

# action 13: communities with a water, energy and materials saving ethic

62

*Every Victorian can reduce their impact on the environment by recycling more, composting organic waste, taking shorter showers, using public transport and buying more sustainable goods and services.*

Every Victorian can reduce their impact on the environment. To help people make more sustainable choices they need better information about the environmental impact of their decisions.

A priority for becoming a sustainable state is to embrace the many different ways that people learn and change behaviours. To do this, we must focus on the everyday lives of all Victorians at – home, work, school, and in the community.

## **What we will do**

### **13.1 Learning to live sustainably**

We will invest \$5.9 million on *Learning to Live Sustainably*, a package of state-wide actions to help Victorians live more sustainably.

*Learning to Live Sustainably* is a 10-year strategy focused on the everyday lives of Victorians at school, home, work and in the community.

It facilitates joined up approaches to changing behaviour by supporting a range of organisations and individuals across the community, government, education and business sectors, to promote long-term change.

The skills of farmers, Landcare volunteers, local neighbourhoods, councils and professional educators will all be involved to help make small but vital changes in the way we live.



A range of incentives – from seed funding, awards and accreditation to locally targeted behavioural change campaigns – will be used, backed up by comprehensive research and evaluation programs.

*Learning to Live Sustainably* is linked to the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014).

The Government's \$5.9 million investment will:

- Establish a package of coordinated state-wide action programs focusing on:
  - households and neighbourhoods;
  - schools, families and local communities;
  - local councils and regional agencies;
  - higher education and the professions;
  - workplaces, businesses and vocational learning;
  - community organisations (including environmental, landcare, community service, recreational, religious, cultural organisations); and
  - farming and rural communities.
- Provide practical support for education and behaviour change practitioners and managers
- Deliver a comprehensive evaluation and research program to:
  - Assess and report on actions and achievements across the state; and
  - Provide feedback on achievements to motivate future efforts by all involved and attract new participants.
- Provide a range of incentives for participation and change including:
  - seed funding;
  - awards;
  - accreditation; and
  - locally targeted behaviour change campaigns using appropriate communications tools.



### 13.2 Energy efficiency and sustainability campaign

We will invest \$7.4 million over the next two years to deliver a Victoria-wide awareness raising campaign.

Government media campaigns have made a significant impact on community behaviour change in areas of health and safety and more recently on issues of environmental sustainability – demonstrated through major shifts in attitudes and behaviour regarding water conservation.

In June this year, the Government launched the first phase of a major, long-term campaign raising community awareness of the importance of saving energy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions – (the “black-balloons” campaign).

Over the next two years we will expand these campaigns which will be underpinned by a range of measures – including more information to help Victorians make the right choices. A guide will be sent to all Victorians on the simple actions they can take in their everyday lives to be more sustainable.

### 13.3 Right advice at the right place

We will enlist the help of hardware stores, appliance and lighting retailers to give consumers energy saving options in a \$2 million consumer awareness campaign.

This will arm Victorians with the best energy-saving advice at the point of sale, to encourage them to buy what’s best for the environment and their own power bills.

This will complement the ‘black balloon’ energy saving campaign to raise awareness of the environmental impacts of our energy use and encourage householders to purchase more sustainable products.

*Victorians want to see tangible demonstrations of how easy it is to be sustainable in the home. VicUrban is building a demonstration house at Werribee Fields, to be ready in 2007 and an entire sustainable suburb, Aurora, in Epping North.*

### 13.4 Eco-living

We will invest \$3 million to set up six Eco-living demonstration houses.

Seed funding will be provided to local councils to establish community buildings that demonstrate sustainability in action, based on the successful Port Phillip Eco-House and the CERES centre in Brunswick. Funding will also be provided for practical examples of sustainability improvements in kindergartens, libraries, community centres, offices and small shops.

