

Supreme Court: odour unit supplier engaged in misleading conduct

A \$675,000 odour control unit installed at a Peerless Holdings Pty Ltd rendering plant was intended to showcase the technology but instead led to a Vic Supreme Court finding the supplier should pay Peerless at least \$1,536,480 in damages after misleading and deceptive conduct. Justice Hartley Hansen this month found equipment supplier Environmental Systems Pty Ltd had breached the terms of its contract with Peerless Holdings Pty Ltd and engaged in misleading and deceptive conduct. The judge held Peerless was entitled to additional damages for "the lost benefit" it could have derived from buying an alternative type of afterburner, with a hearing slated for June 23 on this. Peerless had opted to replace the existing afterburner at its large Laverton North rendering plant in part because the old afterburner was struggling to handle increased capacity. The company opted for the regenerative thermal oxidiser (RTO) proposed by Environmental Systems to control odours because it expected the RTO would have a larger capacity, lower NOx emissions and far lower energy costs. Commissioning of the RTO began in Oct 1998 but by June 2001 Peerless had abandoned efforts to get it working, at one point bemoaning that the EPA "are living here" because of odour complaints. It launched legal action against Environmental Systems later the same year and now controls odour using a biofilter and the old afterburner. Both Peerless and Environmental Systems agreed the RTO had failed because fats stuck to part of the unit, bypassed the combustion chamber and were then stripped off by warm exhaust gases and discharged to the atmosphere. However, Environmental Systems submitted Peerless had breached its responsibility to ensure the airstream entering the RTO was essentially free of fats. It also argued Peerless had not adequately advised it of the presence of fats in the airstream entering the RTO. But Justice Hansen was not convinced. "In my view, it is clear that [Environmental Systems] representations as to the suitability of the RTO for the plaintiff's operation and as to its capacity to destroy odour amounted to misleading and deceptive conduct," he ruled. The judge did not

accept an Environmental Systems' claim that Peerless had refused its request for a thorough analysis of the airstream. "It was always open to the defendant to require further information," the judge said. Environmental Systems "knew all that it needed to know to determine whether to offer an RTO and, if so, on what terms or whether, before making an offer, it should require further information to better assess the suitability of the application," he said. "It did not have to offer an RTO but I find it did so partly under a desire to achieve the first application of the RTO in Australia." Environmental Systems is a subsidiary of The Environmental Group Ltd, which declined to comment. [Peerless Holdings Pty Ltd v Environmental Systems Pty Ltd](#), 3/6/06.

WA EPA: Gorgon impact unacceptable

The massive Gorgon gasfield development would be "environmentally unacceptable" in its current form, the WA EPA has advised the state's environment minister Mark McGowan. The joint venture proposes establishing an LNG processing plant on Barrow Island, a class A nature reserve, to liquefy and export 10m tonnes of LNG a year. But the EPA said the joint venture had not demonstrated risks could be reduced to satisfactory levels in three areas: dredging impacts on the marine ecosystem; introduction of non-indigenous species; and potential loss of fauna. "Flatback turtles in particular would be put at risk from the proposal," said EPA chairman Wally Cox. The minister's approval is required for the project to proceed, however he is not bound to follow the EPA's advice. It is also open to the joint venture to lodge an appeal with the state's independent Appeals Convenor over the EPA's advice. The EPA notes Gorgon says it will inject about 80% of the CO₂ from the feed gas unless it is "technically infeasible or cost prohibitive". If the proposal was approved and the proponent decided injection of CO₂ was infeasible or too costly, "alternative arrangements should be required to ensure that an equivalent amount of CO₂ was offset," the EPA [says](#). "Under these circumstances, the environmental benefit of accessing Barrow Island, to permit carbon dioxide injection, would be lost," it notes. *Details*, www.epa.wa.gov.au.

Joint industry/govt approaches the way to go, says Minerals Council

Substantial strategic and public relations benefits can arise from jointly working with govt on environmental policy-related initiatives, according to the newly-released annual report of the Minerals Council of Australia. The Minerals Council is a strong advocate of developing "joint industry/govt frameworks wherever possible", says the environment section of the MCA's 2005 [annual report](#). This is due to the "influence that these frameworks have on govt policies which affect the minerals industry", it says. The report notes the MCA successfully sought to develop a strategic framework for water management in conjunction with the ministerial council on mining and petroleum resources ([EM574](#)). The council is also working jointly with the Dept of Industry, Tourism and Resources to continue the 'Best Practice Environmental Management in Mining' series of booklets, following the fed environment dept's decision not to continue funding them. "The revised booklets will have a strong focus on supporting the uptake of leading practice approaches within industry, but will also serve a secondary purpose as a valuable tool for communicating the industry's achievements to local communities and the broader public." Unlike the earlier series, the environmental information in the booklets will in future "be complemented by guidance on economic and social considerations". *MCA Annual Report*, www.minerals.org.au.

MCA report: mining certification project failed to reach research goal

A joint WWF and mining industry project examining the potential for third-party certification of mines, "failed to reach the level of research conclusion that was envisaged", say the Minerals Council of Australia annual report (*above*). The annual report says key issues highlighted by industry throughout the mining certification evaluation project (MCEP) process have included the need "to look more broadly than the Forest Stewardship and Marine Stewardship Council approaches". Other issues raised by industry include "the importance of establishing the business value of certification ... particularly given the minerals industry operates mostly in customer rather than consumer markets". A [final report](#) on the certification trial was published earlier this year by WWF with "the broad support" of the working group. It says field trials indicated that, "on the whole, an assessment process based on the MCEP that is practical, cost-effective, and can be used in a variety of mine site settings, should be

achievable". However, the trials showed there is a "difficult balance" to be made between a standard that can be universally applied and can be adapted to diverse operations, "but that still offers sufficient detail and robustness to serve an assurance function", it says. "The MCEP has established that a mine site certification scheme is feasible: the next practical question is whether it is desirable and to whom," it says. *Mining Certification Evaluation Project*, www.minerals.csiro.au/sd/SD_MCEP.htm.

Computer industry and govts to meet on take-back

The computer industry will meet with representatives of fed, state and local govts on June 13 to discuss how to move forward on a take-back scheme for end-of-life computer equipment. James McAdam of the Aust Information Industry Assoc told *EM* the industry and govt had taken a "much more collaborative" approach in recent weeks. The meeting will discuss "a couple of models" for a take-back scheme and some proposed key principles, he said.

DIARY

- **Our water future – water management for sustainable business growth.** Syd, June 19. Ai Group, www.aigroup.asn.au.
- **4th annual green buildings conference.** Syd, June 26-28. IIR, www.iir.com.au/infrastructure.
- **Myopia: short-termism, a barrier to corporate sustainability?** TEC Green Capital event. Syd, June 28; Melb, July 4. www.greencapital.org.au.
- **Stockholm Convention conference: cleaning up persistent chemicals under the convention.** Syd, June 27-29. AEBN, www.aebn.com.au.
- **Environmental audit workshop.** Parramatta, July 3-7; Melb, July 24-28; Bris, Aug, 21-25; Syd, Nov, 6-10. Thomson, 1300 304 197 or www.thomson.com.au.
- **Energy in NSW – 2006 and beyond.** Syd, July 19. Aust Institute of Energy ½ day symposium. Gwenda@tpg.com.au.
- **City development world 2006.** Syd, July 25-26. Terrapin. www.terrapinn.com/2006/cd_au.
- **Environment and community conference.** Wollongong, Sept 10-12. NSW Minerals Council, criordan@nswmin.com.au.
- **Environmental management systems workshop.** Melb, Sept 12-14; Syd, Oct, 17-19. Thomson, 1300 304 197 or www.thomson.com.au.
- **Hydrogen, fuel cells and alternative transport energies.** Perth, Sept 10-13. DPI, www.dpi.wa.gov.au.

BANKSIA AWARDS FINALISTS ANNOUNCED

The annual Banksia Foundation awards are Australia's most prestigious environmental awards. *EM* looks at this year's finalists, announced on World Environment Day. Category winners will be announced on July 22.

Climate Award

'Carbon Tender.' Vic Dept of Sustainability and Environment, Dept of Primary Industries, Catchment Management Authorities. Through CarbonTender, the Vic Govt created a formal market for carbon offset products by contracting landholders to establish carbon sinks, through revegetation projects on private land. It provided \$2.3m over three years to create biologically diverse carbon sinks across the state.

'CO₂ AUSTRALIA carbon sequestration program.' CO₂ AUSTRALIA Ltd. The program establishes commercial-scale, permanent Mallee eucalypt plantings in partnership with individual farmers in high priority revegetation agricultural regions, mainly to generate carbon credits. It is the Australian market leader in carbon sequestration.

'Counting carbon.' NSW Dept of Primary Industries – Forests NSW. Forests NSW's research and accounting efforts to date have produced the world's most sophisticated and dependable carbon accounting system for forest sequestration projects.

'National Green Power accreditation program.' NSW Dept of Energy, Utilities and Sustainability. Since 1997, sales of Green Power have reduced greenhouse emissions from electricity generation by about 2.75m tonnes. More than 250,000 households and businesses now voluntarily participate.

Built Environment Award

Australian Building Greenhouse Rating scheme. The scheme allows building owners and tenants to measure, compare and improve their greenhouse gas emissions using a simple and intuitive five star rating scheme. Over 25% of commercial office building floorspace in Australia is now rated for greenhouse gas emissions.

'36/37 Squadron Headquarters RAAF Richmond.' Dept of Defence, Bovis Lend Lease, Bligh Voller Nield, Carson Group, Baulderstone Hornibrook. The 36/37 Squadron Headquarters was built to provide 36 and 37 Squadrons with a combined headquarters building. The project used the Green Building Council of Australia Green Star rating system and showcases and informs Defence's wider adoption of green building policy.

'C-Air Hillarys.' Investa Property Group. C-Air Hillarys is an estate comprising 87 lots in an established ocean-side suburb of Perth. A sustainability assessment system was incorporated into the design guidelines and a rating system of bronze, silver and gold encourages construction of environmentally conscious homes.

'40 Albert Road.' Szencorp. Following the renovation of a 20-year-old, low-performing building, 40 Albert Road is now Australia's greenest office building, setting the standards for sustainability in Australian commercial buildings.

Land and Biodiversity Award

'Back from the brink: saving Vic's threatened orchids.' Vic Dept of Sustainability and Environment, Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne, Australasian Native Orchid Society Vic Group, Parks Victoria, Melbourne Zoo, University of Melbourne, Victoria University, RMIT University. The project targeted 80 species of highly threatened orchids, protected over 150 populations of 50 threatened orchid species, and saved four critically endangered orchids from extinction.

'Evaluation of management effectiveness in the Tas Wilderness World Heritage Area.' Parks and Wildlife Service Tas, Tas Dept of Primary Industries, Water and Environment. The State of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area Report provides a structured, evidence-based evaluation of the effectiveness of management of this vast and globally significant reserve in south-west Tasmania.

'Greening Western Sydney.' Greening Australia (NSW), NSW Dept of Planning. The project aims to restore publicly-owned land on Sydney's urban fringe by increasing the extent and improving the condition of the Cumberland Plain Woodland, listed as endangered in both state and federal legislation.

'Kuka Kanyini at Watarru – caring for country.' SA Dept for Environment and Heritage, Watarru Community. Kuka Kanyini is a land management project at Watarru in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands in SA's far north-west. The project is mapping biodiversity data; restoring and protecting rockholes; harvesting and monitoring bush foods; removing feral camels; and creating a sanctuary for threatened plants and animals.

'Reconnecting communities for conservation.' Greening Australia (WA), Shell Development (Australia) Pty Ltd. 'Reconnections' focuses on large scale re-establishment of bushland to create habitat links and reconnect isolated 'islands' of remnant vegetation. Since 2004, the program has established almost 400 hectares of native vegetation.

'Seeds For Life.' Qld EPA, Greening Australia Qld, Aust Centre for Minerals Extension and Research, The University of Qld, Griffith University, Brisbane Botanic Gardens. The joint venture with the UK's Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, aims to improve the conservation of plant biodiversity by establishing long-term conservation collections of seed from priority species in Qld.

Eco Innovation Award

'Green Living collection.' Sustainable Living Fabrics Pty Ltd. Sustainable Living Fabrics has all its fabrics certified to carry the Good Environmental Choice Australia Ecolabel. The ranges are presented as the 'Green Living' collection.

'Millmerran power project.' Intergen Australia, China Huangeng Group. The Millmerran Power Project in Qld has adopted technologies such as supercritical boilers combined with air cooling and low NOx burners and uses tertiary-treated wastewater from the Wetalla sewerage treatment plant. The \$1.5bn project is an 840MW base-load coal fired power station, mine and water pipeline.

'Every Drop Counts.' Sydney Water. Since its inception in 2001, Sydney Water's Every Drop Counts (EDC) Business Program has delivered 21ML a day of water savings.

'WOMADelaide zero waste program.' WOMADelaide Foundation Ltd, Zero Waste SA, Grene City, SA Govt, Flinders Bioremediation, Venue Clean. WOMADelaide minimised the environmental impact of the festival through its 'zero waste' and 'carbon neutral' programs.

Sustainability Award

'Sustainability is always in style.' Instyle Contract Textiles Pty Ltd. Instyle specialises in the design, marketing and distribution of furnishing textiles for offices and other commercial applications. Company initiatives include designing and developing an environmental textile collection.

'Building a sustainable future.' Hydro Tasmania. Hydro Tasmania's commitment to sustainability is being realised through an internationally accredited environment and sustainability management system that encourages a strategic and systematic approach.

'Visualising our environmental footprint.' Australian Arrow Pty Ltd. The key to Australian Arrow's approach is visualisation of its environmental footprint throughout the workplace. Commitment to the environment is made obvious to employees and visitors – from the initial environmental awareness signage at the entrance, through to offices, production and stores areas, as well as induction and training areas.

Water Award

'Carpentaria ghost nets program.' Northern Gulf Resource Management Group. Ghost nets are fishing nets that have been lost, discarded or abandoned at sea, drifting with the currents for decades continuing to catch and kill marine wildlife. The program is an alliance of indigenous rangers groups, NGOs and govt agencies to stop the ghost nets in the Gulf of Carpentaria. To date, rangers have removed 5,148 metres of net.

'Coastal CRCs wetland science-into-policy project.' CRC for Coastal Zone, Estuary and Waterway Management. This project combined cutting-edge scientific knowledge with input from policy and planning experts to package information into conceptual models describing wetlands ecosystems. The models represent current wetlands understanding agreed between scientists and stakeholders, providing greater certainty for decision-makers.

'First International Marine Protected Areas Congress.' IMPAC1 Organising Committee. In 2002, Australia was invited to host an international congress on marine protected areas (MPAs) with the endorsement of IUCN. A successful high quality program resulted, which used electronic submission and assessment techniques to allow international review by a panel of experts.

'Millmerran power project.' Intergen Australia, China Huangeng Group. Leading-edge environmental innovations at the Qld Millmerran power project to protect surface water and groundwater resources have saved about 15 ML per day.

'Outstanding achievement in environmental education, innovation and sustainability.'

Townsville City Council. Council's Environmental Management Services in partnership with council engineers and the community have exploring integrated, innovative and sustainable water management practices and partnerships in the coastal dry tropics. Its triple-bottom-line approach is integral to this process.

Minerals Award

'Integration of sustainability into the Boyne Smelter's capital projects management system.'

Boyne Smelters Ltd. Boyne Smelters Ltd has developed a project environmental effects study system to embed an understanding of potential impacts and sustainability considerations before design stages and well before requests for capital funding and approvals are submitted.

'Sustainable mining at Tiwest Cooljarloo.' Tiwest.

Tiwest has deployed significant resources to continually improve environmental performance at Cooljarloo Mine. The sustainable management of clay slimes, high quality rehabilitation, and the management of water abstraction to protect groundwater-dependent vegetation are all noteworthy.

Education Award

'Kicking goals in water recycling.' South East Water, Flinders Christian Community College.

Recycled water is pumped 1.5 kilometres from the south-eastern outfall to the school's campus in Carrum Downs. It is then supplemented with stormwater and used to irrigate the sports grounds.

'Great Gardens community environmental education program.' Landcare Solutions, Swan River Trust, Water Corporation, Nursery and Garden Industry Association WA.

The 'Great Gardens' program uses community-based social marketing principles to protect Perth's Swan and Canning river system. More than 10,000 people have participated since its launch in September 2003.

'Knowledge and skills for sustainability.'

Sustainability Victoria, NSW Dept of Environment & Conservation. The project developed three core national vocational training sustainability standards to better equip the workforce to respond to sustainability challenges. The competencies have received national endorsement by the 10 Industry

Skills councils. More than 1.7m students take part in vocational education and training every year.

'Sustainable landscapes.' Botanic Gardens of Adelaide, SA Water, Land Management Corp, Delfin Lend Lease, Adelaide & Mount Lofty Ranges Natural Resources Management Board. The project practically demonstrates and promotes appropriate park and garden design, plant species selection and sustainable horticultural practices for SA environments, including appropriate water use.

'The food forest – a model for sustainability.' The Food Forest. The Food Forest is a learning centre, home and farm demonstrating the practicalities of living sustainably. The Food Forest shows Australians how to care for the environment through a unique education and public access program based on an urban farm.

'Sustainable business management model.' Village Green Environmental Solutions. Village Green is a multi-disciplined consulting house, specialising in sustainable management and change systems for the small business and retail sectors.

Community Award

'From little things big things grow.' Ravenswood Community Garden. The Ravenswood Community Garden (RCG) is a community project that has for the past decade used a working garden as the vehicle to promote better environmental choices.

'Leading the way.' Naragebup Rockingham Regional Environment Centre Inc. Wherever Robert (Bob) Goodale has lived he has motivated others to care, protect and nurture the natural world around them. Bob's work in sound environmental practice encompasses almost five decades of caring for the land, the things that grow in it and move upon it.

'The Tree Scheme.' Trees For Life. Trees For Life was formed by a group of volunteers in 1981 to protect SA's land from becoming even drier and more eroded through revegetation. Now in its 25th year, it has more than 10,000 members, including 1,250 volunteer growers.

'West coast weed and fire strategy.' West Coast Weed and Fire Management Group. The group has made significant contributions to Tasmania's environment through its efforts to implement the weed and fire strategy.

Local Government Award

'80% diversion is Fairfield City's reality.' **Fairfield Council, NSW Environmental Solutions.** Using innovative UR-3R waste treatment technology, Fairfield City Council is diverting up to 80% of Fairfield's waste to landfill. The UR-3R process generates enough green energy to meet its own needs and feed power into the grid.

'Blackwattle Bay Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program.' **City of Sydney.** The program uses triple bottom line principles in designing and implementing stormwater pollution abatement measures at a local govt level.

'Currie sewage treatment wetlands.' **King Island Council.** Currently, 40% of all Tas sewage discharges to the ocean receive primary treatment at best. The Currie sewage treatments wetland provides an environmentally and economically sustainable solution to wastewater treatment for small residential developments without the need for highly sophisticated and expensive systems.

'Sustaining our city and city plan initiatives.' **Randwick City Council.** The council has over the past 12 months undertaken substantial community consultation to prepare a 20-year city plan that provides the framework to manage the diverse range of social, environmental and economic pressures and drivers facing Randwick over the next 20 years.

'Sustainable snow sport. : Mt Hotham Alpine Resort Management, Mount Hotham Skiing Company. Sustainability initiatives at Hotham include developing a resort-wide environmental management plan and using treated effluent for snow-making.

Media Award

'Climate change: icons under threat.' **Melissa Fyfe, Simon O'Dwyer, *The Age*.** A five-part series on the threat posed by climate change to Australia's most treasured natural assets, including the Murray River, Kakadu and the Great Barrier Reef.

'More than a river.' **Highland Productions International, Murray Darling Basin Commission.** Dermott Brereton travels the length of the River Murray, most of the Darling and through the Murray Darling Basin to talk with those who best tell the rivers' story – rangers, Aboriginal elders, fishers,

conservationists, salinity experts and fruit and cotton growers.

'ECOS.' **CSIRO Publishing.** ECOS is Australia's magazine on sustainability in the environment, industry and community, published bi-monthly by CSIRO in print and online formats.

Prime Minister's Environmentalist of The Year Award

'Dancing and the devil fire: uncovering the hidden history of the Alps.' **The Cultural Heritage Steering Committee.** Victoria's Alpine area is significant to all Australians for its unique landscape and heritage values but the extent of the connection to Aboriginal communities was not well understood. This DVD project aimed to rectify this. Archaeological survey work uncovered thousands of artefacts and numerous sites and enabled Indigenous communities to be involved in uncovering the area's hidden history.

