

The Australian Eco Labelling Program

At last, Eco Labelling has reached Australia. In an initiative set up by The Australian Environmental Labelling Association, consumers will soon be able to easily differentiate between environmentally harmful products and those developed as greener products that have a significantly lower environmental impact.

Petar Johnson, of the AELA discussed the need for such a label; "With the growth of cleaner production and design for environmental programs and their increasing uptake by industry there is now a greater diversity of environmental impacts between products that may otherwise appear similar. The point becomes clear if we observe the environmental loads of using recycled plastic instead of new plastic resin for a product."

The International Standards Organisation has developed a standard to guide environmental labelling programs. The AELA has committed to follow these standards in general conformance to ISO 14 024. In doing so, the Eco Labelling program will give the consumer guidance as to the overall environmental load of a product or service by examining the entire life cycle stages of a product or service including; extraction of resources, manufacturing, distribution, use and disposal. This will eliminate the confusion that currently exists in environmental labelling where single issue labelling such as ozone depletion, greenhouse gases and biodiversity labels can mislead consumers

from truly understanding the concept of the overall environmental load of products.



So far, the Association has issued three voluntary environmental labelling standards addressing; adhesives, recycled plastic and recycled rubber products. There are also current draft standards for computers, wool carpets, lead – acid batteries, gypsum plasterboard and paper pending release.

The AELA holds seminars detailing the key procedures to gaining the Ecolabel from a manufacturing perspective and provides an overview of the benefits from certification.

Officeware members are also invited to participate in the creation of the "Green Office Standard", an ecolabel for the environmental accreditation of offices. The Australian Environmental Labelling Association Inc is a non-profit Canberra based organisation with a national membership of environmental, industry and policy professionals. The Ecolabel program will be launched in mid-2002.

For further information please visit www.aela.org.au

DID YOU KNOW?

The NSW Chamber of Commerce in 2001 presented studies identifying the market for sustainable products:

- **60% of all consumer decisions are made with an awareness of environmental impacts.**
- **73% of people stated they would prefer to buy a product associated with a good cause if the same quality.**
- **49% said they would switch brands if necessary.**

DID YOU KNOW?

- **Australia produces over 18 million waste tyres per year**
- **Australia currently has 50 million tyres in stock piles that represent an infestation and fire hazard**
- **The world produces an estimated 1 billion tyres per year**
- **It takes a tyre 250 years to bio-degrade**
- **Currently, less than 7% of tyres are recycled in Australia: About 20% are incinerated, 20% are disposed of improperly and 50% are disposed of via landfill. (Environmental Protection Agency Report, 2001)**

Ecoflex Provides a Solution:

With the reality of the environmental damage caused by tyre disposal and the fact that the reduction of waste tyre generation is not foreseeable, the creators of Ecoflex Australia Pty Ltd, have invested over \$3 Million, over the past five years, in researching technology that can provide alternative uses for Australia's used tyres.

Ecoflex has successfully developed and commercialised waste tyre recycling systems that are environmentally safe, commercially sustainable and able to significantly reduce the disposal of waste tyres by way of landfill or other environmentally harmful methods. The Ecoflex System is a range of engineering technologies and building products that provide extremely cost effective applications to existing products in mining, marine and agricultural projects.

The system contributes to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions as the recycling process uses minimal energy consumption compared to the production of virgin materials. Through use of the Ecoflex System, a large proportion of used tyres could be removed from the waste stream and placed in long life civil construction applications while reducing construction costs by an average of 25%.

The Ecoflex system involves converting used tyres into concrete slabs for residential and commercial buildings, retaining walls, erosion control systems, wave barriers and even roads and paving.

With over 200 demonstration projects completed, the Ecoflex System is a proven success that comes with a number of certifications from independent authorities. Ecoflex has been welcomed into the Australian Technology Showcase and recognised for its technological and environmental contributions by a variety of leaders in the construction industry, engineering industry, waste management and environment organisations, members of government and academia.

For more information visit their website:

www.ecoflex.com.au ●



The Race to find an Alternative to Oil

“Many companies have pumped thousands of dollars into the research and development of an alternative solution to fuel.”



There have been many developments in the past year in finding a solution to the world's motor transport oil and pollution problems. Many companies have pumped thousands of dollars into the research and development of an alternative solution to fuel. The diverse nature of the industries involved and the products being launched is evidence of the market demand for an environmentally friendly alternative.

For the moment, Honda is leading the way with the Honda Insight. Insight is the result of years of development in areas of fuel economy, low emissions and aerodynamic body design. It uses a hybrid petrol/electric powertrain to achieve a world-best 2.8 Litres per 100km highway cycle. This is about half the fuel consumption of a four-door sedan! While at \$50,000 dollars, the Insight is expected to sell in small quantities in Australia, the outstanding achievement is that the technology is available to create and market an environmentally friendly, energy smart vehicle.

A Japanese Toymaker has also risen to the challenge that faces the automotive industry. Japan's third largest toy maker, Takara has unveiled two single-seat electric cars due to hit the market around September this year. The battery-powered vehicles – a “2010” sports car and a vintage-style model, can be driven on the road, with an eight hour battery charge giving them an 80km

range. The battery can be charged from an ordinary socket. The car can run at speeds of up to 60km per hour and does require a licence. As the car was designed as a toy for adults, the company President Keita Sato said his company will not be taking on the likes of auto giants anytime soon. However, the potential success of the car may lead to interesting turns in Research & Development in this industry.

