

WHAT GOES AROUND

COMES AROUND

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SECOND NATIONAL BUYING GREEN CONFERENCE: Sydney - Olympic Park - Nov 2004

Following the highly successful inaugural Buying Green Conference in Melbourne last year, the second Buying Green Conference will be held at the Sydney Olympic Park at the Telstra Stadium from 10 -12 Nov 2004.

The theme of this year's conference is "Buying Green Means Business" with a focus on how to integrate buying green into your everyday purchasing or how to promote your green product or service directly to a receptive target audience. The program has been designed to meet the needs of delegates from Federal, state and local government and the private sector.

Headed up by a number of exciting international keynote speakers, the conference will include speaker presentations, workshops, forums and interactive panel discussions delivered through targeted streams. As with last year's conference there will be a large product exhibition providing delegates with hands-on exposure to the latest range of green products and services. Additionally there will be a pre-conference technical tour for delegates who want to visit sustainable manufacturing sites and building developments.

There will be opportunities for participants to relax and socialise with a welcome reception on the first night, and a conference dinner (with drinks and entertainment) on the Thursday night. Delegates will be able to structure their own conference package with options to attend one or both days, welcome drinks, conference dinner and the pre-conference technical tour.

ECO-Buy members and green product suppliers should not miss this excellent opportunity to build on their green purchasing knowledge.

Complete the **Expression of Interest** form or contact **Fil Cerone** at **Impact Environmental** for more information.



Right: Conference venue—
Sydney Olympic Telstra Stadium.

NSW LOCAL GOVERNMENT JOINS NATIONAL ECO-Buy ALLIANCE.

At last year's Melbourne Buy-Green conference a resolution was passed to support and assist the establishment of the Local Government Buy Recycled Alliance / ECO-Buy model in all States within the next two years. Since then QLD, WA and ACT have committed to developing ECO-Buy programs with the councils and government departments in their state. However, the first cab off the rank to formally licence the program was the Local Government and Shires Associations of NSW when they signed up in March this year.

The **NSW Local Government and Shires Association** represents 172 general purpose councils in NSW, 19 special-purpose county councils and a number of regional Aboriginal Land Councils. They also provide specialised purchasing support to all of these bodies.

The NSW Local Government and Shires Association environmental purchasing program will focus on the purchase of recycled products and will be officially known as the "Buy Recycled Alliance" using the old LGBRA logo familiar to many of you. **Paul Hannan**, is the account manager and official contact for the NSW Buy Recycled Alliance. We warmly welcome NSW into the program and look forward to working closely with them to build a strong environmental purchasing program in NSW.

We would also like to welcome our new ECO-Buy associate members. Associate membership is available to all interested organisation wishing to stay up-to-date with ECO-Buy information and tools.

- City of Charles Sturt (SA)
- City of Onkaparinga (SA)
- City of Joondalup (WA)
- City of West Torrens (WA)
- Fremantle City Council (WA)
- North East Catchment Committee (WA)
- Taronga Zoo (NSW)
- Parks Victoria (Vic)
- City Wide (Vic)
- Department of Environment and Sustainability (Vic)

OH WHAT A NIGHT! ECO-Buy AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

For those of you who haven't had your ear to the ground you may not have read about the winners of the 2004 ECO-Buy awards. The annual awards night was held on 11 March at Eden on the Park with awards being distributed to members for highest spending per capita and program innovation and communication during the 2002/2003 financial year.

The 2004 Awards evening was generously sponsored by the Construction & Demolition Waste Recyclers Group of the Waste Management Association of Australia as an initiative to give recognition to the Victorian council purchasing the largest amount of C&D materials. This initiative signalled a new relationship between industries manufacturing green products and the councils buying them. It sent a strong message to industry that councils are committed to purchasing their products and provides industry with a chance to acknowledge the support of councils. We invite other green industries to consider sponsoring an award category in future years.

The award winners were:

'Spending Big on C & D' WHITEHORSE CITY COUNCIL

Largest per capita expenditure on recycled construction and demolition products.

'Make or Break' WHITEHORSE CITY COUNCIL

Greatest increase in expenditure on recycled construction and demolition materials

'Hey Big Spender' LODDON SHIRE COUNCIL

Largest per capita expenditure on green products.