'Establishing a national network of places for Australia's endangered wildlife.' **Australian Wildlife Conservancy.** This independent, non-profit organisation has established 14 wildlife sanctuaries around Australia, covering 917,000 hectares. The sanctuaries protect a diversity of habitats and provide refuge for many of Australia's most endangered species.

Kevin Kenneally. LANDSCOPE expeditions. Kevin Kenneally has been the scientific co-ordinator of LANDSCOPE Expeditions since their inception in 1992. Some 70 research expeditions involving over 900 volunteers have raised \$1.7m of community funding for scientific research in remote areas.

'Kuka Kanyini at Watarru – caring for country.' **SA Dept for Environment and Heritage, Watarru Community.** Kuka Kanyini is a land management project at Watarru in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands in the far north west of SA. The project is mapping biodiversity data; restoring and protecting rockholes; harvesting and monitoring bush foods; removing feral camels; and creating a sanctuary for threatened plants and animals.

Category winners will be announced on July 22. *Environmental Manager* is proud to be a media associate of the 2006 Banksia awards.

Full details, www.banksiafdn.com.

Fed Govt explores response to EU hazardous substances directive

Australia's possible policy response to an EU directive on hazardous substances in electrical and electronic products will undergo preliminary assessment in a study to go to the fed Dept of Environment and Heritage (DEH) by the end of the month. Options include legislation, a voluntary code that could evolve into a co-regulatory scheme, or no govt intervention. From July 1, 2006, the EU's Reduction of Hazardous Substances (RoHS) Directive will ban the sale of electrical and electronic products containing lead, cadmium, mercury, hexavalent chromium, and polybrominated biphenyl or polybrominated diphenyl ether flame retardants at above specified levels. Assessing the impact on Aust business and possible policy responses follows a DEH-convened meeting last October involving various industry sectors, which discussed the merits of developing an Aust RoHS policy. A [website](#) established as part of the assessment says roundtable participants generally supported the introduction of a RoHS policy provided adequate time was provided for compliance. "While it was recognised compliance costs will be disproportionately higher for small business, and compliance will be difficult to establish and enforce, export benefits may flow to businesses complying with RoHS," the website says. The assessment is being conducted by Product Ecology and Hyder Consulting. RoHS-like schemes have also been passed in California, China, and Japan for implementation in 2006-07. Thailand, Malaysia, South Korea and Taiwan have also shown interest in developing RoHS schemes. In 2004, Aust environment ministers meeting as the Environment Protection and Heritage Council directed officials to "investigate mechanisms for adopting equivalent measures and timing" to those set out in the EU RoHS Directive. *Details and stakeholder registration page, www.ausrohs.org/.*

'Softly, softly' approach to natural resource offenders questioned

Those guilty of pollution have always been "treated more harshly" than those who breach natural resource legislation, NSW Environmental Defender's Office director Jeff Smith told the EDO annual conference. The reasons for that "need to be articulated and debated", he said. Smith said the "softly, softly approach" taken to enforcing natural resource management legislation undermined the potential for "general deterrence". However, NSW environment minister Bob Debus said moving agencies with natural resource management

responsibilities to a model where they have "an overriding responsibility to protect the environment" is a complex task. It would be "a significant error" to assume it was easy for govt agencies "to move from one paradigm to another".

- **Following the 2003 merger** of NSW environment agencies there had been a "conscious decision" to focus on prosecuting "previously under-enforced provisions" of the state's environmental legislation, Debus said. These include threatened species provisions and those dealing with causing damage to Aboriginal objects, he said.

NSW Chief Justice: court could order offenders to notify banks

Legislative provisions allowing the NSW Land and Environment Court to make orders that offenders publicise the details of their offence are not restricted to placing ads in newspapers and magazines, according to Chief Justice Brian Preston. The judge told the EDO annual conference (*above*) the court "could require notification to financiers and bankers".

Origin Energy sustainability report sets out climate policy approach

Origin Energy supports the introduction of national emissions trading and is contributing to two taskforces established under the Asia Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate, says Origin's latest sustainability report. Origin reports an increase in total greenhouse gas emissions and in GHG intensity for the 2004-05 year, largely due to new production projects. However, thanks to Green Power purchases there were zero emissions from its offices, shops, solar manufacturing plant and LPG terminals. And in June 2005, it had 55,137 customers signed to its 'GreenEarth' green electricity product. The [report](#) notes Origin has 30% of the Australian market for grid-connected solar photovoltaic panels, "with strong sales in Vic and SA". And its energy efficiency team helped business customers identify energy efficiency projects that enabled them to reduce GHG emissions by more than 54,000 tonnes of CO₂e. "This includes projects with a major packaging group and a major steel products group." www.originenergy.com.au.

