



## **Householder's Options to Protect the Environment Inc.**

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### **HOPE E-news Bulletin, 1 July 2009**

Hello everyone,

It is nearly time for our first public event regarding the **Low Carbon Diet!** We are all very excited to be able to bring this great program to you. Frank, our president, has provided another thorough update for you below. I would like to extend my gratitude to everyone who has been able to lend a hand so far. Please share your energy saving stories with us as well. It has also been very encouraging to receive such wonderful comments regarding our e:news bulletin. Thanks for supporting us!

*Miriam Sharp, Secretary - [office@hopeaustralia.org.au](mailto:office@hopeaustralia.org.au)*

#### **Office news**

##### **Overview of Meeting held on Saturday, 16 May 2009:**

Our second meeting of the year went ahead on Saturday 16 May despite there being only committee members present. It is disappointing that there were no other local members at the meeting.

These regular HOPE meetings are important to the group as they allow members and supporters the opportunity for face-to-face contact with committee members; and to raise items for discussion. It is also a legal requirement under the Incorporated Associations Act to hold at least 4 meetings per annum.

Work on the funding application to catalogue our library resources has been deferred until after the LCD project is completed.

The next scheduled HOPE meeting will follow the *Low Carbon Diet (LCD)* information session being held on Wednesday, 15 July, at the Groom Park Hall, Neil St, Toowoomba. See you there.

##### **Report from Office Manager:**

Most of our efforts have been directed towards the *Low Carbon Diet* project (see report below).

Frank attended meetings with the Condamine Catchment Management Association (11 June);

Queensland Conservation Council *Environment Sector Meeting* (22 June); *Environmental Roundtable*

with Hon Kate Jones, Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability (23 June); and SEQ Catchments *Environmental Networking Partnership* meeting (27 June).

##### **Notes:**

1. Once QCC's *Joint Groups Campaign Document* is finalised, a website link will be provided
2. The new Queensland Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM) is currently working on a new Biodiversity Strategy; and updating the Waste Strategy. Discussion papers should be available before the year's end.

## Positions Vacant:

### Areas where you can help

HOPE is looking for volunteers who can help in the following areas:

- Admin assistance; Publications Team; Media Team; Membership Officer; and Marketing & Public Relations

A fair portion of the above work would ideally be done by locals (i.e. in the Toowoomba area) because the HOPE office is in Toowoomba. However, quite a bit of the literature review, research and publications activity can be done via email. If you have a little bit of time to help us in any way, then contact the HOPE office on email [office@hopeaustralia.org.au](mailto:office@hopeaustralia.org.au) or phone (07) 4639 2135.

## Updates on upcoming events

The **Queensland Regional Achievement & Community Awards** are on again! This year you could have the chance to win television exposure or a \$2,500 AwardSaver account. Nominate now, it is free to enter. Just fill in a nomination form and criteria relevant to whatever category you want to nominate in and email, fax or post back to the awards office. Nominations are now open in the following seven categories:

- The Salvation Army Employment Plus **Business & Employment Award**
- The Bartercard **Events and Tourism Award**
- The Coffee Club **Arts & Culture Award**
- The Kleenheat Gas **Regional Service Award**
- The Golden Circle **Environment and Landcare Award**
- The Golding Contractors **Youth Leadership Award**
- The Kleenheat Gas **Community of the Year Award**

**Nominations close Friday 31st July 2009 - so don't delay!** If you require any additional information or would like some help with your nomination form, please to contact the awards office on 1300 735 445, or check [www.awardsaustralia.com.au](http://www.awardsaustralia.com.au).

On **2 August** it is National Tree Day. This is Australia's biggest community tree-planting event. More than 2 million volunteers have planted over 13 million native trees and shrubs since the first Tree Day in 1996. Find out how you can join in at [www.treeday.planetark.com](http://www.treeday.planetark.com)

## Low Carbon Diet project and related news

### LCD project update

It's all systems go!! The program of shopping centre information displays, workshops and information sessions has been finalised (see below); a media release circulated; and invitations to attend the workshops and information sessions has been mailed out (postal and email) to some 820 community organisations, schools, churches, etc.

I ask you to directly support these activities by attending one of more of these events yourself; and by encouraging family, friends and work colleagues to do likewise.

Also, as our LCD Project has evolved and grown, we have a funding shortfall of some \$800. Donations of postage stamps, photocopy paper and of course \$\$\$s would be most welcome.