'Spread the Word' BANYULE CITY COUNCIL

For excellence in communicating the buy green message through staff sustainability training program and focused ECO-Buy training for purchasing staff.

'Who is Buying What?' BASS COAST SHIRE COUNCIL

For excellence in tracking purchasing of green products and distributing monthly purchasing reports to all staff.

'Walk the Talk' DAREBIN CITY COUNCIL

For green purchasing excellence on the Reservoir Civic Centre project. The building incorporates a range of recycled, water saving, energy saving and non-toxic products.



Tania and Adrienne (wearing a touch of green) welcome attendees to the event



Whitehorse Councillors Robert Chong & Bernie Millane accept award from Elaine Carbines - Parliamentary Secretary for Environment



Adrienne & David Fry from Loddon Shire Council



Elaine Carbines with Darebin Mayor Peter Stephenson



Left to Right: Adrienne Stephens (ECO-Buy), Cr Bernie Millane (Whitehorse) Cr Robert Chong OAM (Whitehorse) David Fry (Loddon), Cr Peter Stephenson (Darebin Mayor) Tania Struzina (ECO-Buy) Cr Jenny Mullholland (Banyule Mayor), Cr Loretta Leslie (Bass Coast) , Brad Matheson (MAV President)

COBURG CHILDREN'S CENTRE— GREEN CLEANING FOR THE FUTURE

About four years ago staff at Coburg Childcare Centre began to question the rampant overuse of potentially dangerous cleaning chemicals in the childcare environment. As staff began integrating environmental education into the centre's activities it was observed that food tables were being washed with powerful detergents / disinfectants and children were eating off the tables shortly after .

Thus began an overhaul of the centre's cleaning practices — from the kitchen to the change table to the floor. An examination of safety data sheets of the cleaning products being purchased revealed that many products contained formaldehyde, perfumes and dyes that are harmful to human health. A cleaning trial was undertaken with products specially developed for people with chemical sensitivities that do not contain formaldehyde, ammonia, petrochemicals or animal products . They started to avoid the unnecessary use of bleach, disinfectants and antimicrobials and discovered that many hospitals are now advocating surface cleaning with soap and water, due to concerns that overuse results in strains of resistant bacteria.

In April the centre held a cleaning training seminar to educate staff and parents in best practice cleaning techniques and the use of microfibre cloths — a cleaning tool which mechanically removes grime that houses bacteria particles. The centre now uses an environmentally preferable disinfectant for bodily spills and in other applications encourages removing germs instead of 'fighting' them with harsh chemicals.

You may be wondering how they meet the rigorous health, safety and hygiene standards that council operated care providers are obligated to comply with. Many services providers don't realise is that state legislation (food and safety acts, food standards codes, occupational health and safety acts and infection control guidelines) only set standards for cleaning outcomes, it is up to the provider to determine which substances or tools will best achieve these outcomes. The centre always passes their three-monthly inspections from Moreland Council's Food Safety Supervisor and annual inspections from the Department of Human Services. Furthermore, the centre claims there has been no increase in sickness at the centre since changing their cleaning regime.

So why not take a leaf out their book and of encourage your council to conduct 'green cleaning' training sessions for cleaners and carers. To find green cleaning products visit the cleaning and maintenance category on the [ECO-Find website](#).

CHEMICALS INFO GATEWAY

The Department of Environment and Heritage has recently launched a new [National Chemical Information Gateway website](#), a one-stop-shop for information on chemicals. The website was developed as a direct response to public feedback that information on chemicals was hard to find. Several linking sites give detailed information about issues and concerns with common domestic and workplace chemicals. Visit the site by clicking on highlighted text.

ECO-TRAIN AT KNOX CITY COUNCIL

ECO-Buy members, Knox City Council are making excellent headway in developing systems to track their environmental purchases and educate staff on effective use of the system. Bronwyn Cron, Knox's Conservation Officer has worked closely with Lisa Nimbs from the purchasing department, to include 44 ECO-product item category codes for green purchasing in their Computron AXS1 system. This allows users to register their green purchase in an item coded category (matching product categories to be reported on in the ECO-Buy Report Cavort) and insert the product code / description of product purchased.

Bronwyn says setting up green product tracking did not require outside technical support or an additional software purchase. Working together the purchasing and environment staff were able to set up these new item codes very quickly. Now they can track and report on green purchasing in any spending period at the click of a button.

