



## AUSTRALIAN INNOVATION CONVERTS CRUSHED VACUUM CLEANERS INTO QUALITY SOFAS

One of Victoria's oldest continuous manufacturing companies is breaking new ground by supplying a sustainable alternative to timber components in the production of fine quality commercial furniture. Wharington International have supplied tens of thousands of resin shells to the top end of the contract commercial and international markets since the 1970's. Initially the shells were manufactured using virgin ABS resin but the oil crisis led Wharington to investigate viable alternatives and develop new technology.

ABS (Acrylonitrile, Butadiene and Styrene) Resin is an engineering grade resin used for the casings and parts of home appliances such as vacuum cleaners, telephones, televisions, videos, washing machines and refrigerators. It is also commonly used in computers, printers, photocopiers, answering machines, scientific equipment and toner cartridges. A large majority of these disposed products presently go to landfill.

The manufacture of RECOPOL™ mouldings redeems waste material destined for landfill, recovering a valuable resource and converting it into high quality, innovative products with an indefinite lifecycle.

RECOPOL™ mouldings, which incorporate up to 75% recycled ABS resin, were developed to replace both timber and virgin resin. They are also fully recyclable and can be disassembled for re-upholstery, reshaped for re-styling or re-manufactured into another furniture shell, a planter pot or a compost bin.

Working with the National Centre for Design at RMIT University,

Wharington International undertook a EcoRe-Design™2 program which identified RECOPOL™'s potential in the growing environmentally aware green markets both in Australia and overseas.



Granulated recycled ABS resin.

*The complex shapes achievable with RECOPOL™ mouldings provide designers with a sophisticated medium with which they can create highly styled furniture that is considered too expensive to produce with conventional timber technology.*

RECOPOL™ also offers designers, manufacturers and specifiers the opportunity to create sustainable products that are pre-designed for production, reducing costs through reducing the number of components, minimising assembly time and reducing upholstery.

Yvette Karklins, Wharington's Marketing Manager, is passionate about the benefits of RECOPOL™ and is confident that it will give Wharington International a competitive edge in an industry under pressure to respond to changing markets. According to Ms Karklins Wharington International operates the only plant of this kind in the world.

Ms Karklins believes the survival of the Australian furniture industry lies in the choice between positioning as a low cost / high volume Asian

manufacturer or supplying high fashion / high quality products. Whilst she suggests that Australia can still compete on the low cost / high volume end Wharington International believes the future is



in the top end European and American markets.

These markets are increasingly demanding green products and are legislating accordingly. To export our products Australia must meet these standards and supply low-pollutant, low-waste products with either take-back schemes or recyclability integrated into the design of the product.

With RECOPOL™ Wharington has created a clear example of products that enhance design excellence whilst ensuring real benefits for the environment by minimising waste to landfill, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, conserving a valuable resource and helping to preserve the earth's fragile biodiversity through reduced demand for forest products. ●

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water use

## HOTELS AWASH WITH WATER CONSERVATION IDEAS

While many of us have been 'waking up' to the need for environmental awareness Sydney's Hotels have been committed to environmental programs and contributing to the formulation of industry-wide standards and benchmarks since 1991.

In 1987 the Inter-Continental installed water restrictors in bathrooms. Since then restrictors have also been installed in kitchens, sensors in urinals, and a water reclaiming unit has been designed and installed in the laundry, reducing the Hotel's water consumption by 30%.

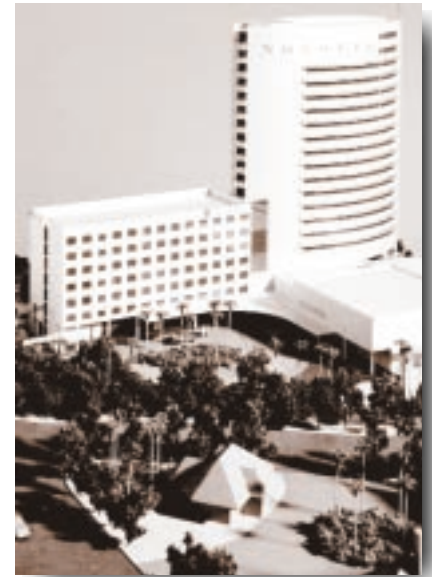
Andy Goonesekera, Chief Engineer, Hotel Inter-Continental, Sydney, is particularly pleased with the impact of water meters he had installed throughout the building. Consumption is monitored at various points in the building and each department is charged for their own water consumption.

