Funding Opportunities

‘Working Together to Manage Emergencies’ Grants Available
The Australian Government, through Emergency Management Australia (EMA) is seeking grant applications under the ‘Working Together to Manage Emergencies’ initiative until 2 March 2007. The initiative comprises two schemes, including the Local Grants Scheme, which is open to Councils. Projects that will be considered for funding should develop and promote effective community preparedness, response and recovery initiatives, identify vulnerabilities with a view to enhancing protective measures for critical infrastructure, and provide emergency management and security awareness training for local government staff. For more information about these grants, and how to apply, visit the EMA Website.

National Disaster Mitigation Programme – Now Open for Applications
The Australian Government’s National Disaster Mitigation Programme aims to identify and address national disaster risk priorities around the nation. Applications for funding for the 2007-2008 programme are now open, and will close on 23 February 2007. Councils are able to apply where they have an established role in disaster and emergency risk management. For more information about the projects that may receive funding through this programme, visit the DOTARS website.

NLP Community Support Component – Funding Now Open
The National Landcare Programme Community Support Component is now seeking applications for local and regional landcare activities that support regional NRM Strategies. Applications close on 26 February 2007. For more information about this funding opportunity, visit the DAFF website.

Coming Up...

Clean Up Australia Day 2007!
It’s that time of year again… when individuals, families, groups and workmates get together to Clean Up Australia! This year the Clean Up Australia campaign is hoping to highlight the link between waste issues and other environmental issues such as water conservation and climate change. There are a number of ways that you (or your Council) can become involved – such as promoting or sponsoring a clean up site in your area, becoming a site co-ordinator, or by volunteering on Clean Up Australia Day, Sunday 4 March 2007; or on Business Clean Up Day, Tuesday 27 February 2007. For more information about Clean Up Australia visit the website, or contact the Tasmanian coordinator, Alexis Vertolli at the Tasmanian Conservation Trust: 6234 3552.

2007 Banksia Awards Now Open for Nominations
The 2007 Banksia Awards are now open for nominations for groups and individuals who have excelled in environmental and sustainability initiatives. This year there are ten category awards, including ‘local government’, ‘climate’, ‘community’ and ‘land and biodiversity’. For more information on each of the categories, or how to nominate an individual, group or institution, visit the Banksia Foundation website.
News

Water & Sewage Taskforce Discussion Paper Released
The State Government’s Water and Sewage Taskforce has released a discussion paper on reforming Tasmania’s water and sewage sector. The Government is working closely with Councils to review current infrastructure and services. To view the discussion paper, visit the Treasury website.

Burnie Waste Water Treatment Plant Opened
The opening of a new waste water treatment plant in Burnie will provide a higher level of treatment to water that is discharged into the north-west coast. The higher level of treatment offered by the new plant, which replaces the treatment plants at Coee Point and Round Hill, will contribute to rehabilitating the coastal zone, and will offer a healthier environment for swimming, fishing and other recreational pursuits. In opening the new wastewater treatment plant, Labor Member for Braddon, Brenton Best, gave credit to the Burnie City Council for their pursuit of sustainability in the northwest region.

Federal Environment Law Strengthened
The Australian Senate has passed amendments to the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 to provide for more timely assessment processes, strengthened enforcement and compliance provisions, and to allow for more strategic decisions that consider the cumulative impacts of development. For more information about the amendments, visit the DEH website.

Framework for Future NRM
In late 2006 Australian Environment Ministers meet and agreed to adopt a new framework to guide the development of future NRM programmes. The framework comprises four key themes of: biodiversity conservation, salinity and water quality, coastal and peri-urban issues, and soil health and production. In addition to these core themes are three crosscutting themes of climate change, greater local government participation, and indigenous engagement. The framework emphasises the important role for local government in addressing coastal and peri-urban issues, and the need to engage more broadly with Councils in NRM programmes. The Framework can be viewed as a pdf document here.

National State of the Environment Report
The National State of the Environment Report released at the end of 2006 has shown that many environmental issues have intensified since the release of the last SoE Report in 2001. Many of the areas highlighted as being of greatest concern overlap with Council issues and functions, including: concerns regarding the cumulative impacts of increasing populations on Australia’s coastline; the need for continued waste reduction and recycling efforts; and adapting to the impacts of climate change. The decline in environmental condition has occurred despite significantly increased funding on the environment and a decrease in land clearance in many parts of the country. To view the 2006 State of the Environment Report, visit the DEH website.

