



Householders' Options to Protect the Environment Inc.

PO Box 6118 – Clifford Gardens, TOOWOOMBA QLD 4350

(22 Vacy Street, Toowoomba QLD 4350)

Ph 07 4639 2135; Email: office@hopeaustralia.org.au

Website: <http://www.hopeaustralia.org.au>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/Householders.Options.to.Protect.the.Environment>

ABN 48 036 173 161

HOPE E-news Bulletin 2018 #11 --- November 2018

The following items have been gathered from various e: newsletters received by HOPE in recent times; and/or prepared specifically by HOPE members and supporters. If you have any news to contribute, please forward to office@hopeaustralia.org.au. Deadline for articles is 15th day of the month.

Editorial

Good afternoon folks,

Where does the time go!? Doing general office duties, preparing paperwork for November meetings AND compiling this newsletter has been quite difficult.

So, if anyone is interested and available to take on the role of Newsletter Editor, I would be most appreciative.

Enquiries may be directed to the office by emailing office@hopeaustralia.org.au or by phoning 07 4639 2135.

Regards,

Frank Ondrus, Office Manager – HOPE Inc., ph 07 4639 2135

2018 National/International Events Calendar

November

- 5 [World Tsunami Awareness Day](#)
- 10 **HOPE Annual general Meeting; following by 1st Ordinary Meeting of 2018-2019**
- 11-18 [Pollinator Week](#)
- 12-18 [National Recycling Week](#)
- 14 [International GIS Day](#)
- 21 [World Fisheries Day](#)

December

- 5 [International Volunteer Day](#)
 - 5 [World Soil Day](#)
 - 10 [Human Rights Day](#)
 - 10 **HOPE End-of-Year Social**
 - 11 [International Mountain Day](#)
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Wanted – Photocopy paper

HOPE has used up its current stock of photocopy paper and we are asking our members and supporters to donate a ream or two of A4 photocopy paper. Donations of paper can be left on the table in the carport at 22 Vacy St, Toowoomba.

Alternately, cash or cheque donations can be made online at <http://www.hopeaustralia.org.au/annual-pledgedonation/> or posted to HOPE Inc., PO Box 6118 -Clifford Gardens Toowoomba QLD 4350.

HOPE News --- November 2018

Good morning,

Most of November has been spent on preparing for our "Annual General Meeting" and "1st Ordinary Meeting of the new committee for 2018-2019" which will be held on Saturday 10 November 2018.

For those of you already on the committee or assisting with various admin roles, I would appreciate your support by either continuing in your current role or stepping sideways/up to help manage HOPE during 2018-2019. I'm happy to continue as President and Office Manager.

2 current key vacancies are Newsletter Editor and Website Administrator.

For those of you hoping to attend the 10 November meetings, please RSVP by Thursday 8 November to assist with seating and catering arrangements (morning tea and lunch).

For those of you who are unable to attend, but would like to make comment and/or contribute suggestions, etc., please email your remarks to office@hopeaustralia.org.au by Friday 9 November 2018.

Lastly, our end-of-year social will once again be an evening meal at Toowoomba's City Golf Club. Further details will be published in the December newsletter.

Regards,

Frank Ondrus, President / Office Manager – HOPE Inc., ph 07 4639 2135

Volunteers needed

More active volunteers – both local and remote (i.e. online) – are required to help us maintain our level of activity. Volunteers are needed to help with projects, events and display activities, as well as general admin duties and media/publications work. We invite members and supporters to step up and volunteer some time and talents to help share the workload. Current vacancies include: Researchers; Media Officers; Publications Team members; and Newsletter Editor

Please contact the office on 07 4639 2135 or email office@hopeaustralia.org.au to offer your assistance.

A fair portion of the above work would ideally be done by locals (i.e. in the Toowoomba area) because the HOPE office is in Toowoomba. However, quite a bit of the literature review, research, media and publications activity can be done via email. If you have a little bit of time to help us in any way, then contact the HOPE office on email office@hopeaustralia.org.au or phone (07) 4639 2135.

