

# GREENING RMIT

Campus Planning—Property Services

August 2001

## Welcome!

Welcome to the first edition of the bi-monthly Greening RMIT Newsletter.

Greening RMIT has provided an umbrella for RMIT's environmental policies, programs and initiatives since its conception in early 1999. This is not to say that greening initiatives were non-existent before this time.

Years prior to RMIT making a formal commitment to address environmental sustainability, students and staff at the University were building the foundations to this program. For example, RMIT's paper and commingle recycling system was first established by RMIT Union student volunteers in the early 1990s. It has been lesser known greening initiatives such as this, as well as high profile initiatives that have provided the anchoring roots to environmental programs at RMIT.

The Greening RMIT program has to date guided the formation of partnerships between Property Services, academic departments and research centres within RMIT and, external organisations that are concerned with environmentally sustainable practices.

Another strong aspect of Greening RMIT is the collaborative project work undertaken by students in conjunction with Property Services. Student projects, such as the Tivoli Rooftop Garden Project and Environmental Management Projects, have provided a vital link for



Photo: Geoff Belmore

the integration of student ideas into RMIT's policy development and strategic planning. For this reason, we are always looking for opportunities to work on collaborative projects with under- and postgraduate students.

We hope that this newsletter will become a way in which students and staff at RMIT can access information on, and communicate their own greening initiatives to the RMIT community.

Thank you to those that contributed to the first issue of the Greening RMIT Newsletter. We are always looking for RMIT students and staff input into the newsletter, so if you are helping to green RMIT, let us know about it!

Nia Emmanouil

## DID YOU KNOW...

Each year RMIT consumes approximately 480 tonnes of paper. This is equivalent to over 6,300 trees every year...

Trees are poems which the earth writes upon the sky. We fell them down so that we can record our emptiness on paper.

Claire Ward

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

- Grass planting day, Friday 24 August @ Bundoora East campus. For more info contact Nia, Ph: 9925 9685.
- On ya Bike Day 2. Friday 28 September.
- Sustainable Living Fair. 16, 17 & 18 November, Alexandra Gardens. [www.sef.org.au/fair/index.html](http://www.sef.org.au/fair/index.html)
- Wild Spaces Environmental Film Festival. September 21, 22 & 23. [www.wildspaces.wild.net.au](http://www.wildspaces.wild.net.au)

# T5 s, Thermal Zones and Ice Storage... RMIT Powers Down

The renovation of Building 14 represents an opportunity to implement Environmentally Sustainable Designs (ESD) into a real project. Whilst previous attempts at implementing ESD were contemplated at a design level, they have not always been carried through due to budget restrictions and insufficient project magnitude that would deliver real benefits. The design and implementation of ESD principles into the infrastructure rectification project of Building 14, valued at \$25 million has been endorsed by the Vice-Chancellor to provide a model of how these projects can be effectively implemented.

A significant component of this project is the correct sizing of air conditioning plant that provides services throughout Buildings 10, 12 and 14. Prior to this implementation, decisions were made to provide air conditioning to student and staff areas that never previously had this service, so whatever systems are implemented, extreme care has been taken to provide the most optimum energy efficient outcome, to ensure minimum running costs in the future. Another aspect of this design which is still in progress is the creation of ice-making and storage facilities, that will provide chilled water for building cooling systems, manufactured at night using low-tariff, off-peak electricity.

Both passive and active heating and cooling systems have been implemented successfully in the design of facilities for the School of Computer Science and Information.

The co-operation of this academic department was sought to ensure ESD savings at a micro level. For example the School has utilized flat square computer screens in a new flexible learning centre, which generate considerably less heat than standard PCs and monitors. As a result, there is far less heat which has to be combated by cooling systems.

All newly renovated areas will boast T5 lighting systems, controlled by movement and time sensors, to provide the correct amount of light with minimum energy use and heat output. The reduction of heat loads again provides for savings on installation and running costs of cooling systems in the future.

Some minor implementation of passive systems has also been included, utilizing existing corridor locations on the north side of Building 14 (level 9), which has a significant northerly aspect. A thermal zone has been created by the design of a combination of

architectural systems that will deliver optimum heat and light into corridor areas, utilizing low sun angles in winter. Conversely in summer, with the higher angle of the sun, the design reflects away the increased heat and light from the thermal zone.

Whilst the latter is only a minor demonstration of an Environmentally Sustainable Design solution, with probably an immeasurable pay back period it will be used as an example of what could be implemented, noting the restrictions that the existing floor plan offers us.

However, with T5 lighting, flat square computer screens and building plant systems that operate on low electricity tariffs, significantly decrease running costs and energy usage, previously only demonstrated in text books.

Graham Bell.



Photo: Jacinda Taylor

## Energy Conservation Action Plan

Since becoming a signatory to the Greenhouse Challenge, RMIT has been working on programs to reduce the University's energy consumption. In June 2001, RMIT became an Energy Smart Partner with the Sustainable Energy Authority of Victoria. As part of this program RMIT and SEAV have developed an energy conservation action plan for 2001. The specific actions which are being carried out for the remainder of the year include:

- The establishment of monitoring systems to measure energy consumption;
- The installation of energy efficient lighting systems in two levels of building 8;
- Development of a maintenance program for gas burners across the University;
- Power factor correction at Bundoora Campus.

Donna Stephenson.