### Late news:

1. We are also investigating the staging of a Sustainable House (Open) Day here in Toowoomba on Sunday 13 September. Expressions of interest in participating in this event will be issued shortly.
2. The *Green Door Group* is offering funding up to \$5,000 for environmental video projects. We propose are currently putting together an application

### Shopping Centres displays

*Help is needed to transport display furniture to and from shopping centres (set-up time 8.15am and pack-up time 5pm); and to staff the displays from 9am to 5pm. Please phone Frank on 4639 2135 to offer your services.*

6 July - LCD display at Grand Central

7 July - LCD display at K-Mart

8 July - LCD display at Clifford Gardens

10 August - LCD display at Grand Central

11 August - LCD display at K-Mart

12 August - LCD display at Clifford Gardens

7 Sept - LCD display at Grand Central

8 Sept - LCD display at K-Mart

9 Sept - LCD display at Clifford Gardens

### Workshops schedule

*Several helpers are needed at each event to assist with setting up the room; looking after the display area and morning tea; and to pack up. Please phone Frank on 4639 2135 to volunteer your services.*

15 July Workshop (#1) - 4pm at St James Community Hall (cnr Mort & Russell Sts)

26 August Workshop (#2) - 2pm at Groom Park Hall, Neil St. (opposite St. Patrick's Cathedral)

26 August Workshop (#3) - 7pm at St James Community Hall (cnr Mort & Russell Sts)

16 September Workshop (#4) - 2pm at Groom Park Hall, Neil St. (opposite St. Patrick's Cathedral)

16 September Workshop (#5) - 7pm at St James Community Hall (cnr Mort & Russell Sts)

### Information Sessions schedule

*Several helpers are needed at each event to assist with setting up the room; looking after the display area and morning tea; and to pack up. Please phone Frank on 4639 2135 to volunteer your services.*

|              |      |             |  |
|--------------|------|-------------|--|
| Wed, 15 July | 10am | Toowoomba   | Groom Park Hall, Neil St, Toowoomba<br>(opposite St Patrick's Cathedral) |
| Thu, 23 July | 10am | Highfields  | Highfields Cultural Centre, O'Brien Rd                                   |
| Thu, 6 Aug   | 10am | Crow's Nest | Community & RSL Centre, 25 William St                                    |
| Thu, 20 Aug  | 10am | Oakey       | Oakey Community Centre, Campbell St (next door to library)               |
| Thu, 3 Sept  | 10am | Pittsworth  | Technology Centre, 42 Hume St  |
| Thu, 17 Sept | 10am | Millmerran  | Cultural Centre - Anzac Room, Cnr Walpole & Campbell Sts                 |
| Thu, 1 Oct   | 10am | Clifton     | Senior Citizens room, Meara Place  |
| Thu, 15 Oct  | 10am | Cambooya    | Cambooya Bowls Club, Lucy St   |

### ADVERTISEMENT

**Yarramine Environmental** is pleased to introduce a new service for the households of Toowoomba and surrounds. Make your home sustainable - save money, save the environment and live better. Get a **Home Sustainability Assessment** today, priced from just \$85. Our consultant will visit your home to discuss opportunities for sustainability improvements. You will receive on the spot advice, plus a written report tailored specially to your home after our visit. For more information go to <http://www.yarramineconsulting.com.au/>

## Related News

### Extracts from ACF News

#### [Environment measures have saved Newcastle 'millions'](#)

Newcastle Council says the introduction of environmentally friendly measures across the city has saved it millions of dollars.

#### **Commuters flock to public transport**

There has been a massive increase in the use of public transport in Melbourne with almost 60 million more trips in the 12 months to March than in the previous year.

<http://www.theage.com.au/national/commuters-flock-to-public-transport-20090604-bx6j.html>

#### **Defying recession, Japan's green cars surge in popularity**

Defying the worst recession in decades, green cars in Japan are gaining ground against conventional gas-guzzlers, offering automakers hope of re-energising a flagging domestic market.

<http://news.theage.com.au/breaking-news-world/defying-recession-japans-green-cars-surge-in-popularity-20090605-bxeu.html>

#### **China, India go with the wind as fossils dwindle**

RENEWABLE energy overtook fossil fuels in attracting investment for power generation for the first time last year, according to figures from the United Nations.

<http://www.smh.com.au/environment/china-india-go-with-the-wind-as-fossils-dwindle-20090604-bx8r.html>

#### [Green project a success in central Vic](#)

An environmental project run in central Victoria may be rolled out in other towns across the state.

#### [Government report shows climate change is happening now and impacting entire U.S.](#)

A press conference was held recently to discuss a climate study prepared by the U.S. Global Change Research Program. The study lays out the effects of global warming on specific U.S. regions and sectors, and calls for immediate action. (18 June)

#### **Students teach us how to save electricity**

The Ergon Energy led Climate Smart Living Program has helped students in regional Qld schools target their electricity usage with amazing results! The three biggest users of electricity in schools are lights, air conditioning, and computers. Concentrate on these and you'll save heaps as shown by these schools: **Home Hill State School** reduced their electricity usage by **17%** and **saved** more than **\$5000**. **Biloela State School** reduced their electricity usage by **18%** and saved more than **\$5000**. Well done to all the students at these schools!