Current volunteer positions available are:

- Researchers – required to review and comment on a range of discussion papers, policy documents and reports provided by government departments, business and industry organisations and NGOs.
 - Media Officers – required to write media releases, event notices, date claimers and design promotional flyers/posters for projects, campaigns, events and activities
 - Publications Team members – required to write information articles for our newsletter; website summaries; and assist with the development of PowerPoint presentations and information sheets
 - **Newsletter Editor** – required to write and/or source articles and other items for compilation into monthly E: News Bulletin
 - Social Media Assistant – required to source and post suitable 'environmental' content items regularly on HOPE's Facebook and Twitter accounts
 - **Website Content Maintenance Assistant** – required to perform weekly updates and routine maintenance as provided by Office Manager
-

Helpful Hints

Saving Energy in the Home

By Mark Diesendorf



In the age of high electricity and gas prices, we can save money and protect the planet by reducing the wastage of energy in our homes. Although the use of renewable energy is growing rapidly, the majority of electricity in the eastern mainland states of Australia still comes from burning coal, the most polluting of all fuels in terms of greenhouse gas emissions, air pollution and land degradation.

When we save one unit of electrical energy from burning fossil fuels, we actually save three units of fuel energy, the source of pollution. This is because of the low efficiency of burning coal and gas in a power station – two-thirds of the energy stored in the fuel is lost as waste heat. So, energy conservation and energy efficiency can make a difference!

This article sets out some of the ways we can save energy and money in the home. For most Australian households, the biggest energy using activities are space heating/cooling, water heating and the refrigerator. Heating is unlikely to be important in most of Queensland, but cooling is.

The suggested actions listed in Table 1 can be implemented by all households, including those in rental accommodation. In the latter case the household cannot make changes to the structure of the building or fix any equipment onto the roof. Table 2 provides additional actions for people who own their own homes. No doubt, you, the reader, will think of additional actions omitted from the tables.

In each table, I've attempted to list actions in order of increasing costs. Generally, the cheapest actions involve changes in behaviour and the more expensive involve buying a bit of technology.

If you haven't already done so, join the Alternative Technology Association (recently renamed 'Renew') and obtain their excellent magazine ReNew.

Table 1: Actions for all households

Action	Comment
Take shorter showers and fit a water efficient shower head	By saving hot water, you save household energy. You don't need a plumber.
Wash clothes with cold water	Except cloth nappies. Use appropriate detergent.
Use solar-powered clothes drier	That is, a clothes line
Check fridge is well ventilated.	Also, don't run a second fridge
If your home is centrally cooled or heated, adjust thermostat to avoid excessive cooling or heating.	
In Summer, ensure your home is well ventilated	
For Summer cooling, use electric fans and/or evaporative cooler instead of air conditioner	Evaporative cooler is unsuitable for the humid wet tropical zone
Switch off appliances that are not being used at power-point	
Replace any old incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent or LED	Although LEDs are more expensive, they last much longer than fluoros.
Use laptop instead of desk-top computer	For ergonomic reasons, buy a stand and separate keyboard for the laptop.
In Winter wear warm clothes indoors	Instead of excessive heating
In Winter, block drafts under doors with 'sausages'	Not if you use an un-flued gas heater!
In Winter, if you need to heat, only heat occupied rooms	
If working at a desk, buy a low-power heater for your legs, instead of heating the whole room	Don't forget to turn it off when leaving the desk.
Insulate windows with thick curtains	
Use a microwave cooker	Also, portable induction cookers can be plugged into standard power-points, but the cheapies may be poor quality.
If renting an unfurnished house or apartment, buy appliances (especially fridge) with the greatest number of energy stars	Although the up-front cost is higher, you will save energy and money over the lifetime of the appliance
Walk or cycle to local shops, school, etc. instead of driving	It's healthier too, provided you aren't hit by a motor vehicle

