



Householders' Options to Protect the Environment Inc.
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HOPE E-news Bulletin 2013 #1 --- 21 January 2013

The following items have been gleaned 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.

Hi!

Happy New Year to you all. Hope you had a good Christmas.

*Did you know that Australians use nearly **7 billion** plastic bags every year? And a bag is used on average for only **12 minutes**? Then they end up in landfill and become a deadly product. This nation discards 7,150 plastic bags every minute! The Queensland Conservation Council has decided to challenge you to not use a single plastic bag in the month of February. We need to support the move towards a plastic bag free Queensland. For further facts on plastic waste and how to reduce your plastic impact, please go to [Plastic Free February](#).*

Another way to reduce waste generation is to take part in a Local Energy Transfer Systems (LETS) program. You probably have things that you don't want, but that someone else would really like to have. Why not trade? Find your local LETS on <http://www.communityexchange.net.au/> and check out the article below.

Education plays an important role in reducing waste and littering. The 'Adopt a Road' program initiated by Keep Australia Beautiful (KAB) 'gives local communities the opportunity to contribute to a healthier and cleaner roadside environment'. Please read the full article below.

Also in this bulletin you'll find hints and tips on saving energy, how to travel smart and sustainably, and lots more. Don't forget to send us your feedback!

Miriam Sharp, office@hopeaustralia.org.au

Urgent!! Volunteers needed

More active volunteers – both local and remote via email – are required to help us keep the machinery of operation going. We are currently looking for a Membership Officer; media support staff and admin assistants; as well as on-ground helpers to assist with staffing information displays, and helping out at events.

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.

Office Hours

HOPE's office is open every Monday from 9am to 5pm; with the library resources available at the same time. Other times can be arranged through the office.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

Date Claimers:

February 2013

- 11-17 -- HOPE information display at Grand Central Shopping Centre, Toowoomba
- 15 -- HOPE Ordinary Meeting – Jacaranda Room, Grand Central Shopping Centre, Toowoomba
- 9-28 --Exhibitions – Reduce, Reuse, Romance – opening Saturday 9 February
Reverse Emporium's February exhibition Reduce, Reuse, Romance, celebrates Valentine's Day, Reverse Garbage-style. The exhibition will showcase up-cycled objects and art with a romantic flavour that are perfect sustainable gifts for your sweetheart! Reduce, Reuse, Romance runs from 9 - 28 February 2013, open Monday to Saturday from 9 to 5pm. Reverse Emporium, Reverse Garbage 20 Burke St Woolloongabba. More info and set times [here](#) and facebook invite [here](#).
- 23 – HOPE fund-raising Garage Sale, 22 Vacy Street, Toowoomba
- 25-26 -- Two-day Soil and Agronomy School with Dr Arden Andersen entitled '[Soil to Plate to Health](#)' at Toowoomba Motel and Events Centre. Dr Arden Andersen is a soil scientist, agricultural consultant and a physician. He specialises in the management of soils, crops and animals in productive, profitable and environmentally sustainable way. He is a consultant on education, product formulation and market development, and a world authority in biological agriculture. With his dairy farming background, Dr Andersen has a unique insight into how the food farmers grow influence the health of those who consume it.
- 27 Feb-1 March – Second Australian [Summer Study on Energy Efficiency and Decentralised Energy](#) at Novotel Sydney Brighton Beach

March 2013

- 3 - **Clean Up Australia Day** is a simple way you can take action to clean up, fix up and conserve our prized Australian environment. Be a good sport and join the winning team on Sunday 3rd March 2013 for this iconic event. Registering is simple: Find a site that needs cleaning up in your community, register online at www.cleanupaustriaday.org.au, wait for your kit to arrive, spread the word to get your family and friends to join the site and then turn up on the day for the big clean!
- 20-21 - [3rd National Sustainable Food Summit, Melbourne](#)
The [3rd National Sustainable Food Summit](#) addresses 'how do we get to where we need to go?', mapping out how transformational change might occur within our food system over the next 50 years with a focus on immediate and emerging priorities. This event is the largest and most diverse gathering of practitioners interested in the sustainability of our food system, and attracts delegates with interests across the food supply chain, including primary producers, manufacturers, retail brands, and members of the business, government, education, public health, community and not-for-profit sectors.

April 2013

- 14 - Felton Food Festival – www.feltonfoodfestival.org.au

June 2013

- 3-9 -- **Celebrating Queensland's Environment – information displays & speakers program (hosted by HOPE)**

September 2013

- 27-29 - Condamine Headwaters Landcare will host the 24th annual **Queensland Landcare Conference** in Warwick. With the theme *healthy habitats ... profitable production*, the event will take place 27 – 29 September to coincide with school holidays and make the most of majestic weather in the Southern Downs.

October

- 8-11 - [Greenhouse 2013 Conference](#): The Science of Climate Change, Adelaide Convention Centre

Office News

Welcome to 2013 and a busy program of projects, events and activities to support. Remember, the HOPE Charter http://www.hopeaustralia.org.au/uploads/media/Brochure_HOPE_Charter_2012_07.pdf is what guides our efforts here in the Toowoomba region, throughout Queensland and the rest of Australia. So wherever you live, please endeavour to support environment groups undertaking "good works" in your community. For added inspiration, why not support of the observances listed on the 2013 Environmental Events Calendar is available at www.environment.gov.au/about/media/events/index.html.

HOPE is coordinating an **appeal for gardening tools and equipment** for Toowoomba and regional Bushcare and Landcare groups. The wish list of items requested are spades, garden forks, both plastic and metal rakes, axes, long handled round nose shovels, post hole shovels and wooden handles for garden tools. Wheelbarrows, pruning saws, loppers, both chip and push hoes, crowbars, star picket driver, watering cans, small hand secateurs, small potting tools and garden gloves are also needed. Donations of the above items can be left at 22 Vacy Street, Toowoomba or picked up from the donors by prior arrangement. To find out more about the types of items needed or to organise a pick-up of items phone HOPE on 4639 2135.

Our first major information display will be held at the Grand Central Shopping Centre, Toowoomba, 11-17 February. Volunteers are required to help staff the display. Please contact the office on 4639 2135 to register your interest.

Meeting Notice: Our next quarterly Ordinary Meeting will be held on Friday, 15 February, 7pm, Jacaranda Room, Grand Central Shopping Centre, Toowoomba. Guest speaker is Mr Howard Nielsen, NAC Consulting, who will outline the establishment process for the **Darling Downs Regional Conservation Council**. All envNGOs in the Toowoomba region are invited to send delegates to this very important meeting. Bookings are essential and may be made to the HOPE office on 4639 2135 or email office@hopeaustralia.org.au.

HOPE is holding a fund-raising **Garage Sale on 23 February** (Toowoomba) and we invite members and friends to support this event by donating unwanted household items, in reasonable condition – e.g. furniture, clothing, toys, gardening tools and bric-a-brac. Donors are asked to indicate a 'sale price' for their items. Please contact the office on 4639 2135 to arrange a suitable time to deliver the goods.

Frank Ondrus, acting Office Manager, ph 07 4639 2135

Letters to the Editor

To HOPE,

I get these emails, thanks for your concern in these matters. I was recently in Nepal. A state to the east called Elam has a ban on plastic bags and a fine can be imposed on people for using any plastic bag. This region of Nepal is known for tea growing and found plastic bags are not good for the ground. So they banned them. Why can't we do it? Take Care. Thanks for your emails.

Trevor (Toowoomba)

Advertisements



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Feature Articles

LETS in AUSTRALIA

LETS (Local Energy Transfer Systems/Local Employment Trading Systems) have been operating in Australia since 1987, when the first group was set up in Maleny, Qld. There are now around 200 LETS nationally with between 20 and 200+ members.

People join the system and an account is created for them in the system, and they then have access to the skills and services of other members of that (and other) LETS systems. The buyer of the goods and services acknowledges the seller for the amount agreed on in "local units", which are deducted from the buyers account and credited to the sellers account. Occasionally, if there are material charges for the goods/service this may be negotiated to be paid in Federal \$\$, but we encourage 100% LETS trades where possible. The very big difference between LETS and conventional economies is that you don't have to have units to spend them and there is no use "hoarding" them – no interest is charged or given on debits & credits. In this system is more sustainable and recognises that the wealth of any community lies in the skills and services of its members, not the cash available to it. It also differs from straight barter, in that if I trade with somebody, I may not actually need their services in return, but can trade with members whose services are useful to me.

Over the last few years many LETS systems have moved to the fully internet based Community Exchange System, and now we are part of a local server group. This means that members can go online and add offerings and wants to their listings, change their contact details, see what others are offering or wanting, and record their own trades. This website is <http://www.communityexchange.net.au/> and non-members can go to it to look at the locations of LETS in their area, and even register as members online. After this step is taken, the LETS system will send the prospective member a Welcome letter explaining how to operate the account.

The network of LETS in Australia is very strong via other LETS Newsletters and bulletins, regular email contact of any events, and also an annual National LETS Conference which is rotated through the participating states. This was held last in Victoria (organised by several LETS groups for minimal \$\$ cost and local units being paid for much of the food and accommodation costs) in October 2012. It's always helpful and inspiring to newcomers to LETS and "old hands" alike.

Ann Jupp – Maleny LETS. Member of LETS for 23 years

Drying Herbs From Your Own Garden

By Isabell Shipard

Enjoy the ease and availability of dried herbs from your own garden all year round. If you live in a climate where it can get very cold in winter, and many herbs die out because they are tender annuals, or the perennial herbs get frosted and turn black, it could be useful to dry some of your favourite culinary herbs and also some medicinal herbs, to be able to use them, when these herbs are not available in your garden.

How To Dry Herbs

Pick herbs before they go to flower and seed, as the herbs will be highest in their essential oil before flowering. It is this essential oil that gives the herbs aroma and flavour, so this is what you will want to get the most of, in the dried product. After the sun has dried the dew on the leaves, is a good time of the day to pick herbs. Don't plan to cut herbs for drying if rain is forecasted, or if the day is humid, as there will be a lot of moisture in the air. Trim the bush by taking 15 to 30cm cuttings (of course this will depend on the size of the bush and the type of herb too). Cutting herbs for drying is a good way to prune perennial herbs; it is like giving them a good hair cut! Various ways of drying herbs can be used. An electric dehydrator will dry the leaves evenly and quickly. Or if you have a well-ventilated verandah or covered patio the herbs can be tied in small bunches and hung from a strong string or clothes line to dry. Alternatively, leaves can be stripped off the stems and spread out on trays or in boxes to dry either in shade, or alternatively in sun for 1-2 days so the majority of moisture is quickly removed, and then the herbs can be finish drying in the shade. When leaves are crispy dry and crumble easily between the fingers, they are ready to store, and you will then have them ready for use in the kitchen for when there is none to pick in the garden. Store the dried herbs in glass jars, zip seal bags or other containers with lids. Label the container with name of herbs and the date dried. Dried herbs will retain more flavour if you store the leaves whole, and then just crush them before you wish to use. Store the dried herbs in a cool, dry, dark place, away from sunlight. When you wish to start using the dried herbs, use about 1 teaspoon of crumbled dried leaves in place of a tablespoon of fresh leaves.

Queensland News

[Adopt A Road program – by Keep Australia Beautiful \(KABQ\)](#)



Adopt-a-Road is a safe, enjoyable and educational roadside litter program that gives local communities the opportunity to contribute to a healthier and cleaner roadside environment. Adopt-a-Road mobilises an army of community-focused organisations and individuals who clean their local roadside environment. The program's purpose is to educate the community that littering is a social offence and an unacceptable action. With 174,000km of State and local government maintained roads in Queensland, litter removal is a major exercise which is costly to the community. Our mission is to foster good corporate citizenship by encouraging community groups to take personal responsibility for keeping their local roadways and communities clean. Through Adopt-a-Road, volunteer groups are given an opportunity to accept responsibility for removing litter and enhance a section of an agreed local

roadway or highway, for a minimum of four times per year for two years. To register your interest in this worthwhile 'roadside litter' program visit http://www.kabq.org.au/programs/adopt_a_road/download_reg

[Weeds of Southern Queensland app](#)

The Weed Society of Queensland has released the highly popular publication "Weeds of Southern Queensland" in App form extending its appeal to users and the broader public. The app contains photos and information for 132 weeds present in Southern Queensland, along with details of control and treatment methods. Weeds of all types are covered including woody weeds, cacti and succulents, vines, groundcover and herbs, grasses, and aquatics. There is an extensive section on weed management techniques and weed hygiene. Declared weeds are listed, together with a page on landholder obligations for control of these Class 1, Class 2 or Class 3 weeds.

[Plastic Bag Free Queensland During February](#)

Plastic bags are wasteful and deadly. QCC's Plastic Bag Free Queensland campaign would like to invite you and your members to take part in Bag Free February. During the month of February, swear off single-use plastic bags (if you don't already!) and see how easy it is to live plastic bag free. Take your own reusable bag shopping. Ask retailers to provide alternatives. [Pledge your support here](#). [Like the campaign on Facebook](#) and take part in the virtual [BAG FREE FEBRUARY event](#).

You, the individual members of the Plastic Bag Free Community, can act as micro-ambassadors: sharing your bag-free stories on our Facebook page, saying no to plastic bags at the checkout, telling people about the campaign, and telling retailers that you don't want to see single-use plastic bags (and why). [The Plastic Bag Free Queensland webpage](#) has great resources for you: a plastic bag fact sheet, information about becoming plastic bag free for individuals, communities, and retailers, and a free "This store is plastic bag free" poster for retailers.

[Community Plant Nurseries](#)

We've had such a great response to listing community and native plant nurseries, that Landcare Queensland has created an exclusive Nurseries webpage. Visit us at <http://landcare.org.au/community-nurseries/>

It feels good to [Travel Smart](#)

TravelSmart is a voluntary behaviour change program that encourages people to use sustainable travel modes such as [public transport](#), [walking](#), [cycling](#) and [carpooling](#) rather than single occupancy travel in a car.

What's in it for me?

- [Save money](#) getting to school or work
- [Save the environment](#)
- [Save time](#) by beating the traffic
- [Get fit](#) getting to work or school

(Sourced from Queensland TravelSmart – www.travelsmart.qld.gov.au)

National News

[Off the charts: Extreme Australian summer heat](#)

Australia is a land of extremes. As global temperature rises, very hot days are becoming more frequent and heat-waves are becoming more prolonged across many parts of Australia. The Climate Commission has received questions from the community and media seeking to understand the link between climate change and the very unusual weather. This document provides a summary of the influence of climate change on Australia's temperature and extreme heat events.

[Food security, risk management and climate change](#)

This report identifies major constraints to the adaptive capacity of food organisations operating in Australia.

[Make your next holiday a sustainable one](#)

Its holiday time and many of us are heading off overseas, or thinking about where to spend our next vacation. Our choice of destination, accommodation and activities can make a difference to local economies, cultures and environments. Dr Rosemary Black offers some advice on how we can make our holidays more sustainable.

[Chef, marine biologist cook up a guide to sustainable seafood](#)

A University of Melbourne zoologist and a Melbourne chef have teamed up to produce a sustainable seafood website. The aim of the website [GoodFishBadFish](#) is to make consumer choice easier by collating and interpreting the varied and often conflicting information about sustainable seafood, providing a unique resource for shopping and recipe ideas.

The [Climate and Health Alliance](#) (CAHA) is a coalition of healthcare stakeholders that work together to advocate for climate action and environmental protection to protect and promote human health and wellbeing. CAHA works to raise awareness about climate and health and environmental health issues; provides advice to policymakers on climate and health policy; generates policy ideas and discussions; produces information and publications for media, the public and policymakers; and works with the healthcare sector and health community to promote sustainable healthcare and low carbon operations. Recent publications include [Our Uncashed Dividend: The Health Benefits of Climate Action](#), produced with The Climate Institute (available at <http://caha.org.au/resources/reports>) and [Prescription for a Healthy Life and a Healthy Planet](#) (<http://caha.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Your-Prescription-for-a-Healthy-Life-and-Healthy-Planet1.pdf>) which helps people identify action they can take in their own lives to improve their own and population health and reduce emission at the same time. For more information, see www.caha.org.au

Australian Food and Grocery Council – Packaging Stewardship Forum Achievements

Do The Right Thing, Use The Right Bin. Through these partnerships, we have installed more than 7,900 new recycling bins, over the past three years reaching more than 1.3 billion patron visits annually, covering:-

- **92%** of airport passengers
- **55%** of higher education staff and students
- **52%** of shopping centre visits
- **42%** of train passengers
- 70 major sporting stadia and entertainment venues with over 68 million patron visits annually (including iconic venues such as the Sydney Opera House, WACA, GABBA, Melbourne Entertainment Centre, Aurora Stadium and Exhibition Park in Canberra)

National Toxics Network (www.ntn.org.au) community information guides:

[A Public Interest Guide to Toxic Flame Retardant Chemicals](#)

[Australia's Most Dangerous Pesticides](#)

[The Threat of Pesticide Spray Drift: A Community Information & Action Kit](#)

[Reporting Spray Drift Guide](#)

[Getting the Drift: A community guide to pesticides sprayed in the NSW Northern Rivers](#)

Resources

Green Power – Energy saving tips

Switching to GreenPower is just one way to reduce your environmental impact. There are many other practical actions we can all take to make a difference, and save money in the process. You can do your power bills and the environment a favour by making a few simple changes to your daily life at home and work.

Tips for saving energy at home:

- Install low-energy lighting - such as LED or compact Fluorescent lights - where possible, energy saving alternatives are also available for energy hungry halogen down-lights
- Switch off lighting in unoccupied rooms
- Switch off appliances which are not in use at the wall, to save standby power
- Only use heating when and where needed – close off doors to unoccupied rooms where possible
- Dress for the weather and set your heating thermostat to 18° to 20°C – every 1 degree less will save about 10 per cent on your heating bill
- Weather-seal external doors using draught stoppers or 'door snakes' at the bottom and weather stripping around the frame, and seal up any gaps and cracks in external walls, floors and the ceiling to keep heat inside during winter
- Make sure your ceiling is adequately insulated and use thick drapes with a boxed pelmet to reduce heat loss in winter
- Use shutters and/or install awnings to cut out the summer sun on the Northern and Western side of your building.
- Wash your clothes in cold water where possible, and dry on a line or rack
- Compare star ratings on appliances - the more stars, the lower the running costs
- When replacing your gas hot water system, consider installing a solar hot water system. Government rebates are available for eligible households.
- When installing a ducted heater, look for a high efficiency zoned system which can limit its heating to certain areas
- Choose an accredited EcoSmart Electrician or Green Plumber for electrical and gas work
- Make sure your washing machine and dishwasher are full before running

Tips for saving energy at work:

- Make a plan that's achievable and encourage colleagues to consider their energy use
- Sign up to CitySwitch (<http://www.cityswitch.net.au/>), a free energy-efficiency program for office tenants
- Put your computer in power-saving mode to use 50 per cent less energy
- Switch to laptops instead of desktop computers and use up to 85 per cent less energy
- Replace your old lights with more energy-efficient models
- Hold a phone or web conference instead of driving or flying to attend meetings
- Invest in reusable coffee cups (Keep Cups) for your team, and customise with corporate colours and branding to promote your green credentials
- Consider the environmental credentials of suppliers and ask that they take back their packaging or recycle.

Presentations from 15th International River Symposium (8-10 October 2012) now available!

Click on the presentation title to listen to the audio of their presentation, whilst their PowerPoint presentations plays through. You will require the latest adobe reader to view/listen to these files. Some of the files are quite large in size so please be patient when waiting for them to load.

- [Monday 8 October](#)
 - [Tuesday 9 October](#)
 - [Wednesday 10 October](#)
-

Remember, you CAN make a difference!

Think before you print! 1 ream of paper = 6% of a tree and 5.4 kg CO₂ in the atmosphere; 3 sheets of A4 paper = 1 litre of water

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