Victorians want to see tangible demonstrations of how easy it is to be sustainable in the home. VicUrban is building a demonstration house at Werribee Fields, to be ready in 2007 and an entire sustainable suburb, Aurora, in Epping North.



> Victorian Local Government Green purchasing expenditure 2001-2005

### 13.5 It's easy being green

We will make it easy for Victorians to be green with \$1.5 million for an ECO-Buy Environmental Purchasing Centre in Melbourne.

A simple web page showing how green products are, will help Victorians, businesses and government shop with the environment in mind.

This project builds on the success of ECO-Buy, a green purchasing scheme for local government that has grown from \$5.9 million in 2001 to \$81.9 million in 2005, involving 75 per cent of councils.

#### 10 things you can do to save the planet

So you want to help the environment but think there's not much you can do?

Below is a list of just ten things you can do in and around your home. Victorians are encouraged to try to do at least three of these actions.

1. Take four minute power showers – instead of the average seven minutes
2. Avoid plastic bags, and take reusable ones shopping
3. Turn off lights and appliances when you don't need them
4. Switch to Green Power by calling your electricity retailer
5. Choose efficient appliances
6. Put your food and plant scraps in a worm farm or the compost
7. Avoid unnecessary packaging
8. Walk, cycle or use public transport – and leave the car at home
9. Grow plants native to your area
10. Go chemical free when you clean – and use low salt content soap and detergent.

### 13.6 Rebates for being green

We will invest \$1.5 million on targeted rebates to encourage Victorians to replace the main household culprits of energy inefficiency.

The rebates will focus on those household items that have the biggest impact on energy use and could include old fridges, upgrading old gas-ducting and insulation.

### 13.7 GreenHomes

We will invest \$4.2 million to convert more Victorian homes into *GreenHomes*<sup>®</sup> – a hands on program showing Victorians how they can make small changes to save water, energy and waste.

In partnership with environment groups and local government, we will help residents make eco-friendly choices covering energy, waste, packaging, transport, gardens and water. This project builds on successful pilots in Bankstown and Parramatta in NSW.

We will tailor the program to suit the needs of different regions in Victoria and boost the capacity of local government, communities and key organisations in each region to deliver these programs in the long term.

*GreenHome* literally brings experts into your home to identify ways you can make a difference. The Victorian program will start in the Westernport region, before being rolled out to other regions following evaluation.

### 13.8 Sustainability fund grants

Round 1 of the Sustainability Fund allocated \$6.9 million to 26 applicants for community, business and local government projects which will help Victorian businesses and the community to use their resources more efficiently and reduce everyday impacts. A further \$12 million over the next four years will be allocated in grants to the community, and the following projects have received funding in Round 2.

\$400,000 for Earth Utility Pty Ltd to provide an Earth Utility Solar Hot Water Service to Australian Homes, through a new innovative model of funding the asset with investor funds and charge a quarterly service fee for usage.

\$80,000 for Bicycle Victoria Incorporated to undertake a state wide community program, which supports behaviour change in young people riding and walking to and from school.

\$120,000 for Australian Sustainable Industry Research Centre Ltd to develop raw material substitution as an attractive and sustainable solution to managing prescribed industrial wastes.

\$1 million for Greenfleet Australia to work in partnership with local government and regional waste management groups around Victoria to establish the Victorian Greenhouse Forest at closed municipal landfill sites which are in serious need of rehabilitation, to sequester greenhouse gasses.

\$167,000 for Victorian Association of Forest Industries to assist 20 small and medium enterprises to develop and implement an Environmental Management System for forests, and develop an industry wide reporting framework to measure enterprise and industry performance against sustainability goals and targets.

\$205,000 for The Active Reactor Company Pty Ltd to undertake a large scale street lighting trial in the Latrobe Valley, Victoria – the device to be trialled is the Active Reactor which is expected to reduce street lighting energy consumption by 25%.

