

**Question on Notice  
No. 1775  
Asked on 9 November 2005**

QUESTION:

MR ENGLISH asked the Minister for Environment, Local Government, Planning and Women (Ms Boyle)—

What benefit is the ecoBiz program bringing to business 'bottom lines' and the environment in Redlands?

ANSWER:

Since the launch of the ecoBiz program in June 2004, over 100 companies across Queensland have joined the program and committed to making improvements in materials, energy and water consumption, and in the production of wastes and greenhouse gas. By showcasing what businesses can achieve through eco-efficiency, the ecoBiz program encourages others to adopt similar practices and realise similar gains.

Over half a million dollars has already been committed in ecoBiz rebate funding to assist companies to implement the eco-efficient opportunities that are identified through the program. Substantial community benefits are also created by the program through the increased availability of energy and water for further economic development and the deferral of costly upgrades to electricity, water and wastewater infrastructure.

In September 2004, the Redlands Shire Council (the Council) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding to formalise the co-operative management of the ecoBiz program within the Shire. The Council also joined the ecoBiz program as a participant in March 2005 in order to set an example to local businesses by improving their own resource use.

Over six months the Council recruited seven businesses into the program, including Alchemy Cordials in Capalaba, the Good Guys in Capalaba, Darwalla Milling and Sirromet Wines in Mt Cotton, and Sheldon College in Sheldon.

Since implementing the ecoBiz program, three of the local participants have achieved outstanding results for the environment and the company's bottom line.

- After implementing projects under the ecoBiz program **Stradbroke Ferries** has reduced its water consumption from 3.1 megalitres to 1.8 megalitres in 6 months, which represents a saving of 42%.
- **Redlands Nursery** has reduced both energy use and waste generation by 35% over 9 months. Redlands Nursery Managing Director, Mr John Bunker said that the ecoBiz program "has been of commercial benefit to our company and compliments existing initiatives of cost management of all internal processes".
- In the four-month period from March to June 2005, **the Good Guys in Capalaba** reduced their operational energy consumption by 12%.

However, the most significant results they have achieved are directly linked to the community. Since joining the ecoBiz program in July 2004, they have created substantial benefits for their business, the customer and the environment through the promotion of energy and water efficient appliances. The store saw a 190% increase in sales of eco-efficient front-loading washing machines. This equates to annual savings of 17 million to 24 million litres of water and a reduction of 105 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions. Owners of these front-loading machines also enjoy a saving of over a third of the electricity costs relative to top-loading models.

The Redlands Shire Council is to be congratulated for the leadership that it has demonstrated through its participation in the EPA's ecoBiz program, as should the local businesses that have been working hard to unlock the potential business and community benefits of eco-efficiency.