When the system was operating Bronwyn invited Tania from ECO-Buy to train 38 key purchasing staff over two days in the following:

- Background to green purchasing and ECO-Buy.
- Registering green purchases in the AXS1 system.
- Case study—comparing standard & green products.
- Life Cycle Costing—why paying more can save \$
- Using the ECO-Buy Guide and ECO-Find database.

Feedback from the training has been overwhelming positive with all participants saying the sessions increased their knowledge of environmental products.



Above: Knox staff debating the pros & cons of buying recycled content toilet paper at their ECO-Train session.

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ECO-Buy STAKEHOLDERS AND SUPPLIERS FORUMS

In April ECO-Buy launched two new forums to keep all parties up-to-date with ECO-Buy activities.

- ECO-Stakeholders Forum: for organisations working on environmental purchasing, and any other relevant government and non-government bodies interested in green purchasing.
- ECO-Suppliers Forum: for suppliers on the ECO-Find website or other suppliers of green products who are interested in the program.

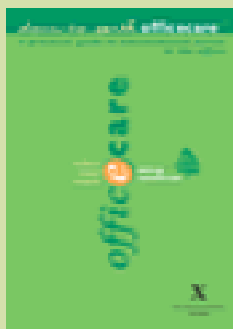
These forums will be held every six months to demonstrate any new tools or initiatives we have developed (such as the ECO-Guide to Green Purchasing and the ECO-Find website) and report back on our progress (through reporting such as the annual Report Cavort) and training programs.

The ECO-Suppliers Forum provides an excellent opportunity for ECO-Buy to help manufacturers and suppliers of green products to better understand how to market their products to local government. It is also an opportunity to help suppliers understand the commitments ECO-Buy member councils need to meet and how they as suppliers can support members in achieving them. Any interested suppliers that missed the April meeting can view [minutes](#) here. The minutes include a document on the many ways you can work with ECO-Buy to promote your product.

The next round of ECO-Stakeholder and ECO-Supplier forums will be held in November and will feature an international guest speaker, Scott Case from the Centre for a New American Dream, a prominent sustainability organisation working towards the promotion of less materialistic society. Scott will be visiting Australia as a keynote speaker for Buying Green 2004 (see article page 1).

GREEN OFFICE GUIDE

From time to time we get asked where to find information on Green Office Programs (ie looking at organisational sustainability in all areas -not just green purchasing). While the [Down to Earth Officecare guide](#) was written in 1997, it is still an excellent office sustainability overview showing how to reduce energy, paper, water consumption and overall environmental impacts.



ECOBLEND CEMENT GETS GOOD ENVIRONMENTAL CHOICE TICK

Independent Cement and Lime (ICL) recently received the **AELA Good Environmental Choice** certification on their Ecoblend range of cement. The **Ecoblend** range contains industry waste such as steel slag and fly ash, thereby diverting these materials from landfill.

Using these waste products, in place of virgin materials, means the concrete has significantly less energy input and emission output making it a product with a very low embodied energy. Surprisingly Ecoblend cements are 10 -20% stronger than the non-blended product. Ecoblend can be purchased as a bagged product or made to order containing 30 -90% reclaimed steel slag. All ICL products are compatible with Vic Road specifications.



Left: Ecoblend cement (containing 65% reclaimed steel slag) steps at Beacon Cove.

ECO-Buy PLANNING

ECO-Buy staff held their annual planning day in April . We always attempt to integrate member feedback in our plans and hope you feel your requests are being heard. Here are some of the highlights / new ideas (alongside our regular action packed program!) planned for the period ending April 2005.

- Creation of a supplier incentive program to provide green products to members at discounted rate.
- The long awaited tracking training event to happen in July / August. Members will have an opportunity to discuss their tracking systems with other councils using the same systems and representatives from their software provider company.
- Special support for members who have not submitted a Report Cavort in 2003 or don't have a Working Group, Action Plan or Purchasing Policy.
- Membership drive for regional Victorian Councils (20 out of 48 regional councils are members).
- Development of environmental marketing training and tools for suppliers.
- Ongoing support to members participating in the Community Based Social Marketing Pilot Project.

Please contact up with any feedback or suggestions about our planned activities.