#### **Live Local**

Live Local is a new website to share stories about improving communities. Like a 'green' Facebook it enables people to participate by making profile pages yet extends the concept further so local neighbourhood 'green' activities can be developed and displayed, as well as more on global actions. Read more at <http://www.livelocal.org.au/>

#### **Gas Installation Rebate**

Save up to \$500 when you replace electric appliances (such as a hot water system, cooktop or oven) with gas. Go to [www.dme.qld.gov.au/Energy/gas\\_rebate.cfm](http://www.dme.qld.gov.au/Energy/gas_rebate.cfm)

### Energy Efficient Homes Package

Get a rebate of up to \$1600 on ceiling insulation or a solar hot water system. For more information visit [www.environment.gov.au/energyefficiency](http://www.environment.gov.au/energyefficiency)

### Reducing Carbon Emissions through ICT

An Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) white paper released by Telstra and WWF highlights a number of "return on investment" tools, including video conferencing and teleworking, to help businesses dramatically reduce their carbon footprints. Read more at [http://www.thegreenpages.com.au/index.asp?page\\_id=1205](http://www.thegreenpages.com.au/index.asp?page_id=1205)

### Students unite to combat climate change

Two local Griffith University students are excited to be included in 80 world delegates chosen from more than 40 universities worldwide to attend a global student conference on climate change in Victoria, Canada in June. Read more at [http://www.gecko.org.au/index.php?climate\\_change](http://www.gecko.org.au/index.php?climate_change)

### Deep CO2 Cuts May Be Last Hope For Acid Oceans

The indisputable fact that burning fossil fuels is slowly turning the oceans into an acid bath has been largely ignored by industrialised countries and their climate treaty negotiators, concluded delegates at the World Oceans Conference in Manado, Indonesia. Read the article at <http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=46869>

### Feed in Tariff petition

The [FeedInTariff.com.au](http://www.feedintariff.com.au) petition was originally instigated and developed by **Energy Matters** on behalf of the many people in Australia who firmly believe a better deal is needed to increase solar power uptake. They've been lobbying for a national gross feed in tariff via the petition at [FeedInTariff.com.au](http://www.feedintariff.com.au) for some time now and 15,000 signatures have been collected. Thank you all so much for your support. The petition is to be submitted to Greens Senator Christine Milne who will then table the results in Parliament. Australians want to be part of the solution when it comes to climate change. Go to <http://www.feedintariff.com.au/> for details.

## Resources

### Book review

#### **Eco-sufficiency & Global Justice: Women Write Political Ecology - edited by Ariel Salleh**

As the twenty-first century faces a crisis of democracy and sustainability, this book brings academics and alternative globalisation activists into discussion. Through studies of global neoliberalism, ecological debt, climate change, and the ongoing devaluation of reproductive and subsistence labour, these uncompromising essays by internationally distinguished women thinkers expose the limits of current scholarship in political economy, ecological economics, and sustainability science. With in-depth analyses of climate change, MDGs, financial meltdown, and new theoretical concepts for understanding humanity-nature links, this book is essential reading for students of political economy, ethics, global studies, sociology, women's studies, geography and environmental science. Details on [http://www.spinifexpress.com.au/book\\_detail.php?id=196](http://www.spinifexpress.com.au/book_detail.php?id=196)

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## Feature Article

### Beautiful Gardens with Clean Consciences

by Trish Gardener

Gardening for the pleasure of creating a beautiful place should be the least offensive of all human endeavours. But modern gardening can be a less than environmentally benign activity, with its wasteful use of water, unnecessary consumption of resources, and pollution of the environment. Far from a clean, green activity!

It doesn't need to be like that. Nothing is more energy and resource efficient than a garden of indigenous (local native) plants.

Because they are already adapted to the local soil, there's no need to use products with potentially polluting side effects to modify or enrich the soil.

Because they are already adapted to the climate, there's no need to use any water at all, besides natural rainfall, on a garden of indigenous plants.

With none of the negative impacts which often result from gardening, it is possible for us all to do our own bit towards modifying the climate and living a carbon neutral lifestyle - and at the same time we can do something positive for the flora and fauna of our own part of the world.

Plants from our local dry rainforest and softwood scrub ecosystems are particularly suited to garden use, being long lived and drought hardy, and some of the most attractive Australian plants in existence.

Establishing a garden DOES require the use of just one resource - water. Efficiently applied this use can be reduced to a minimum, but can't be avoided for new plantings. Local native trees and shrubs, however, can grow out of the need to be watered within three months of planting.

Gardeners might choose to use more resources in the first year of the plants' lives, however, so as to achieve a faster growth rate. Extra water at this time of life is far more effective than it is at a later stage, and is worth using to help the plants achieve deep roots quickly. This means infrequent but deep watering, preferably applied below the soil surface. Small plants will also grow faster if given a small amount of organic fertiliser, and some organic mulch. In the case of Toowoomba's red soils, which are deficient in minerals in their upper layers, some rock dust (crusher dust) will also help these plants grow faster.

