

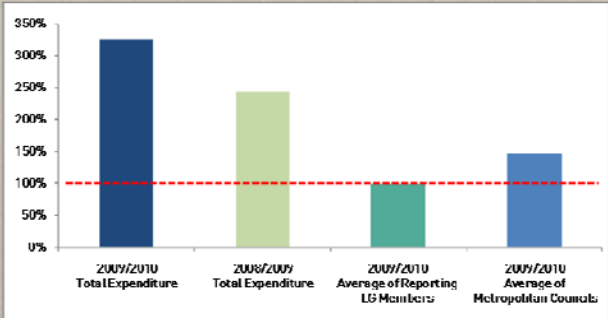
2011 Winner: City of Whitehorse On Track to Meet 30% Green Purchasing Target

Award for Excellence in Green Product Procurement – Metropolitan Council

This award recognises the metropolitan local government with the largest investment in green products and services (as a percentage of available expenditure).

In 2009-2010, the City of Whitehorse achieved a significant step on the road to meeting its ambitious green purchasing objectives. Compared with the previous financial year, the Council increased its green product spend, by an impressive 33 percent to reach just under 12 percent green spend as a percentage of total available expenditure. This is 2.5 times higher than the average green spend of the 37 councils who submitted data for the awards.

Not only is the size of the increase in expenditure impressive, but the range of environmentally preferable products purchased by the Council has also expanded significantly over the years. In 2009-2010 the City of Whitehorse reported green spend against a total of 143 product types - one of the highest number reported by any council.



Green purchasing expenditure at City of Whitehorse (dark blue and light green bars) compared with other councils'.

This outstanding result is the product of a concerted and committed effort by the City of Whitehorse to progressively embed green procurement practices into the corporate culture over the last decade. Despite some peaks and troughs from year to year (due to one-off or infrequent purchases), the City of Whitehorse has increased its green expenditure from \$254,828 in 2000-2001 when it joined the ECO-Buy Program to more than \$6 million in 2009-2010. Of particular note is the more than \$900,000 spent on GreenPower, a doubling of expenditure since 2008-2009, which avoids emitting a substantial 9,902 tonnes greenhouse gases (CO₂-e).



The journey toward green purchasing at the City of Whitehorse began by switching to greener alternatives on a small scale. This included purchasing 'low risk' green products (such as copy paper and mobile garbage bins) and testing trial quantities of a green alternative (such as crushed concrete and recycled asphalt) until the benefits, practicality and value for money were proven. Championed by the Sustainability Officer and supported by ECO-Buy, the Program was gradually expanded to greener options available across different categories.

The City of Whitehorse has formalised the actions, timeframes and responsibilities needed for this shift in its Sustainability Strategy, which shows a clear pathway to achieving the Council's target of at least 30 percent green spend.

Established in 2004, the EcoLeaders Program has been instrumental in changing the behaviour and culture across the organisation by establishing cross functional teams to implement and promote sustainability initiatives. The Program has been particularly active in switching office consumables to green products, and played a key role in amending the Procurement Policy to consider Fairtrade certified products where possible. A project team supported by the Sustainability Officer made this possible by obtaining approval from executive management to trial a range of Fairtrade certified products and negotiating for the slightly higher cost to be absorbed into the budget.

Another key success factor is that sustainable procurement practices are not sole responsibility of Council's procurement department.

The capital works, finance and contracts teams are equally committed to ensuring sustainability criteria are applied to capital projects and supplier contracts in line with the environmental clauses integrated in Council's Tendering and Procurement Policy in 2007.



7.6kW solar PV System on Box Hill Town Hall

This is reflected in the size of some of the green investments. \$2.4 million were spent on recycled asphalt in road and footpath projects in 2009-2010, an outstanding result driven through a tender that favoured suppliers with the capability and experience to deliver a product that was significantly less damaging to the environment. A minimum of 20% recycled asphalt was specified, which goes beyond the recycled level allowed by VicRoads for unconditional use. To win the contract, the supplier conducted additional testing to assure the product was of suitable quality, fit for purpose, and represented value for money. This has resulted in the avoidance of over 16.5 tonnes of CO₂-e.

Other significant green capital works projects include the Blackburn Village rain gardens and solar power systems for the Box Hill Town Hall.

A SNAPSHOT OF GREEN PURCHASES AT THE CITY OF WHITEHORSE:

- Recycled asphalt, concrete and rock for road making and footpaths
- Recycled carpet for the Civic Centre and library refurbishments
- Recycled paper products such as information cards, calendars and copy paper
- Compact fluorescent lighting
- Smaller fuel efficient vehicles
- Solar power systems for Box Hill Town Hall and Blackburn Lake Sanctuary
- 25% Green Power in council buildings, and 100% Green Power in all street lights
- Drought resistant indigenous plants, water harvesting systems and recycled water