

Energy Wise Schools Program

Working with local schools to raise awareness and improve energy efficiency

Summary

The Energy Wise Schools Program works with six local schools each year to improve energy efficiency and to raise awareness among students about energy use behaviour and the implications for the Great Barrier Reef. One of the objectives of the Great Barrier Reef Climate Change Action Plan is to work with communities to reduce climate footprints. By sponsoring the Energy Wise Schools Program for the 2008 and 2009 school years, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority contributes towards meeting this goal.

Background

Based out of the Holloways Beach Environmental Education Centre, a Queensland Department of Education hub, the Energy Wise Schools Program emphasises the actions that can be taken to save energy, money and the environment.

The broader value of this pilot program is in raising awareness and encouraging 'best management practice' in state government curriculum and activities, while recognising that effective protection and management of the Reef requires partnerships at all levels of government, schools and community.



Photos courtesy of Innisfail Advocate

Objectives

- Improve energy efficiency within participating schools leading to reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and electricity usage (overall target was 10% reduction in Kilowatt hours used in the first year)
- Spread energy efficiency practices to students' homes, non participating schools and the wider community.



Project name: Energy-Wise Schools Program

Project number: 4.3B.414.1.07

Outcome: D2

Year: 2007- 2008

Bulletin type: Launch



Outcomes

Average reductions in electricity usage by the schools over the first year of the program ranged from 8% to 33%.

During the first year of the Program, data collection was only consistent across all the participating schools during the 2nd and 3rd quarters of the school year, therefore preliminary calculations in reductions are based on figures from these quarters (Energy Wise Schools Program Annual Report 2008).

Outputs

- 1) A Memorandum of Understanding document drafted in consultation with each participating school, indicating an intended common line of action regarding energy efficiency practices and agreed targets and performance indicators.
- 2) An Action Plan developed by each school to embed Energy Wise activities into whole of school curriculum.
- 3) Energy Wise Schools Program Annual Report, including energy efficiency practices implemented by the schools, milestones and performance indicators.

| School | % Reduction in average daily Kilowatt usage |
|----------------------------|---|
| Babinda State School | 13% |
| Bartle Frere State School | 8% |
| Machans Beach State School | 15% |
| Mourilyan State School | 16% |
| Miriwinni State School | 33% |

Actions

For the six participating schools, Energy Wise actions and Reef Guardian initiatives were incorporated into:

- 1) The school curriculum
- 2) Projects including energy efficiency, recycling, compost and worm farms
- 3) Community education and involvement (e.g. Earth Hour)
- 4) Partnerships with councils and local businesses

Future Directions

It is hoped that other schools and communities become aware of the positive changes made by those participating in the Energy Wise Schools Program and are inspired to take measures to reduce their own emissions.

*For further information contact the:
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Discussing energy issues as part of the Energy Wise Schools Program