\$246,300 for Parkland Albury Wodonga Ltd to implement an IMBY Project Coordinator and support requirements to empower individuals to make sustainable choices in what they eat, how they live in their homes and how they get around.

\$230,000 for Indigo Shire Council to undertake rehabilitation of the closed Yackandandah Landfill which has been identified in the Business Plans of Indigo Shire Council and the NevRwaste as a priority for rehabilitation.

\$150,000 for Greater Shepparton City Council to develop the Greater Future Sustainability Park, and link the site to existing bike and walking tracks to provide a prime observation platform of the Goulburn River and floodplain.

\$100,000 for the University of Ballarat to survey Hopetoun's current and projected power demand, collect solar access, wind speed data, biomass potential, investigate potential local alternative renewable energy technologies, and develop a model for other communities to apply in such studies.

\$1,000,000 for The Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance (CVGA) to undertake household energy use monitoring and reporting for the Central Victorian Solar Cities Program.

\$150,000 for the Buloke Shire Council to advance the Donald Neighbourhood Environment Improvement Plan, including water conservation and reducing environmental impacts from a number of sources including stormwater pollutants, waste and salinity.

\$50,000 for Nillumbik Shire Council to evaluate their kerbside organic recycling contamination reduction. It will document their experience (positives and negatives), drawing on this experience to develop education/marketing templates for metropolitan Councils considering moving to full organic collection systems.

\$330,139 for Darebin City Council to develop a Sustainable Homes Program focused on low cost practical measures to achieve environment outcomes including reductions in energy, greenhouse gas emissions, water consumption and waste, as well as improving biodiversity and increasing sustainable transport usage.

\$250,000 for Brotherhood of St Laurence to undertake Stage #4 of the Phoenix Fridge Project – a repair and recycling scheme which promotes the use of energy efficient fridges, provides collection of unwanted and underused fridges, removes and recycles inefficient fridges from circulation.

\$184,545 for Fresh Green Clean to undertake the Safe and Sustainable Indoor Cleaning Project, which will assist the implementation of 'green' cleaning products and practices in childcare centres.

*The National Centre for Sustainability, Environmental Design and Land Management at Swinburne will create new and refurbished energy-efficient buildings catering for up to 850 full-time students.*

\$350,000 for Moreland Energy Foundation Ltd (MEFL) to take action on electric hot water and air conditioning – undertaking research to increase understanding, then trialling and rolling out innovative approaches to reduce electricity and greenhouse gas emissions from these appliances.

\$125,360 for Darebin City Council to implement Community Power 6000 Plus which will increase the uptake of Community Power Energy Plans through innovative promotional and resource efficiency activities – the targets include greenhouse savings of 40,700 tonnes per year and 6000kl of water per year.

\$70,000 for One Umbrella Australia Inc to construct a centralised model kitchen to rescue, produce and distribute food, overcoming their current limitations in the amount of food they can collect and distribute to charities.

\$173,460 for City of Melbourne to pilot a Building Improvement Partnership Program, to reduce energy and water consumption, and waste production in ten existing commercial office buildings in the City of Melbourne.

\$5,000 for St Vincent De Paul Fitzroy to run a Conference and reduce landfill by using green bags in lieu of plastic for the 130 food and clothing parcels they distribute every week.

\$380,000 for International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives - Australia/New Zealand Limited to establish The Centre for Public Agency Sustainability Reporting - Incubator Project (The Centre).

\$210,000 for Origin Energy to undertake a program for approximately 20,000 domestic energy consumers to identify simple ways to

live more sustainably by saving energy and water, and equip consumers with tools to show them how it can be done.

\$99,000 for RMIT University (Centre for Design) to develop an Online Rapid Assessment Tool which will assist product designers, engineers and manufacturers to consider environmental issues during product development.

\$195,000 for Boroondara City Council to undertake the Living for our Future program, which promotes sustainable behaviour change through provision of practical resources and action-learning workshops.