**A useful resource** for gardeners in Toowoomba and the Eastern Darling Downs

"Toowoomba Plants; natives of the Region suitable for Gardens" by Patricia Gardner - a low-cost, non-glossy publication. It is available from Dymock's in Margaret Street for about \$30.00. See it on the internet at <http://members.optusnet.com.au/toowoombaplants>

**Another resource** is the internet site: <http://www.toowoombaplants2008.blogspot.com>

**Local native plants can be difficult to source.**

There are two local suppliers, however, who have excellent stocks at low prices. Both are only open part-time, so a phone call is necessary to arrange a visit.

\* Crows Nest Community Nursery (0417 193 665, between 7.00am and 3.00pm)

\* Future Forests at Ravensbourne (4697 8228, between 6-7pm)

## General

### Take action: Local power

Local councils play an important role in bringing to life community aspirations for the environment. We can have our say in what happens locally. Why not contact your local council and ask for a copy of their strategy for sustainability? Ask how you can contribute as a community member. Find your local council on <http://www.alqa.asn.au/policy/regdev/sor/>.

### Red list of threatened species

According to Nicola Markus, Bush Heritage's Chief Conservation Officer, 'Australia's track record of mammal losses is awful but hardly surprising. The majority of species on this list are small mammals that are falling victim to the damage caused by feral cats and foxes and uncontrolled pastoralism over more than two-thirds of the continent'. Read more at <http://www.gecko.org.au/index.php?www>

### Gene Ethics: working for a GM-free future - Find GM-free farms, businesses & local councils

Gene Ethics has launched its GM-free website register. The interactive google map is a public service, to help you find GM-free products and services. These enterprises aim to exclude from their products, services and facilities all Genetically Manipulated (GM) soy, corn, canola or cotton - and products from animals fed GM feed. Please use the information on the register to win a GM-free future for ourselves and future generations by supporting these champions of GM-free in any way you can. This is a work in progress and we need your assistance. If your local council, farm, food processor or shop is not on the GM-free register already, please download the registration form from the map and ask them to sign up. It's free and simple. GM canola growers are a separate category on the map. This clearly shows that GM-free supporters far outnumber the GM farms, whose GM contamination poses hazards to our health and environment, and threatens our right to choose GM-free! When you shop, support GM-free and say no to GM. The future is in our hands. More information: 1300 133 868 (local call) or [info@geneethics.org](mailto:info@geneethics.org) or <http://www.geneethics.org>

### Progress on e-waste

Key steps were taken recently on national recycling schemes for TV's and computers. Check progress on <http://planetark.org/awarenews/30>

## A tip / helpful hint

Here are some helpful hints to reduce your energy consumption in the kitchen:

- **Multiple fridges or freezers:** If you have a second fridge, turn it off until you really need it. If your second fridge is outdoors or in the sun, consider bringing it inside so the fridge will be cooler and use less energy.
- **Maintain your fridge:** Regularly clean dust away from condenser coils at the back of fridges. There should be at least a 5 centimetre gap between the back of your fridge and the wall to allow the heat to disperse. A well-ventilated fridge will run more efficiently.
- **Microwave cooking:** Up to 90 per cent of the energy used by ovens is wasted. Use alternatives such as the microwave, electric frying pan or pressure cooker.
- **Maximise efficiency, save cooking time:** Keep lids on pots to minimise the time it takes to cook using the stove. Every time you open your oven door, it loses about 4 degrees of heat. Keep the oven door shut to cook your food quickly and efficiently.
- **Check fridge seals:** Check your fridge and freezer seals regularly. Damaged fridge seals can cause your fridge to run inefficiently and use more energy. Clean and replace them as required.
- **Old fridges:** Pre-1999 fridges can use around 30 per cent more energy than newer models, so consider replacing your old fridge. Contact your local council to find out how to properly dispose of your old fridge.

- **When buying a new fridge:** If you buy a new fridge, ensure it is large enough to meet the needs of your household. It is more economical to run one larger fridge, than multiple fridges and freezers. Fridges with freezers on top use 10 to 15 per cent less energy compared with side-by-side models of an equivalent size. Aim for an energy star rating of four stars or more.
- **Installing gas appliances:** Consider installing or replacing electric cooking appliances with gas. The Department of Mines and Energy provides [rebates for installing gas appliances](#).
- **Using the dishwasher:** Use the 'economy wash' setting on your dishwasher, and remember to only run it when it is full.

*Remember, you CAN make a difference!*

Think before you print! 1 ream of paper = 6% of a tree and 5.4 kg CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere; 3 sheets of A4 paper = 1 litre of water

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