DEH seeks graduates

Applications close on June 30 for the fed Dept of Environment and Heritage graduate recruitment [program](#). *Details, www.deh.gov.au.*

Industry to fund Tas air quality station near Bell Bay estate

Industry will fund the establishment of an air quality monitoring station in George Town, as part of the state's air quality strategy released on June 4. There have been "some air quality issues in George Town, relating to emissions of fluoride, sulfur dioxide and particles from the Bell Bay industrial estate", the strategy says. Facilities located at Bell Bay include a Comalco aluminium smelter, ferro-alloy producer TEMCO, fibreboard manufacturer Pinepanels Bell Bay and the Bell Bay power station. The strategy notes Comalco installed dry scrubbers in 1997 and 2001 at a cost of about \$56m which have "significantly" reduced fluoride emissions. TEMCO has also spent "significant amounts" to reduce process emissions and the power station has converted from oil to gas. Operating costs for the monitoring station will be met by the Tas environment dept. *Tas air strategy, (03) 6233 3373.*

Tas quarry operator fined \$15,000

Launceston Magistrates' Court has fined Lloyds North Pty Ltd \$15,000 for creating an environmental nuisance and breaching the requirements of an environment protection notice. The charges follow "a long history of dust complaints" over a Lloyds North quarry at Ulverstone, Warren Jones of the Dept of Tourism, Arts and Environment said.

Methane doesn't undermine carbon sequestration benefits of tree planting

The impact of any increase in methane emissions from planting trees is very minor compared to the carbon sequestration benefits, research done jointly by the CRC for Greenhouse Accounting, CSIRO, Ensis and UNSW has concluded. "Planting trees is not a waste of time," the CRC's Dr Miko Kirschbaum said. "It is an effective way of slowing climate change." The [research](#) concluded methane emissions would reduce the benefit of planting trees by up to 4.4% at most.

Ethanol sales rising

Woolworths aims to have 50 sites selling ethanol-blend fuel by the end of 2007, while BP is planning for a 100-fold increase in ethanol sales over the next two years. At the conclusion of an ethanol sector roundtable last week, industry minister Ian

Macfarlane said over the past 12 months the number of servos selling ethanol had risen from 70 to 230.

On the precipice of an investment cliff for renewables, study says

Govt policies have delivered a 55% increase in renewable power generation capacity (excluding hydro) since 2000, says a report by McLennan Magasanik Associates. But on current settings what is now "quite a high level of investment" in renewables "will fall dramatically over the next few years" becoming very low from 2010. The report, prepared for Renewable Energy Generators Australia, urges a new policy framework founded on market-based measures. www.rega.com.au.

SA Govt grant offered for cement kiln alternative fuel shredder

An Adelaide Brighton Cement and Resourceco joint venture will receive a \$250,000 SA Govt grant to shred oversize waste so it can be used as an alternative fuel at ABC's cement kiln. The grant to ABC is one of seven totalling \$1.3m announced June 1 by SA environment minister Gail Gago.

\$12,000 travel prize offered to Aust's outstanding OHS innovator

Have you and your team implemented a practical, OHS solution since Jan 1, 2005? Why not share it with your peers and be in the running to win a \$12,000 prize to attend an overseas OHS conference of your choice, anywhere in the world? To enter the 2006 Blake Dawson Waldron/*Inside OHS* Competition, tell us how you implemented your OHS solution. How you identified and controlled risks, benchmarked its benefits and achieved outcomes. Entries close on Oct 2. For conditions of entry and an entry form, phone Miranda Flint, editor of *EM* associate publication 'Inside OHS' on (03) 9205 0681, or email miranda.flint@thomson.com.

RESOURCES

- The NSW DEC has released an information sheet on biodiversity certification and biobanking. www.environment.nsw.gov.au.

WA's **draft state of the environment report** is now available at www.soe.wa.gov.au. Public comment closes on Sept 29.