According to Andy environmental concerns were not a priority when the building was designed and his focus has been to retrofit many energy and waste management concepts into the existing plant. Pay-back, when retrofitting, can be significantly longer than when concepts are incorporated at the design phase.

The hotel has been recognised internationally as a leading "green hotel" and featured many times in best practise case studies.

Accor's Novotel & Hotel Ibis due to open at the Olympic site in late 1999, are among the first hotels in Australia to incorporate world's best practise environmental goals into the design of the original plant. General Manager, Neil Scanlan aims to develop the new hotels as a role model for Accor's entire hotel chain in Australia.

The new hotels target is to reduce potable water use by 50%. They



The Novotel & Hotel Ibis model.

have installed efficient tap and shower fittings and will capture rainwater for irrigation. Reclaimed water will be used for flushing toilets, irrigation and fire facilities. Water conservation strategies will also be implemented in the kitchen and housekeeping. ●

## green games update

### GREEN GAMES WATCHDOG AWARDS BHP GOLD



"Steel is playing an integral role in the delivery of the Green Games"

Green Games Watch (GGW 2000), the government appointed 'watchdog' organisation, recently awarded BHP, along with IBM, number one in environmental performance. The award recognises BHP's systematic approach to energy / emissions reduction.

As the preferred construction material for the Games, steel had to measure up against strict

ecologically sustainable development (ESD) principles. Eco-rating assessment evaluated the environmental impact of every material throughout it's life-cycle, considering factors such as recyclability, energy consumption and by-product waste.

Steel was chosen because it met or exceeded the environmental benchmarks. In fact, BHP's Life Cycle Analysis (LCA) model is so highly regarded that this life-cycle assessment is now being applied to the entire Homebush Bay site.

BHP's Olympic association has helped spread the message of environmental awareness throughout their organisation. Environmental programs including,

improved communication with green groups; Port Kembla's BHP 2000 Environmental Awareness Program; Olympic Landcare; Olympic life-cycle analysis; and environmental solutions in Olympic venues have involved staff from the shop floor to the corridors of BHP Tower.

BHP Director of Environment and Community Relations, Ian Wood said the Games are "inspiring and motivating employees to refresh their commitment to environmental performance." He believes that the momentum created by BHP's Green Games association will live on, "...beyond the Games the environment will always be an integral part of the BHP business and part of our day-to-day lives." ●



## BLANK BUT NOT BROKEN

Next time your computer screen goes blank - it doesn't necessarily mean it is broken; it's just doing it's bit for the environment!

The average PC produces 620kg of greenhouse pollution per year, which is equivalent to a car travelling 1,000 km a year. When Energy Star is enabled the equipment literally slows down to use the minimum amount of energy required. In the case of PC's, the

screen will turn black, but is reactivated simply by moving the mouse or hitting any key.

Unlike screen savers which do not save energy, Energy Star reduces each machine's energy consumption by 50-75%, equivalent to saving nearly 45 tonnes of greenhouse gas and taking 10 cars off the road for good.