Table 2: Additional actions for home-owners

Action	Comment
Insulate the ceiling with batts	Wool batts are dearer, but better environmentally
Fit lined curtains and pelmets to windows	Except bathroom and laundry
Buy a solar powered attic ventilator	More efficient than a whirlybird, although more expensive.
Buy a solar or heat pump hot water system	Make sure it comes with an accessible switch or controller for the booster. You should be able to adjust the time period during the day when it boosts. You should be able to turn off the booster of a solar hot water system entirely for at least the Summer months.
If you have a sunny roof space, preferably north-facing, and use a significant amount of electricity in daytime, buy a solar PV system.	Don't buy a cheap and nasty system! Check guarantees. Ensure it has an inverter that's 'battery ready', so that you can install a battery when they become cheaper. Ensure it is connected to power your hot water system too.

Solutions to Plastic pollution

By Rao M Sajjad Sharif, Shahid Majeed and Erum Shahzadi, students at the University of Agriculture, Faisalabad, Pakistan

Plastic is everywhere! We love it because it is waterproof, relatively cheap, durable, and versatile. Plastic makes our lives incredibly convenient, disposable, and easy, but most people rarely think about the effects it has on the environment. Unlike other materials, it never really goes away. Plastic does break down, but in a landfill, it takes up to 400 hundred years; worse, it doesn't ever become other materials, it just breaks into microscopic pieces of plastic that are still non-biodegradable.



Bring your own cloth bags

Jute and cloth bags should be used for the shopping instead of plastic bags. Whenever you go shopping don't forget to bring the cloth bags with you. These types of personal bags may help to protect our marine and terrestrial environments.

Elimination of disposable products

The disposable items such as plastic wrap, straws, coffee-cup lids and disposable cutlery are used in our daily life. Ninety percent of these disposable products are used once and then discarded. These disposable items should be replaced with biodegradable or reusable versions.

Stop buying disposable water

Every year 22 billion plastic water bottles are thrown into the trash. These water bottles are dangerous for our marine and terrestrial ecosystems. These water bottles can easily be replaced by personal water bottles. These personal bottles are more valuable for our society, as a whole.

Recycle

Recycling is one of the most effective options! Recycling plastic takes less energy than making plastic from raw materials. Adoption of this method will lead to reducing pollution, minimize human-induced stressors, and lessen pressure from natural resources, support economy and balance the demand-waste stream.

Your idea

At this time, plastic is a fact of modern life, as is the pollution derived from it. However, with a little planning, commitment, and effort, it's easy to make steps towards reducing your carbon footprint. Here are some ideas to reduce plastic pollution:

- Recycling pick-up should be provided free everywhere (government subsidized)
- Take littering and illegal dumping seriously
- Encourage buying and selling used things
- Regulate packaging
- Implement polluter pay principle
- Reduce consumerism
- Manage demand-waste streams

The Word

As early as the 1600's, plastic was used as a term to relate to something that could be easily moulded or shaped. Plastic is derived from the Latin word **plasticus** and the Greek word **plastikos**, both meaning 'able to be molded, pertaining to molding.

- The first synthetic plastic was invented in 1909 by Leo Hendrik Baekeland and was called Bakelite. It was developed from phenol and formaldehyde. Bakelite is considered the first true plastic because it is synthetic (not based on any natural material).

Support Organizations Addressing Plastic Pollution

Diverse organizations are working to change the way plastic is viewed and plastic waste is handled - through strategic planning, communication, consumer awareness campaigns, raising business awareness, documentary films, education, cleanup campaigns, scientific research, entrepreneurial innovation, legislation and sustainability: e.g. NRDC, Oceana, and ORCA. Our little pieces of support and contribution to these can prove inspirational and courageous which enable them to work efficiently.

