



Bed & Breakfast and Farmstay

NSW & ACT Incorporated

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Going Green

A Checklist for reducing our impact on the Environment ... and saving money!

If we do not change direction, we are likely to end up where we are headed.

Chinese proverb

A staggering ninety-four percent of the 24,500 travellers surveyed by Lonely Planet last year say travelling in a low impact way is the way they want to go and a raft of green initiatives will make it easier to tread lightly this year.

The Sydney Morning Herald January 2008

It seems that the issue of Global Warming is no longer in doubt. It is said that within the tourism industry, accommodation has the greatest environmental impact through its use of water (particularly in the laundering of linen), power and packaging.

The Bed & Breakfast and Farmstay Association of NSW & ACT Incorporated invite members and those thinking of entering our industry to participate in assessing their environmental business practices and policies. The checklist set out below acts as a guideline for what you can do and provides some resources to help you do it.

The resources recommended in the checklist were carefully researched and chosen on our understanding that they are Australian owned companies with high integrity with a strong commitment to the environment.

This checklist takes into account the financial cost to your business whilst encouraging you to take steps toward reducing your impact on the environment.

Some of the items on our list may not be applicable to some members however the majority are capable of being retrofitted to existing properties sometimes with substantial subsidies from local, state or federal governments. Some are more appropriate in the planning stage of new buildings or renovations.

The changes that you make will be a positive move towards diminishing the impact that Climate Change will have on the environment.

If you are interested in calculating your carbon footprint visit
http://www.1degree.com.au/carbon_calculator

NOTE: This checklist is an initiative of and copyright to Bed & Breakfast and Farmstay Association of NSW & ACT Incorporated. Comments and suggestions on the content of the checklist from members of the Association, the wider industry and travelling public are more than welcome and can be made online at [BBFNSW-ACT Green Forum](#) or should be addressed to the Association at PO Box R1372 Royal Exchange NSW 1225. Whilst every care is taken to ensure absolute accuracy in compiling the contents of this document and whilst data is updated regularly, the Bed and Breakfast & Farmstay NSW-ACT cannot be held liable for any consequences resulting from misrepresentation, misdescription, inadvertent errors or outdated data contained therein.

The KEY to “Going Green” ... AVOID, REDUCE, REUSE & RECYCLE!

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Australia has 0.32 per cent of the world's population, yet produces 1.43 per cent of carbon dioxide emissions. This means that, per person, pollution levels are 4.5 times the global average. CSIRO

Green or Renewable Energy

... created from sources that do not contribute to greenhouse gas emissions or pollute the environment

All energy sources are combined on the grid, however signing up for green energy creates the necessity for the supplier to ensure that the energy provided is from renewable resources such as sun, wind, water. Signing up will reduce carbon emissions significantly. For more information visit Green Electricity Watch at this Website <http://tec.org.au/gew/home> and look in the section for NSW

Options include 10%, 25%, 50% or 100% renewable energy. [Apply to display this logo](#)



on your promotional material.

Thermal Insulation – walls and ceilings an absolute must for energy efficiency

Insulation in walls and ceilings is a good way of minimising the need for cooling in hotter times and heating in cooler times. Products include pink batts, green batts, reflective shield and wool batts. Use Google for more information on the product of your choice.

An absolute must to increase energy efficiency & adapt to Climate Change. Visit [For rebates](#)

Reflective roof paint

Visit either www.4seasonsinsulation.com or

[Solacoat](#) for another choice.

Energy efficient light globes

only 4% of the energy used to make a light globe comes out as light..... Michael Grunwald

“60 watt incandescent light globe x 8 hours a day = 480 watts
15 watt CFL bulb x 8 hours a day = 120 watts.” Energy Matters

Visit the link below to find out more. <http://7myths.planetark.org/index.html#myth1>

Turn off lights, open blinds

Replace incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent globes (cfl), available in cold light or warm light. Buy them from the hardware store or lighting company. Experiment as some brands are better than others, you may be surprised by the amount of light cast & they last longer.

Use candles

how much more romantic are they for your guests & you

Paraffin is a petroleum derivative. Candles and candle wicks made of soy, palm oil, beeswax and natural plant oils are environmentally friendly. They also have a delicious natural scent and are much more appealing to the senses. Candles made of soy wax are non toxic and totally natural, burn cleaner and cooler, lasts 25-50% longer and burn completely; the wax cleans off easily with soap and water.

Visit www.ikou.com.au

Most candles are made with wicks containing lead to help the paraffin stay alight. So choosing cotton or other natural fibre is a good alternative.

As an example of this type of product.

Turn off electronic devices (not leaving them on stand-by mode)

Either turn off the device itself (a TV, DVD player or sound system) or turn the whole system off at the power point. As the latter can be difficult, purchase an energy saving power board. This may be initially expensive but in the long term it will save you money.

Visit [Energy saving powerboard](#) for more information

Signage instructing guests to turn off lights/air-conditioning

An example:

“For energy efficiency please don't set air-conditioners on extreme settings, they are more efficient 24-25 degrees. Please turn off when leaving for the day”

Develop an environmental policy & display on your website and in your compendium; leave a copy on display to inform your guests. Include suggestions as to how they can help, add a chocolate or two

The Gaia Napa Valley Hotel in California has a copy of Al Gore's documentary *An Inconvenient Truth* in all rooms along with their environmental policy.

Other energy saving tips

Use a clothes line rather than a drier.

Install ceiling fans and encourage their use over air-conditioning.

Install exterior shades over your windows

A website with a wide range of additional energy savings tips is www.energymatters.com.au. This will provide answers to many questions with the option of following their contact details if you cannot find your answers on the site itself.

View your energy bill for the daily wattage used. Set yourself the challenge to reduce this.

SOLAR ENERGY

a renewable resource

Solar passive design

Solar passive design is not retrofit-able and must be accomplished at design stage. It involves aligning the house on the block in such a way as to maximise the warming effect of sun in winter and the cooling effect of summer breezes throughout the house. The use of wide verandas and open windows aiding through-flow of cool air is significant to good solar passive design and must be undertaken in conjunction with proper insulation.

Ongoing reductions in costs in combining solar passive design with effective wall and ceiling insulation are considerable.

Solar Hot Water

Solar hot water may be backed up by electricity or by gas fired means in the [rare] periods when there is no sunlight to heat the water. Visit www.hillssolar.com.au to see the Evacuated Tube technology or www.energymatters.com.au for other options.

Ongoing costs of hot water heating drop by well over 30%. The installer applies for the rebates on your behalf.

Photovoltaic (Solar) cells

The two main types of solar power are grid connect and off grid (stand alone). With a grid connect system, you are still connected to the mains power supply, so battery storage is not required. An off grid system is completely separate from mains power and utilises a deep cycle battery bank for storing electricity.

Can be expensive so do your homework.

[find all the answers on rebates here.](#)

Solar external lights/gates

Installing solar driven external lights and gate mechanisms where they might otherwise be driven by grid supplied electricity makes good environmental sense. The cost of products vary radically and the general rule about “getting what you pay for” applies in this area.

WIND TURBINES

For further information on Wind Turbines, follow this link.

[For further information on wind turbines](#)

WATER

Australia is the driest continent on earth (apart from Antarctica).

Dual flush and low volume cisterns

Rather than purchase new cisterns it may be best to install a dual-flush converter to old single flush cisterns and reduce the amount of water in the cistern when full. This will result in reduced efficiency of a partial flush, but the full flush is effective and you can save a lot of water.

Composting toilet

can save over 60,000 litres of water per year in the average home

A waterless, odourless toilet treatment system. It uses no chemicals, heat or water, and has no polluting discharge. Water used in sewerage systems amounts to 30-50% of water usage in the normal household.

Visit
www.compostingtoilets.com.au, or
www.rotaloo.com.au, or
www.nature-loo.com.au for further information.

Water Tanks

up to 40% of a household's water use can be replaced with rainwater

In these times of water-restrictions installing a water tank for home/garden use is an important option.

For information on rebates visit
<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/rebates/termsconds.htm>

Water Saving Shower Heads

The home handy-man can do this. Water saving shower heads can be bought at any plumbing supplier or hardware store or on-line at Tip: Use an egg timer rather than a battery powered timer to limit the time you and guests spend under the shower. Experienced users report no diminution of the exhilaration of the shower, though you still have to be "miserly" in the time you spend under the shower.

www.neco.com.au

Easy, options available saving up to 50% of the water used in the conventional shower head.

No leaking taps

a leaking tap can waste up to 2,000 litres a month.

Regularly check all taps. Ceramic tap fittings are best.

Easy

No leaking toilet cisterns

The great silent water loss as the leaking cistern is often soundless and difficult to detect unless you look carefully for water running down the rear of the bowl. Worth a regular check.

Cost to you could be extensive if the leak is considerable and undetected for long periods.

Drip irrigation or grey water recycled on gardens

This requires some additional plumbing and is best done at design stage, though retrofitting is not too expensive and well worth the water saved. Check with your local Council regarding regulations for signage.

<http://www.wetearth.com.au/Grey-Water-Irrigation>

Drought hardy plantings

six trees will absorb one tonne of CO2 in areas of planting, up to 50% of the absorption occurring in the first 10 years.

Planting heat-tolerant & dry-tolerant trees & shrubs. Save water, carbon-offset your energy usage, create shade, windbreaks, shelters while still enjoying the wonderful hobby of gardening. An important adaptation to Climate Change.

Visit
<http://www.carbonneutral.com.au/> for more information.

[List of Australian plants](#)

Water Filter in lieu of bottled water

some 1.3 million tonnes of plastic go to landfill in Australia per year with NSW reaching its landfill capacity by 2010.

Plastic persists in the environment for 100 years & is made from oil, gas and coal.

[Tap-water filters](#)

Visit
www.cleanup.com.au/au/NewsandMedia/fact-sheets-index.html

<http://www.wetearth.com.au/Grey-Water-Irrigation>

Water Efficient dishwashers and washing machines the majority of the energy used in a dishwasher is for water heating

Always check the STARS for water efficiency & the energy rating.

An efficient washing machine has at least a 3.5 star energy rating and a 4 star water rating.

<http://www.energymatters.com.au/energy-efficiency/#WashersandDryers>

Visit
<http://www.energyrating.gov.au/dwl.html> for some great tips when using dishwashers

No change options for towels and linen

A suggestion would be to hang only one towel per guest, put spares in a cupboard, they will find if necessary. IT WORKS.

Water saved, energy saved, money saved, environmental saver.

PACKAGING and PAPER

... avoid, reduce, recycle!

Use of products made from recycled paper

Toilet paper; tissue paper; dinner napkins (cloth may be even better) as well as letter heads, brochures and other publicity material can all be sourced in recycled material. Available everywhere from major supermarkets to local wholesalers.

<http://www.environment.gov.au/settlements/publications/government/purchasing/packaging.html#download> .

Newspapers

Newspapers are made from waste timber products such as off-cuts, forest floor timber (which disturbs the eco system) & wood pulp. Recycle, reuse or compost.

A stress free holiday may mean no newspapers for many.

An excellent article on the environmental impact of the industry

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wood_pulp#Environmental_concerns

Use a Paper Shredder

There are some papers you would not want to dispose of at the local recycling depot so ... shred your paper and add it to your compost bin.

The only cost is the effort.

RECYCLE

look for the recycling symbol before buying

avoid, reduce, reuse, recycle

Recycling glass, plastic, paper waste and steel or aluminium cans etc.

separating glass, plastic, paper and steel or aluminium cans or other waste products and making sure they are "clean" and disposed of in an appropriate recycling program operated by your local council. If this is not available to you it is still possible to make individual arrangements for appropriate recycling practices. Visit <http://www.cleanup.com.au/au/NewsandMedia/fact-sheets-index.html> for information on other products that can be recycled.

[For more ideas when purchasing environmentally sustainable packaging](#)

Composting green waste

Recycling green waste through composting is not just sensible it makes good economic sense. A local chicken run is also a useful way of disposing of some green waste.

<https://www.aerobin400.com/aerobin400/about.aspx>
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vermicomposting>

Visit <http://www.cleanup.com.au/au/NewsandMedia/fact-sheets-index.html> for fact sheets on composting and worm farming

Recycling E-Waste from unused electronic devices and computers

print cartridges, computer parts, mobile phones, batteries, battery chargers & more

All these electronic products contain seriously dangerous materials many of which degrade the environment if not properly disposed of. They are toxic to humans & animals alike.

The collection of E-waste is a difficult issue to resolve but we should not give up! Thiess is one company that will get involved with local councils on this issue though there is a cost to the council so ... lobby your council to organise a collection ensuring the waste is recycled.

You can organise with Clean-Up www.cleanup.com.au to recycle mobile phones and there are several outlets such as Leading Edge Computers that will recycle print cartridges. Check also with your council.

These items constitute so serious an environmental issue that there ought perhaps to be some kind of offence for those not disposing of them responsibly. Doing so costs little (or nothing) and should be an article of faith for us all.

Say NO to plastic bags!

It seems as if it will not be long before local state and federal governments finally bite the bullet & prohibit the use of plastic shopping bags. HOW HARD IS IT TO BAN PLASTIC BAGS? Landfill and oceans abound with the wretched plastic monsters and the loss of life and degradation of our landscapes is something that is so readily avoidable by making sure we use reusable cloth bags of one kind or another.

Green shopping bags can be recycled in the bins provided for the recycling of plastic shopping bags at your supermarket.

This costs little or nothing and should be high on every concerned citizen's agenda.

CLEANING/TOILETRY PRODUCTS

Use of biodegradable cleaning products and toiletries

The availability of biodegradable cleaning products and toiletries is so widespread that there is really no excuse for not using them. Packaging is clearly marked and the general experience of the product is that they are as, or more efficient than, their non-biodegradable alternatives.

For those with on-site effluent disposal units, make sure you use non-phosphorous & no anti-bacterial products in your washing machine and dishwasher. If needed yoghurt creates more bacteria.

Most of these products are cheaper in the long term if you follow the directions on the packaging. Experiment and use even less ... it works!

OTHER INITIATIVES

Guests informed of environmental policy

This could mean a sign on your property and/or each room or a page in your guest compendium or on your website. If you are passionate about this you will enjoy creating and updating your environmental policy statement. You will be surprised at how much you can put on the list.

The only cost is your effort.

Internal Smoke Free Zones

This (prohibiting smoking indoors) is essential in our industry for all sorts of good reasons to do with your responsibility for the health and comfort of guests. There are very few guests who will fail to make a booking on the basis of not being able to smoke inside the room or house. Indeed there are many smokers who will not stay if smoking is allowed inside.

A no-cost option.

External Smoke Free Zones

Putting aside areas outside where smoking is permitted might depend on the nature of your property though this is really a matter for your own judgement. Whatever you do ensure you leave ashtrays outside for the disposal of butts as it takes upwards of eighteen months for a cigarette but to break down.

A no-cost option.

Organic Farming Practices

Organic farming practice whether or not you are officially "certified" as organic is a good way to exhibit a keen environmental commitment. "Permaculture" is a well documented and easily followed way of "going organic" in the smallest garden and the largest farm. Courses are available on this environmentally friendly gardening and farming practice at TAFE and at Agricultural Colleges around the state.

Costs savings and the lure of self sustainability are the attraction here.

Try the holistic approach and look for products that are GM free, try free range eggs, free range chicken (available in your supermarket) and other free range meats. The benefits are huge not only to you but to the environment and animal welfare. Drive less... the supply of oil is not an infinite resource

Take up the challenge the environment deserves and change your way of thinking and acting.

Aim to be carbon neutral in your home & in your business.

It's easy being green.....