE

AND THE WINNERS ARE

Congratulations to all of the schools who participated in the Gosford City Council's environment program this year

The projects are finished, the schools visited, and the judging done. Once again we have been impressed by the work undertaken by schools, teachers and students alike. We have been fed at a Grade 3 organised café where no disposable plates or cups were used (rest assured we paid for our scones, no bribes were offered or taken), we inspected a canteen free of highly packaged foods and we saw a billy cart built by a class and made entirely of reused materials.

Like previous years the judging of schools and individual projects has been difficult and picking winners, nearly impossible. While all of the projects that we received have been fantastic I would like to particularly mention the work received from Stage 3 students across the area. All of the Council staff that who have been involved in the judging of these projects have

been impressed by the standard of the work and creativity shown by the student. This project had students looking at the "real" cost of a desired item, this included looking at the materials and energy needed for production, the sea miles to get it to them, hazardous by-products of manufacture and its recyclability at the end of life. Judging staff finished the task both inspired and truly more informed. If you were thinking about buying a new item, in particular an electronic gadget and wish to purchase the best with respect to the environment, then these projects would be of great help to you. Some of these projects will be on display at the Awards Ceremony.



Friday, November 21, **Laycock Street Theatre** - be there for our Awards Ceremony. All schools are invited to come and see which schools have won the Environmental School of the Year awards and the individual winners of the project competition. Like other years the Awards Ceremony will also show case some of the wonderful performances created by schools, this year based on the Reduce before Recycle theme. A morning of colour and excitement is promised.

WATERTIGHT

AN EXCURSION IN YOUR OWN SCHOOL GROUNDS

Watertight is an interactive water education program tailored to the different stages of primary school

The Central Coast Watertight Program is coordinated by Gosford City and Wyong Shire Councils, and Rumbalara Environmental Education Centre. Students from K-6 participate in a series of activities focusing on the water cycle, water supply, water use, wastewater and their schools own management of water.

Activities range from watching a hilarious Mad Cow production to actively engaging in scientific

experiments, to studying the catchment of your school. Many activities are linked to the key learning areas of the NSW curriculum and outcomes of the DET's Environment Policy

To be eligible for the Central Coast Watertight Program your school must:

- Be connected to the Town Water supply;
- Commit to developing a School Water Management Plan; and
- Have shown prior interest and commitment to Environmental Education.

Expression of interest are now open for the 2009 program. Contact [Kylie Gillett on 4304 7068](#) for more information.



THE GREENHOUSE PROGRAM - 2009

If your school did not get involved in the program this time, 2009 is another year. We are already planning the program for next year and it is looking great. If you are a teacher at a school without an active environment component this is a great place to start as we can provide resources and ideas to help you. If you are interested but need more information please give me a call

2009 will also see another round of the Council's Water Saving in School Program. These are grants of up to \$5,000 per school to fund water savings projects. Ten grants will be on offer next year.

Finally I would like to say a big **thank-you** to all of the environment contact teachers in the schools that participated in the program this year. Without your hard work this program would not be as successful, leaving the students and our environment the poorer for it.

For more information contact our Environmental Education Officer, Anni Griffiths 4325 8333



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DO YOU NEED IT?

KEEP WALKING THE TALK

The 2008 program is nearly at an end but you can still Reduce before Recycle .

Buy Nothing Day - November 28

24 hours of not buying - Shop Less - Live More

This is an international day celebrated in over 40 countries around the world. It is a day when you challenge yourself, your family and friends or your students to focus on activities other than shopping. The rules are simple, for 24 hours you buy nothing.

This day is roughly timed to coincide with what is seen as the start of the Christmas shopping period. It aims to challenge people to look at the shopping frenzy that we all seem to enter at this time of year and to recognise that there are environmental and ethical consequences of this excessive consumerism.



Highlighting this day to students is a great way to finish the Reduce before Recycle Year. Celebrate the day by closing the canteen and perhaps encourage students to make Christmas presents through craft activities.

The Bottled Water Challenge

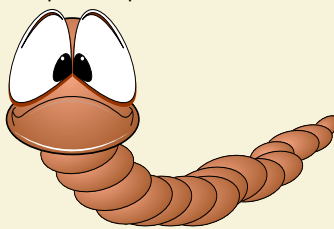
Encourage students and their families to take on the water bottle challenge - it's easy, just avoid buying bottled water for 1 month. Why? For each 500ml bottle of water you avoid you will be saving 100ml of oil, up to 15 litres of water and you will avoid adding an extra 186 g worth of greenhouse gases to the atmosphere. You will also save yourself at least \$1.50. **Each year Australians generate over 60,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions through bottled water consumption.**

Making Christmas Presents

End of term 4 is often a time when teachers are looking for craft activities to do. Why not encourage the making of Christmas presents with recycled materials. Woy Woy Public kindy kids have made some fantastic pen holders from old floppy discs which would look fantastic on Mum or Dad's office desk. There are many sites on the internet with great ideas, here is one to start with - www.treehugger.com/files/2007/06/diy_recycling_f.php or www.replayground.com/pages/diy/diyhome.asp

At School

- Kids love worms.
- This is a simple way to reduce your waste.
- You can create a veggie garden using your wonderful worm castings.
- You can make some money by selling the juice to jealous parents.



Getting to know Your Worms

- Worms breathe through their skin.
- Worms have 5 hearts.
- Two adult worms can create 1500 little worms in one year.
- Worms have both male and female organs.
- The largest earth worm ever found was in South Africa and measures 22 feet from tip to tip.
- If you cut a worm in half you will not get two worms.
- Worms can feel the vibrations of a bird landing on the ground.

For more facts and fun go to: www.wormsgalore.com.au. or for information on worms farms go to: www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/warr/2005129_wormfarm_eng.pdf



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IMPORTANT DATES

Awards Ceremony

- Friday 21 November

Other Important Dates

- November 28 - Buy Nothing Day
- December 1-7 Coastcare Week

ACTIVITIES

Visy Environmental Detective

An in-class environmental education program offered to all primary and secondary schools nationally. The lesson plans and programs change annually to suit individual state curriculum outcomes. Great prizes for schools, students and teachers on offer. www.visy.com.au/recycling/index.php?id=178

Ollie's World

A fantastic web based sustainable education site. Use Ollie to help emphasize the 3 R's - Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. The site has activities for kids and resources for teachers. Great Christmas activity is an e-greeting card generator. www.olliesworld.com/index.html

RECYCLING

Cartridge Recycling

Does your school use more than 3 printer cartridges a month? You may be eligible for a free Planet Ark collection box. Call 1800 242473 or www.planetark.com/cartridges.



WORMS

WORKING HARD TO SAVE THE WORLD

Reasons why you should have a worm farm at your school.

The statistics

- Millions on tonnes of food waste ends up in land fill every year.
- In Australia we throw out over \$5.3 billion worth of food a year.
- Nearly half of household waste is food scrap.

What is the problem with that?

- Food waste in land fill facilities do not decompose, they ferment.
- Fermentation produces methane.
- Methane is a green house gas 25 times more potent than CO₂.
- More than a third of our ecological footprint is related to our food choices.

The Worms

- Some worms consume their own weight every day.
- Worm waste is one of nature's best soil conditioners.
- Up to 70% of household waste is edible by worms.
- Worms are simple and easy to maintain.