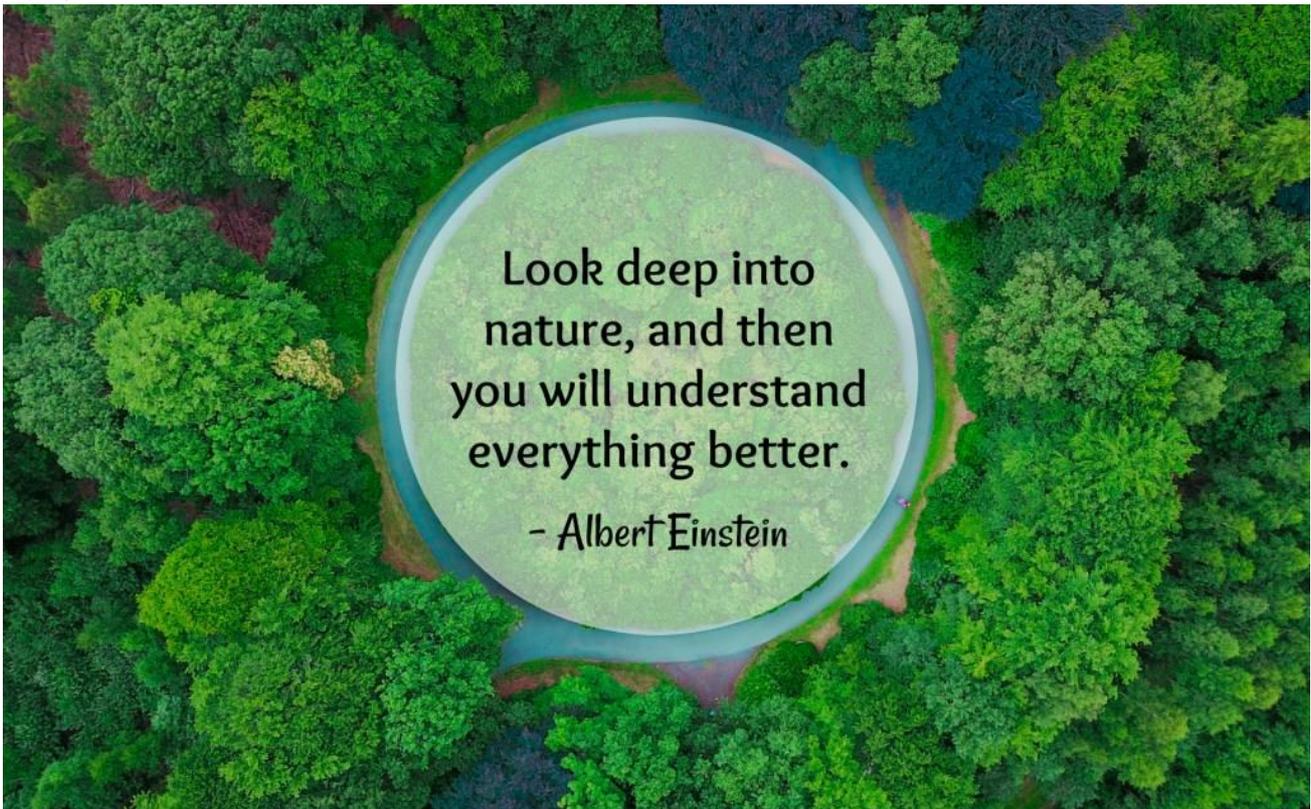
Educate Businesses:

Rapid economic growth in term of business development to win the global race is at its peak regardless of environment degradation. There should be an effective platform to amplify and unify the environment with the business sector; using an integrated approach to educate, raise awareness and charge the businesses which are contributing to plastic pollution. Ethical, legal and financial approach to adoption enforces businesses to reduce packaging, lessen plastic production, promote biodegradable products and saves ecology.

50 Inspiring Environmental Quotes

--- <https://sociallyconsciousclub.com.au/blog-50-inspiring-environmental-quotes/>

No.10



Feature Articles

Tackling the conundrum of low-carbon, low-income housing

An article from *The Fifth Estate* - Willow Aliento, 8 August 2018

Comfortable, affordable and low-carbon housing is possible, but according to experts at a recent National Forum on Low Carbon Housing for Low Income Households, there are multiple challenges that need tackling to get there.



(L-R) Dr Kate Wilson, NSW Office of Environment and Heritage; Dr Matthew Soeberg, Sustainability Victoria; Kellie Caught, Australian Council of Social Services, Professor Paul Cooper, University of Wollongong

Organised by the CRC for Low Carbon Living, ASBEC and the University of Wollongong (UOW), the forum brought together representatives from the not-for-profit sector, community housing, government agencies, architecture, energy providers, researchers and tenant advocacy groups to unpack barriers to delivering housing that is both affordable and sustainable.

Other sessions explored potential pathways to achieving the goal, including policy approaches, strategies for retrofits, how to improve performance of new builds, and the challenges of introducing mandatory minimum standards for energy efficiency in rental dwellings.

UOW Sustainable Buildings Research Centre director Professor Paul Cooper told *The Fifth Estate* that while mandatory minimum standards were needed, there were some potential negatives.

A system that assessed a home's energy performance in a robust and formal manner would give tenants and owner-occupiers an idea of what energy bills might be, but it could also have an impact on rents, he said.

Homes with good ratings could send rents and purchase prices upwards.

It is a conundrum, Professor Cooper said.

"There are all these complex problems with upsides and downsides."

The bottom line is, low-income people are "disadvantaged on several fronts".

Low-income households can't reduce use more

The CRCLCL has done a lot of work on retrofits for low-income and community housing, he said. As a result, what is clear is that those on low-incomes, especially older people, are "very frugal already".

"Older low-income people do their best to save every bit of energy they can," Professor Cooper said.

But it doesn't matter "how hard they try"; those on low incomes can only reduce their consumption so far.

There are also large families living in "dreadful accommodation" who have enormous power bills. These bills are a cause of anxiety, guilt and stress, and have a genuine mental health impact, he said.

"We see terrible things in terms of the impact of poorly performing buildings."

A session at the forum examined the impacts of energy performance on health.

Professor Cooper said that while there was currently not a considerable amount of Australian data on the relationship between energy and health, the evidence gathered so far shows that having an energy-efficient, well-insulated and thermally comfortable home leads to better health outcomes.



Monitoring of homes in areas such as the New England Tablelands, Southern Highlands and other places where it gets extremely cold has shown that for long periods of time throughout the year, people are living with indoor temperatures that are well below comfort and also below the World Health Organization recommendations for a healthy indoor environment.

Overall, there is considerable interest in the impact of home performance on people's health, both in terms of low temperatures in winter and extreme heat in summer, Professor Cooper said.

There is a broader need for health co-benefits to be factored into the cost-benefit analyses that drive government decision-making on energy and housing.

Compulsory blower door testing

Another important area in improving thermal comfort and energy efficiency of low-income housing is performance checks on newly built dwellings.

Professor Cooper said this would include air tightness testing, as a leaky house will let in cold in winter and heat in summer.

While the draft revisions to the NCC 2019 have proposed blower door tests as a voluntary demonstration of as-built performance, Professor Cooper said it should be compulsory.

More broadly, there needs to be greater focus on compliance, Professor Cooper said. This should include checks on the installation on insulation, and photographic evidence of compliance gathered throughout the build. Then, when the occupancy certificate is being produced, the builder can show it was built to the standard it was designed and approved for.

There also needs to be some kind of baseline performance standard that dwellings must conform to, in the same way that the actual performance of commercial buildings is determined using NABERS ratings.

Mandatory disclosure needed

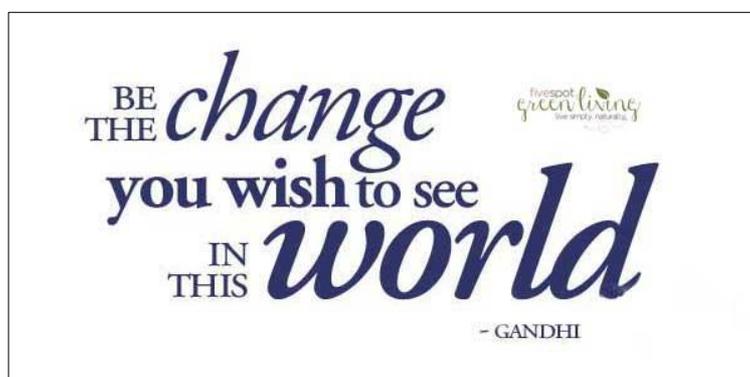
Professor Cooper said mandatory disclosure had been a positive initiative for NABERS and more broadly for the commercial buildings sector, as it has resulted in building performance improvements.

"Why are we not doing the same thing in residential?"

Another session at the forum focused on energy supply alternatives such as solar. Professor Cooper said rolling solar out was a "complex question" when it came to the low-income housing sector.

Solar PV is popular as a way of reducing household energy bills, but there is not "an unlimited amount of funds" for landlords, governments and community housing providers to spend on providing it for properties. won't reap all the rewards.

"It is not a silver bullet. We should be looking to improve thermal performance of the building first, then optimise the installation of the home solar PV system."



Queensland News

The use of public transport

By Joshua (Tin Ming Hui)

As transportation is one of the important ways to enable living, trade and work among people in particular, it links and integrates with land use and community activities. Several *Transit Oriented Development (TOD)* projects have been or will be established in South East Queensland (SEQ) to maximize the utilisation of residential, business and leisure space. It is clear that these TODs provide common transit services for pedestrians and cyclists. Through high accessibility of TOD, high quality and speedy travelling (Teal, 1987, p.203; Nagy, 2015, p.101), as well as friendly designed public spaces and streets are built up to enhance the efficiency of public transport.

The TODs are targeted to establish better living and bring up the renewal to enable energetic and sustainable communities. It aims to develop walkable, pedestrian-oriented and mixed-use community centre with the integration of existing public transport network systems. In order to maintain the continuous growth of Queensland, it is essential to further enhance high quality transportation for enhancement of city revitalization. From this point of view, the Queensland government recognised the effectiveness of TODs as it enhances in-depth discussion for further development, especially in reducing the number of vehicles on roads. Under this target, the Queensland government decided to introduce TODs in SEQ region in order to strengthen the existing public transportation network - in particular the existing TODs located at Milton and South Bank in Brisbane which improved the linkages to train stations for better transport.

Moreover, TODs have been established to accommodate new communities and employment in the new developed areas. It is known that efficient public transport infrastructure, including network can integrate transport and land use to undertake urban revitalisation and city image building as a part of the planning for the transport corridor (Department of Transport and Main Roads, 2017, p.27).

From the above points of view, most TODs are built next to a railway station to allow commuters to arrive within a short walking distance. Some newly established TODs even provide park and ride facilities to settle travellers' concern. It is obvious that there will be more TODs not only in the SEQ region, but also in other Australian cities.

(The future integration of TODs and public transportation is a topic for another time.)

References:

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Department of Transport and Main Roads, 2017, 16. Traffic and Transport, in Ipswich to Springfield Public Transport Corridor Study, Queensland Government, viewed 31 August 2017, http://www.tmr.qld.gov.au/~media/Projects/I/Ipswich-to-Springfield-Public-Transport-Corridor-Study/Pdf_ipswich_springfield_eis_16_traffic_transport.pdf

Nagy, S., 2015, Effectiveness problems at Urban Public Transport – From the perspective of the European court of auditors, Quaestus, vol. 7, pp.101–108

Teal, R.F., 1987. Carpooling: who, how and why, *Transportation Research Part A: General*, 21(3), 203-214.

HOPE's own website resources are available at <http://www.hopeaustralia.org.au/resources/>

- [eNews Bulletins](#): - informative downloadable monthly news-letters produced by HOPE
- [Sundry - HOPE](#): - a variety of HOPE publications in support of sustainable living
- [Sundry - External](#): - a collection of significant publications on a variety of topics
- [Media Activities](#): - HOPE's activities in getting the message out there & important media releases from third parties
- [Interesting Websites](#): - Listing of interesting websites looking at what others are doing to protect our planet
- [Reference Library](#): - Publications on a broad range of environmental subjects