Having Energy Star enabled on office equipment (computers,



monitors, faxes and photocopiers) not only reduces greenhouse pollution - it also lowers the energy bill. ●

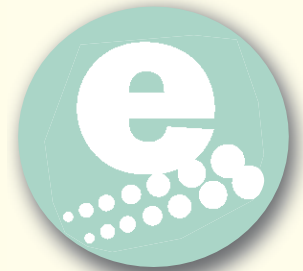
energy

## WHY WE NEED TO IMPROVE ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND REDUCE GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

- The earth's global temperature in 1998 was the hottest on record since 1860 according to the World Meteorological Organisation. 1999 is expected to be the 20th consecutive year with an above normal global surface temperature!
- Australia's emissions of harmful greenhouse gases are amongst the highest, per person, in the world.
- Britain's Hadley Centre for Climate Change have completed modelling on the world's biggest

super-computer and their findings include:

- ▶ land temperature will go up six degrees by the end of next century.
- ▶ the number of people on the coast subject to flooding each year will rise from five million now to 100 million by 2050 and 200 million by 2080.
- ▶ another 30 million people will be hungry in 50 years because it will be too dry to grow crops in large parts of Africa.



- ▶ an extra 170 million people will live in countries with extreme water shortages.
- ▶ malaria will threaten much larger areas of the world, including Europe by 2050.



## VISY PUTS YOU IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL BOX SEAT

Visy has environmentally responsible options for manufacturers such as cardboard pallets (which can hold over one tonne of weight) and Corrupad, a cardboard replacement for polystyrene packing. Corrupad offers the same strength and protection but with less bulk. Otor, Visy's new 8 sided box, is another innovation that maximises pack strength and space

while minimising production costs.

As a provider to the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, Visy has come up with an innovative box design to house the uniquely shaped Olympic torch. Designers worked with SOCOG to achieve their objectives of packaging minimisation, strength and bulk handling / storage ease.

As end users of the waste paper

they collect, Visy provides a complete closed loop recycling system, assisting companies in meeting recommended environmental guidelines. This will become increasingly important with the introduction of the National Packaging Covenant.

For more information, please contact Keathea Henderson 03 9248 2109. ●

paper use



Officecare News aims to provide practical information for how business can reduce its impact on the environment. If you would like information about an environmental issue in your office please send your questions to: Graham Cavanagh-Downs, Officecare News, PO Box 380 Rosebery NSW 2018.

Graham Cavanagh-Downs is the Divisional Manager in charge of remanufacturing & logistics. He is a long time supporter of environmental workplace issues and currently sits on the NSW Landcare Board.

LANDCARE NEWS



Fuji Xerox volunteers at Ravenswood Victoria.

Landcare's biggest ever project!

On the 4th and 5th September 1999, volunteers and families planted over 500,000 trees in degraded sites around Australia alongside community volunteers, famous Olympians and other landcarers.

Olympic Landcare is a three-year project to plant two million trees in over 600 sites in the lead up to the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, with each site dedicated to our greatest Olympic heroes.

letters to the editor

Question:

I work for a small service based organisation employing 5 people. Although I am personally interested in the environment and conserving resources I wonder how much I can do in my workplace?

Answer:

There are many ways a small company can improve its environmental performance. Here are some ideas you can easily implement:

- Choose office equipment that operates efficiently - and use it efficiently. This will not only reduce waste, but you will save money on electricity, paper, toner and other supplies.
- Use the e-mail or the phone instead of faxes these options are just as time efficient, and do not use paper.
- Print on both sides of the paper when photocopying long documents.
- Improve environmental awareness in your business and educate your employees on how they can make a difference.
- Consider the type of paper you use. Does it have a recycled content? Origin of the paper? Less transportation and energy is used for Australian made papers.

Question:

Our business is currently looking into the process of applying for ISO 14001 accreditation. We are a medium sized organisation and already have an environmental policy and programmes and we are an accredited quality organisation. What are the benefits of the EMS accreditation system?

Answer:

An Environmental Management System (EMS) built around the particular parameters of your company and it's management objectives will assist you in developing an efficient "Plan, Do, Check, Act" cycle. It is also a necessary requirement in applying for ISO 14001 accreditation.

ISO 9000, the series of standards devoted to 'quality assurance', is a good foundation upon which to build an ISO14001 EMS. If your company is an accredited quality organisation, you are already well on the way.

Implementing an EMS that will gain ISO accreditation will require a high level of commitment. You will need wholehearted senior management support, including, ideally the board of directors.



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