

Spring
2007

green living



IN GOSFORD NEWSNEWSNEWSNEWSNEWS

Welcome to the Spring Issue of Green Living News!

This issue of the Green Living news will encourage you to look at ways you can reduce energy use in the home.

The newsletter talks about options for halogen downlights, choosing energy efficient appliances and the benefits of solar hot water systems.

There's many ways to reduce your energy use and lower your contribution to climate change. Get involved in the Central Coast Climate Challenge and come along to the Green Living Fair (*details inside*) to find out what will work for you and your household.

Michelle



"It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change"

Charles Darwin

Heating water with the sun's rays!

Using the sun's energy to heat water can save you money and help protect the planet!

Water heating accounts for about 30 percent of an average household's energy use and a large portion of your energy bill. A solar water heater can provide most of your hot water needs, depending on the climate and the model of heater installed.

It may cost more up front to install a solar hot water heater than a gas or electric system, but savings on your energy bill will compensate for this and within a few years you will be saving money. The pay back period is even shorter when you take into account Government rebates.

The Australian Government provides rebates of \$1,000 to install solar water systems in existing eligible homes. Go to www.greenhouse.gov.au/rebates to find out more. The NSW Climate Change Fund will also provide rebates for energy efficient hot water systems in the near future, so keep your eyes peeled for more details.

How do they work? Most solar hot water system heat water in much the same way as the sun heats the water in a hose on a sunny day. The

technology of these system is fairly simple, so they are much cheaper that solar photovoltaic (PV) panels.

Solar hot water heaters come in a range of shapes and sizes to suit different household needs.

Visit www.greenhouse.gov.au/yourhome to find out about the different types of systems, which system will be most suited to you hot water needs and lots of other great information to help you make an informed decision on purchasing a solar hot water heater.



green it's the new black!

Congratulations to Kincumber Primary School and C Walker from Woy Woy who were the lucky winners of our Switch to GreenPower Competition. They will both receive an energy assessment and \$500 towards their energy bill.

Home Energy Survey

Thanks to all those who completed the home energy survey from last issue. It has provided us with some very interesting and useful information about your home energy use.

Some interesting facts:

- 75 percent of participants said it was very important to reduce the cost of their electricity bill, while 90 percent of respondents said it was very important to reduce their household greenhouse gas emission.
- 66 percent of people said they had or were considering switching to GreenPower.
- 91 percent of homes reported having energy efficient (compact fluorescent) globes installed and a quarter of those homes had compact fluorescent in all light fittings.
- 93 percent of participants were aware of the energy rating labels for appliances.

To read more about the results of the survey go to greenliving.gosford.nsw.gov.au

Also congratulations to D Kirkby, S McLellan and S Burrough who won the three home energy assessments.

Reach for the stars



When you purchase a new electrical appliance check for the energy stars to save electricity and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Most of you would be familiar with the energy rating system (*pictured right*) for **white goods**. Fridges, freezers, washing machines, clothes dryers, dishwashers and air-conditioners sold in Australia must be labelled. This makes it really easy to compare the efficiency of appliances - as more stars means the more efficient the appliance and less energy it uses compared to similar models.

It's important to **remember that with energy stars size does matter**, so make sure by the smallest size appliance suitable for your needs! For example a large fridge can have more stars than a small fridge but may use more energy. So choose appliances with most stars, but also check the energy consumption per year. Visit www.energyrating.gov.au to compare appliances.

Eco Myth Buster

Myth: That purchasing GreenPower doesn't make a difference.

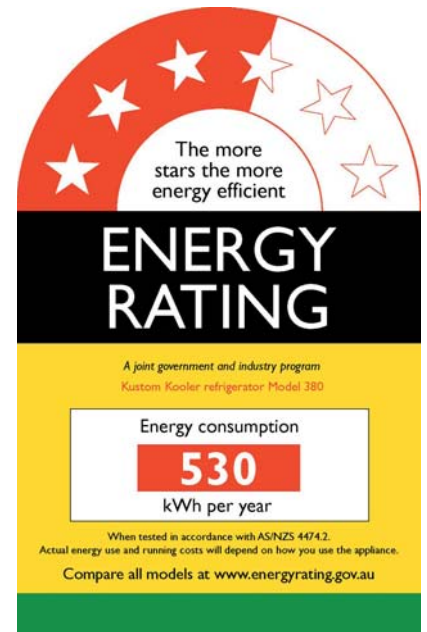
Fact: When you purchase a GreenPower product, you reduce your personal greenhouse emissions and support the development of renewable energy sources in Australia. Although the GreenPower doesn't actually power your home, the electricity provider buys GreenPower Rights on your behalf making the electricity you purchase greenhouse gas FREE!



Electronics such as TVs, computers, DVDs and other electronics products aren't required to display the energy rating system. But to help you choose more efficient models there is an international standard for energy efficient electronic equipment called ENERGY STAR.

Equipment that complies with the ENERGY STAR standard consume around 75 percent less energy in stand-by mode than standard products do. Stand-by power can contribute to about 10 percent of your energy bill. As electronics spend more than 60 percent of their time on standby this can save large amounts of energy.

Look out for the ENERGY STAR next time you buy any electronic equipment and go to www.energystar.gov.au to find out more.



'Watts' the go with halogen downlights?

Low voltage doesn't mean low energy - it's the watts that matter!

Halogen downlights have become the new trend in lighting and can be found in the ceilings of homes and businesses all around Australia. Unfortunately low voltage doesn't equal low energy, it's the watts that matter, and most halogens use 50 watts per globe. On top of that if you have low voltage halogens, which are far more common than mains voltage halogens, you will have a transformer sitting in the ceiling using another five to ten watts.

Now this might not seem like much, but when you count how many halogen downlights you have, they can easily be using 300 watts or more in one room. Think about the fact that the same room would have traditionally been lit by an incandescent globe of 100 watts or less, which could now be replaced with a 20 watt compact fluorescent lamp (CFL) and you can see just how much more energy lighting your home with halogen downlights can take.

Replacing the fitting probably isn't all that appealing, particularly if they are not that old, so here are some other options to reduce your energy use with halogen downlights.

- **Solution 1 - Remove the lamps from some of your fittings.** For example, if you have four downlights in a room, you may find you only really need two. Using wide angle lamps to improve light dispersion will also help light the room much more efficiently.
- **Solution 2 - Go for alternatives.** If you don't like the idea of having empty fittings around your home or it won't work in your room, replace the halogen bulb with another type of lamp. A number of alternatives to halogen lamps have been produced in recent years, and the technology keeps improving.

Compact fluorescent replacements (*pictured right*) are available and are much more efficient. If you have low voltage fittings you will need an inverter and the lamps are a different shape so sometimes don't fit. LED replacements are also available and recent models are much improved to previous models and are very efficient. These lamps are often much more expensive, but last over five times longer and can reduce your electricity bill from lighting by 80%.

To find out more about halogen alternatives contact your local lighting store. They are also available through a number of on-line eco stores.

- **Solution 3 - Reduce the watts.** If you are not able to install alternatives, install lower wattage halogen lamps. A twenty watt halogen globe will be adequate for a lot of lighting situations and this will halve your electricity for lighting.



Central Coast Climate Challenge

Register your family or get your business, school, community group, sporting team or club involved...the Challenge is for everyone!

- Get kick-started with FREE energy efficient light bulbs installed in your home by Easy Being Green.
- Receive an easy 'passbook' to guide you through different options to reduce your energy use AND save money!
- Great prizes to be won including Fisher & Paykel fridges and Solahart hot water systems!

Register for the Challenge on-line at www.climatechallenge.org.au, at the **launch on Saturday 22nd** at Memorial Park, The Entrance between 10am to 2pm or by calling 9279 2522. **Do your bit - be a part of it!**

Find out about easy steps you can take to reduce greenhouse emissions and do something about climate change. The Challenge is a great way for the whole family to get involved....and have some fun while you're at it!



**Thurs 4 to Sat 6
October
at Erina Fair**
Karalta Rd, Erina

green
living
fair

Giveaways, workshops, kids activities, performances and eco-fashion parades.

You don't need to be a super hero, join the fun and learn simple ways to save water and energy, reduce waste, live natural and **help save our planet.**

To see the program visit greenliving.gosford.nsw.gov.au or call Council's Environmental Education Officer on 4325 8175

GREEN LIVING NEWS

Would you like to be included on the mailing list? Do you have a great tip or story you would like to share, or a comment on what should be included in the next newsletter?

Call Council's Environmental Education Officer on 4325 8175 or email: green.living@gosford.nsw.gov.au

What's on!

Permaculture Central Coast 3rd Tuesday of the month, 6.30pm. Tuggerah Community Hall, ANZAC Rd, Tuggerah.

At Kariong Eco Garden - Dandaloo St, Kariong. To book 4349 4756.

Grow and eat the Rainbow. Friday 14 September, 10am to 1pm.

No Dig Gardening. Saturday 15 September, 10.30am to 11.30am.

Frog-friendly gardens. Sunday 7 October, 3pm.

Getting a sense of humus. Friday 19 October, 9.30am to 12.30pm.

At Woy Woy Environment Centre - 267 Blackwall Rd, Woy Woy

LETS Trading Day. Saturday 6 October.

Native bushtucker. Saturday 3 November, 10.30am.

Make your home Sustainable. Saturday 1 December, 10.30am.

Central Coast Naturewatch Survey 29 & 30 September and 1 October. Conduct a survey of your garden and send details to naturewatch@cccen.org.au.

Central Coast Environment Forum 27 October. 9am to 4pm. Mingara Recreation Club, Mingara.

Natural Gardening Workshops and the Youth and Community Garden Project 23 & 30 October and 6 November. 9am to 10.30am. Rumbalara Environmental Education Centre, at the end of Donnison St, Gosford. Call Mia Hughes on 0417 043 165 by one week prior.

Water Festival 28 October. Memorial Park, The Entrance.

Plastic Bags - Kick the habit! 10 to 24 November. **Recycling Week** 12 to 18 November.