## Tivoli Rooftop Garden

RMIT has been successful in its application for a State Government grant for the development of a rooftop garden at Tivoli. The project is an initiative of Property Services in collaboration with the Faculty of Constructed Environment. Third year Landscape Architecture students have undertaken a study into the feasibility of the project which is due to commence construction in late 2001.

Stormwater harnessing and reuse will be a feature of the project, a measure which is increasingly being employed by organisations in the Melbourne CBD areas as a means to conserve potable freshwater resources.

Geoff Belmore.

For more information on the initiative, contact Geoff Belmore, Strategic Planner—Urban Spaces, Ph: 9925 3826 or [geoff.belmore@rmit.edu.au](mailto:geoff.belmore@rmit.edu.au)

# national tree day

National Tree Day was celebrated by RMIT's Queer Action Collective, Ecology Action Group students and Greening RMIT on Friday 27 July with a grass planting day at the Bundoora East campus.

The day at the Bundoora East campus provided us City-centric folk with an opportunity to appreciate the amazing remnant redgums and scar trees that have stood on Wurundjeri country for over 500 years.

Our 'planting' was hindered by a steady rain which set in for most of the afternoon. Despite this, we managed to put up a rabbit fence to protect the local indigenous grasses we were intending to plant... unfortunately, we did not quite get that far into it before the rain became torrential!

We completed stage 2 of the planting on Friday 24 August and are one afternoon in the sun away from finishing the remainder of the project.

If you are interested in getting involved in this planting project or other similar initiatives at RMIT, please contact Nia @ Campus Planning, Property Services on 9925 9685, or, [ourania.emmanouil@rmit.edu.au](mailto:ourania.emmanouil@rmit.edu.au)



Photo: Geoff Belmore

## GreenStar — Sustainable Office Program

GreenStar has taken off since I first introduced readers to the program a few months ago. Since then, we have been wrapping up the Building 48 pilot project and responding to the calls of various departments around RMIT that just can't wait to go green!

RMIT Union is all set to get involved and will initially focus its energy on greening its Information Centres and RMIT Union Arts. The purchasing of credible recycled paper is another issue that is at the top of the to-do list.

The Department of Built Environment is also actively engaging with us to implement GreenStar and other Greening RMIT programs. The DBE is the first academic department

to take on the GreenStar program and we hope to receive the same level of support from RMIT students as we have from staff.

The Client Relations branch of Property Services is another group to become involved in the GreenStar program and will act as a key link in the communication of greening initiatives between RMIT faculties and departments and Property Services.

If you are keen on getting involved in GreenStar, contact Nia Emmanouil, GreenStar Facilitator, Ph: 9925 9685 or [ourania.emmanouil@rmit.edu.au](mailto:ourania.emmanouil@rmit.edu.au)

## RMIT RECYCLE CENTRE

RMIT's Recycle Centre (RC) is a service provided to RMIT students, staff and not-for-profit community organisations and relies on the generosity of departments to donate unused/excess furniture.

The RC is a caged area located in Building 10, Level 3. Stock in the RC varies from week to week, so we recommend you keep eyes peeled.

Current goodies include:

- Exhibition boxes/stands
- Vinyl upholstered chairs
- Standing pin board



- 1m standing metal rubbish bins with lids
- Folders, folders, folders!!!
- Tables/desks

We recommend that you bring your own trolley and/or a friend to help you carry heavy furniture and equipment. Unfortunately we do not have a holds system.

**The Recycle Centre is open from 12:30—1PM every Monday and Friday.**

For more information contact Donna Stephenson @ Campus Planning, Property Services Ph: 9925 2586

## *CONTACTING US...*

Website: [www.greening.rmit.edu.au](http://www.greening.rmit.edu.au)

Send newsletter contributions to:  
[ourania.emmanouil@rmit.edu.au](mailto:ourania.emmanouil@rmit.edu.au)

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## *Food for Thought...*

*We simplify our lives,*

*We live gladly with less.*

*We let go the illusion that we can possess.*

*We create instead.*

*We let go the illusion of mobility.*

*We travel in stillness.*

*We travel at home.*

*By candlelight and in stillness,*

*In the presence of flowers,*

*We make pilgrimage.*

*We simplify our lives.*

*Leunig*

## TIP OF THE WEEK

When distributing newsletters/draft documents/discussion papers, place one copy in a central location where students and staff can borrow it in turn.

## Local Heroes of the Green Kind

*Are you a local hero of the green kind or know someone who is?*

This is your chance to share your ideas on how you are greening RMIT while encouraging others to do the same. The more creative, the better!

Please let us know via the contact details above and help fill this space.



**This is you!**

## *Check out these websites...*

Greening RMIT  
[www.greening.rmit.edu.au](http://www.greening.rmit.edu.au)

Global Sustainability  
[www.global.rmit.edu.au](http://www.global.rmit.edu.au)

Sustainable Living Fair  
[www.sef.org.au/fair/index.html](http://www.sef.org.au/fair/index.html)

Radio National Earthbeat: Sustainable Houses Series  
[www.abc.net.au/rn/science/earth/handouts/houses.htm](http://www.abc.net.au/rn/science/earth/handouts/houses.htm)

[savewater!com.au](http://savewater.com.au)  
[www.savewater.com.au](http://www.savewater.com.au)

Wild Spaces Environmental Film Festival  
[www.wildspaces.wild.net.au](http://www.wildspaces.wild.net.au)

**Found any good websites worth sharing? Send them in!!!**