\$147,000 for Sustainable Gardening Australia Inc to develop a Sustainable Gardener Certification – an industry relevant audited system for garden designers, landscape gardeners, maintenance and public garden staff to undergo training, implement environmental best practice guidelines and to educate clients.

\$30,000 for Yarra Ranges shire council to conduct a detailed study into the creation of a sustainable transport link, using an innovative, high-tech solar powered ultra light rail (the Green Rail), to improve access for residents and tourists to the Yarra Valley connecting the townships of Lilydale, Coldstream and Healesville.

\$607,500 for City of Casey on behalf of the Western Port Greenhouse Alliance and regional partners, to build on existing programs and regional partnerships to engage, educate, support and extend landholders operating large beef and dairy businesses to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, water consumption and waste landfill.

\$150,000 for CSR Building Products Limited to install a briquette plant which enables solid waste generated from the Rockwool manufacturing process to be recycled.

\$350,000 for December Films Pty Ltd to develop Carbon Cops - Transforming Energy Usage – a multi platform media project that takes a variety of households through a series of steps to highlight energy consumption.

\$440,000 for Orica Australia to develop a program for elimination of paint solid waste in the auto industry.

\$110,000 for the Surf Coast Shire to implement practical steps towards sustainability in the home for typical Surf Coasts residents through workshops, home visits, monitoring and evaluation & information sharing.

### **13.9 Training for tradies**

**We will invest up to \$1 million on training and accreditation to bring more tradespeople and professionals up to speed on sustainable practices.**

We will offer more training and information for tradespeople. This will complement proposed developments at the national level and support the implementation of 5 Star building regulations by working with electricians, residential heating and air conditioning installers and home sustainability assessors. Sustainability Victoria will work with training providers to give apprentices and trainees sustainable practice updates.

### 13.10 Maintaining the Advantage – Skills Statement

**We will invest \$10 million to develop a National Centre for Sustainability, Environmental Design and Land Management at Swinburne TAFE's Wantirna campus and appoint a State-wide Sustainability Skills Advisor.**

The National Centre for Sustainability, Environmental Design and Land Management at Swinburne will create new and refurbished energy-efficient buildings catering for up to 850 full-time students. Once completed, the centre will focus on developing skills in sustainable land management and design that reduce impacts on the environment. The centre will also provide opportunities across the state through partnerships with regional TAFE institutions.

More than \$240 million has also been provided by the Government towards the *Maintaining the Advantage – Skills Statement* which includes specific actions with regard to environmental sustainability training.

- ▮ The appointment of a state-wide Industry Skills Advisor in environmental technologies to facilitate training in small to medium sized enterprises.
- ▮ Establishment of a Specialist Centre for Building and Construction in Ballarat to support development of skills in the design, installation and maintenance of sustainable building technologies and practice relating to both restoration works and new developments.
- ▮ Extension of activities in dry land farming, natural resource management and water management at the National Centre for Sustainability's Sunraysia Institute of TAFE campus.

- ▮ Development and delivery of training programs for the design, installation and maintenance of water recycling and water efficient technologies and practices at the Centre for Environmental Technology at the Geelong Gordon Institute of TAFE.

### 13.11 Sustainable schools

**We will expand environmental sustainability programs to more Victorian schools through an investment of \$500,000.**

We will evaluate a number of key environmental education programs, including the *Sustainable Schools Challenge* and the Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative (AuSSI Vic), to provide direction for the roll out of environmental sustainability across all Victorian schools.

We will extend methods used by AuSSI Vic in programs like *Waste Wise Schools*, into the areas of biodiversity, energy use and water use. This will provide schools with stronger links between schools, their communities and the environment.

*The Sustainable Schools Challenge* is currently being trialled in 40 schools, encouraging Victorians to undertake 10 sustainable actions in the home.

The AuSSI Vic program is aligned with the Department of Education and Training's curriculum directions as outlined in the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS).