

A SPECIAL
ADVERTISING
FEATURE

LivingGreen

Go Green - sustainability begins at home

When it comes to reducing your carbon footprint, making small changes around your home can have a big impact on improving the environment.

Homes generate about one fifth of Australia's greenhouse gas emissions yet there are many ways to reduce this and it can be as simple as changing a light globe, installing a water tank or updating an appliance to a more energy efficient model.

However, households are often overwhelmed by the amount of information available on how to save energy and water and to reduce greenhouse gases, and find it difficult to decide what action to take.

That's where Go Green Energy Solutions Aust. (GES) can help. GES is helping ordinary Australian's make a difference in the fight against climate change.

Through the federal government's Green Loans initiative, GES' main objective is to help the environment by improving energy and water efficiency in the home.

They provide Home Sustainability Assessments to most parts of Australia, where their highly trained assessors come out to your home and assess how sustainable your home is and what approaches you can take to make your home more energy efficient.

Donna Alfeo is a GES home sustainability assessor for the Illawarra region and she certainly believes in practicing what she teaches.

Donna won an environmen-

tal award last year in Wollongong Council's Rise and Shine campaign. The award was in recognition of contributions made towards our city's environment in 2009.

"I am very motivated about sustainability," Donna said. "I was a Super Challenge participant with the Sustainable Illawarra Section at Council in the 2008-2009 intake."

"I believe that sustainability begins at home and every little bit counts so I have taken many initiatives at my own home including growing the majority of my own vegetables in my backyard, having a few hens to supply us with eggs, composting and changing our light globes.

"I have made my family change their habits like turning off lights when they leave the room, likewise with the TV, and will be getting water tanks shortly with our Green Loan.

"I only live on a small suburban block and I use every available space wisely.

"I am excited about what we can do for the environment and want to share the knowledge that I have learned on my journey with other people."

Through GES and the Green Loans Program, householders have access to a free, comprehensive Home Sustainability Assessment (some conditions apply). This will help them to reduce their energy and water bills, increase the comfort of their home and help reduce damaging carbon pollution.

The independent assessment is an expert report listing the most effective changes for your home and will provide advice from the smallest behaviour change to major investments such as a solar hot water system or photovoltaic panels.

"Once you have that assessment you can go right ahead and implement some of the changes or you can apply for a federal government Green Loan of up to \$10,000. It is an interest free loan, payable over a four year period (standard loan requirements apply)," Donna said. "The money from this loan can then be used to implement the recommendations put forward in the assessment."

The assessment generally takes about 1.5 hours to complete and will involve the physical inspection of major energy and water systems relating to thermal comfort, water heating, lighting, refrigeration, cooking, entertainment, water efficiency and outdoor consumption, and waste management.

"There are many little changes that people can make and these changes don't have to be expensive," Donna said. "It can be as simple as changing your light globes, putting up window coverings - curtains are the best form of insulation, placing snakes under doors or turning power points, lights and appliances off when they are not in use."

For your free Home Sustainability Assessment give GES a call on 1300 841 434 or for more information visit www.gesorg.com.au



Donna Alfeo, a GES home sustainability assessor, with one of her hens.