A further development in the quest for alternatives for oil has been the fad now taking off in Europe for electric bicycles. Powered by batteries charged from solar cells, the electric bicycle makes a good substitute for car trips of less than 10 kilometers. These state of the art electric bicycles have been designed to ensure that the power assist is not used to recklessly ride at speeds of more than 25 km/hr on roads or pathways. Electric bicycles conforming to European Union regulations are now being mass-produced in Japan, Taiwan and China for the growing Japanese, Chinese and European markets. Unfortunately, Australian consumers will not have access to these power assisted bicycles because of one regulation in the Australian Road Rules. Australians will not be able to legally ride these bikes until the government revises the Australian Road Regulations, so that the 200 watt maximum power output for electric bicycles can be increased to 250 watts to bring it into line with the EU regulations. ●

Complete Office Refurbishment

why replace your old
office furniture at great cost

...When you can make it
look like

new !

for a fraction
of the price



Andrew Gould, managing director of Complete Office Refurbishment has long held the belief that “an attractive work environment is the ideal way to achieve office productivity gains and enhance corporate image.” However, he also recognises the significant costs that can be associated with such change, both financially and environmentally, noting that on many occasions perfectly good furniture is discarded in order to make way for a new office colour scheme or “look”. In order to alleviate costs for business as well as to divert waste to landfill, Gould created Complete Office Refurbishment. Based in Sydney, COR is a 100% Australian owned company who specialise in creating new look offices, using the customers existing furniture.

With an ISO 9002 Quality endorsement, COR colour match and recycle furniture to look like new by electro-spraying, steam cleaning, re-upholstering and repairing filing cabinets, safes, elevator doors, desks, window frames, hand rails, chairs, lounges, and workstation screens to name a few. COR arranges pick up and delivery, as well as replacement furniture for the duration of the process. Staff at COR are also willing to work outside normal office hours to minimise disruption to the workplace.

Past clients have included The University of Sydney, Movecorp, Connell Wagner and Lend Lease. Some of these contracts involved diverting thousands of pieces of furniture from landfill. Each of these clients reported their satisfaction with COR’s work.

For further information, please visit www.cor.com.au ●

Note from the Editor

Welcome to another edition of the Fuji Xerox Officecare News. Fuji Xerox Australia has been supporting the Officecare program now for four years and it has become an integral part of Fuji Xerox's environmental commitment. For those who have been a member of Officecare for some time you will be familiar with this newsletter which is a key piece of communication to our members. The newsletter aims to fill a niche in the market for information on corporate 'good news' stories in relation to the environment. We hope to spread the word about all of the innovative ways businesses are dealing with challenges in relation to waste, energy, water and paper. Also the newsletter aims to keep you up to date on tools and resources available to business to help you track, manage and understand the impact your business has on the environment.

One of the challenges we have with the newsletter right now is to get more of our members onto an email distribution system so as to reduce the need to provide a printed newsletter. Last year we began email drive to all of our Fuji Xerox staff Australia wide which saves us paper and money on the cost of printing. If you want to receive your copy on email and have not yet let us know please email Ina.Mullin@aus.xerox.com.

So I hope you enjoy another edition. We welcome your feedback and your input please write or email us if you have news or information about sustainable business practices you would like to share with our members.

Regards



Anne Cherry
Communications Manager
Fuji Xerox Australia



Innovative New Web Site Measure Car Pollutants

Hot on the heels of the Australian Greenhouse Calculator, and using much of its technology, the Environmental Protection Authority, Victoria and the RACV have jointly launched the Car EcoMeter on their respective Internet sites.

The Car EcoMeter was developed in partnership by EPA Victoria and RACV and is now available in the "Motoring" section of www.racv.com.au and at www.epa.vic.gov.au.

The EcoMeter gives motorists the ability to measure how much their vehicle is impacting on the environment and can also show motorists how much money they can save through their regular vehicle maintenance and smoother driving.

By answering a series of simple questions relating to your motor vehicle, the Car EcoMeter can calculate how much fuel your car uses and the impact this has on the environment.

Dr Brian Robinson, the EPA Victoria Chairman, stated that "Motor vehicles are the major cause of air pollution in modern society. Their emissions continue to have a huge impact on the quality of our air, particularly in urban areas. This tool will enable motorists to measure their impacts on our environment and take action to improve air quality." There is a range of information available on both the RACV and EPA web sites that explains to motorists the many ways that motorists can dramatically reduce the impact of their vehicles on our environment. ●

join the offic^ecare program!

The Offic^ecare Program is sponsored by Fuji Xerox Australia. Offic^ecare encourages people who work in offices to reduce, reuse and recycle.

For more information about Offic^ecare, to receive a free Offic^ecare kit and a newsletter, or to change your address details:

Please write to Offic^ecare: 114 Joynton Ave. Zetland NSW 2017 Phone 8345 2863 or visit our website on: www.fujixerox.com.au/environment

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