

## TASK FORCE FIGHTS ENERGY AND WATER WASTAGE IN DAREBIN

Wednesday 6 January 2010

Jika Jika Community Centre was the first house in Darebin to have a visit from the Energy and Water Task Force - who installed a range of products that will keep the house cooler in summer and warmer in winter, help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and most importantly, save money on their energy and water bills.

The Task Force is available completely free of charge to households in the southern suburbs of Darebin (Northcote, Westgarth, Fairfield, Alphington and Thornbury) that have a Centrelink Health Care or Pensioner Concession card.

It is coordinated by Sustainability Victoria and since 2003 the program has assisted over 6,000 households across Victoria to cut their energy bills. Supported by both Yarra and Darebin Councils the services are delivered by Australian owned environmental company Low Energy Supplies and Services (LESS).

Jika Jika is also part of the Greener Houses Growing Greener Neighbourhoods, and Project Manager Linda Parlane said they came into contact with the Task Force just as their volunteers were about to embark on the huge task of retrofitting the Plant Street and East Street Buildings.

"The Task Force contacted us looking for somewhere to train their staff and we realised we could help each other out," said Linda.

"One of the Jika buildings dates back to 1920 so it's really draughty and we knew we would have to put in some draught stripping.

"The Task Force contacted us at exactly the right time and did an incredible job of stripping both houses top-to-bottom and insulated one of the halls, completely free of charge.

"It's immediately made the buildings much more comfortable for the community visiting the centre and will significantly reduce the energy bill for Jika Jika," said Linda.

Adjustable wall vents were installed at both buildings and ceiling insulation provided for one of them and Linda says she would definitely recommend other eligible homes to take up the offer.

"The Task Force guys were really enthusiastic and friendly, good at their job and the work was done really well," said Linda.

"I would definitely recommend them and if people would like to see the kind of thing the Task Force can do then they are welcome to visit Jika Jika."

The Energy and Water Task Force service is **AVAILABLE FREE OF CHARGE**. A trained and police checked team can assess the energy and water efficiency of a home, and where required install:

- Energy-saving light bulbs
- Low-flow shower roses
- Brush and rubber door strips along bottom of doors
- Weather sealing around doors and windows
- Adjustable wall vents over existing non-adjustable wall vents
- 'Draft stoppas' over kitchen and bathroom ceiling vents
- Blinds and pelmets in living area (maximum 3 of each per household)
- Ceiling insulation over living area
- Lagging (insulation) over external hot water pipes
- Replacement tap washers

To be eligible for the Energy and Water Task Force project, you must:

- Hold a current Pensioner Concession Card or Centrelink Health Care Card
- Live within the City of Yarra or southern suburbs of the City of Darebin (Northcote, Westgarth, Fairfield, Alphington and Thornbury)

Owner occupiers and tenants in both private and public housing are eligible to participate in the project.

**To book a free installation of energy and water saving products, please contact Low Energy Supplies & Services on 1300 882 412**

**For media comment contact Peta Cooper 0425 294 490**