ABS Water Account 2004/05 Shows Decline in Water Use
The latest ABS Water Account has shown an overall 14% decline in water usage between 2000/01 and 2004/05, incorporating a 23% decrease in agricultural water usage. Household water use also declined, however, water use in the mining, electricity and gas sectors increased in the same period. The report can be found on the ABS website.

Resources and Tools

Stormwater Stencilling Kits for Tasmanian Schools
As part of Coastcare Week in early December, the Tasmanian Minister for the Environment launched stormwater drain stencilling kits that can be used by Tasmanian Schools and community groups to spread an important environmental message. The aim of the stencilling is to promote awareness of the connection between urban drainage systems and our waterways and coasts. The kits can be borrowed from the Environment Division of the Department of Tourism, Arts and the Environment, only once Council approval for a stencilling programme has been granted. For more information, contact the Environment Division on 6233 3595.

Australian Weed Strategy Endorsed for Release
The NRM Ministerial Council has endorsed the Australian Weeds Strategy for release. The strategy provides a framework to establish consistent guidelines for all involved in identifying priorities for weed management in Australia. To view the strategy, visit the AWS Website.

Website for New National Economic Development Body
The newly established Economic Development Australia (EDA) has launched its new website, which provides an overview of the role and services of the organisation. The organisation seeks to provide information about economic development initiatives at the local, state and national levels, whilst also taking on an advocacy role for effective economic development programmes. Visit the new EDA website for more information.

Plastic accounts for one third of all litter found on Tasmanian highways
(Keep Australia Beautiful, 2006 Survey)
Climate Change Corner

Climate Change Reference Group
The Local Government Association of Tasmania has responded to Council concerns about climate change with the establishment of a Local Government Climate Change Reference Group, which had its first meeting in early December. The Reference Group comprises Council staff, representing a range of Council functions that are likely to impact upon, or be impacted by climate change in the future. The Reference Group will seek to find points of common interest across Councils, identify opportunities to build on existing activities, and explore areas where further research or demonstration projects may be established. For more information, please contact Jenni Rigby at LGAT.

Opportunity to Comment on Draft Climate Change Strategy for Tasmania
The State Government’s Draft Climate Change Strategy for Tasmania is open for comment until the end of January. The Strategy sets the scene for combating climate change in Tasmania, and provides an Action Plan for Adaptation to climate change impacts. The Draft Strategy can be viewed on the DPIW website, and comments can be submitted until the end of January 2007.

King Island Council to go Carbon Neutral
The King Island Council has passed a motion to investigate ways in which to mitigate greenhouse gases and climate change both through the actions of Council and the activities of the community as a whole. The Council will establish a sub committee to explore ways in which the principles and targets of the Kyoto protocol can be met within the island municipality, by working with the community and showing leadership as a Council. One aspect of this will be to investigate how Council can move toward becoming carbon neutral.

Coming Soon - Climate Change Resources…?
As a component of the Local Government Association of Tasmania website a climate change web page is currently being developed to provide Councils with access to information, tools and resources that relate to climate change. If you are aware of any resources that would benefit people in other Councils, please forward details to jenni.rigby@lgat.tas.gov.au so that they can be included in this new resource.

Conferences

Australian Water Summit: Can you Afford to Miss a Drop?
The 5th Annual Australian Water Summit will be held at the Hilton on the Park, Melbourne from 26 – 28 February 2007. With water a key issue for all levels of government, the conference will feature speakers from state and federal governments, scientists and the commercial water industry. For more information about the conference programme, or to register for the event, visit the conference website.

LGMA Conference: Power and the Passion
The 2007 Local Government Managers Association (LGMA) National Congress and Business Expo will be held at the hotel Grand Chancellor in Hobart from 29 April until 2 May 2007. The theme for this year’s conference is the ‘Power and the Passion: The power to make a difference. The passion to lead’. Keynote speakers include John Anders, and the Hon. Jeffrey Kennett – for more details on the conference programme, and for registration details, visit the conference website.

Green Cities: Where Our Future Lives
Hosted by the Green Building Council of Australia, and the Property Council of Australia, this three-day conference offers an insight into cutting edge innovation, research and technology for green buildings. Concurrent to the conference is the Green Cities Expo, which showcases innovative green building products, services, initiatives and technologies. This Australasian Conference and Expo will be held at the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre, Darling Harbour from 11 – 14 February 2007.

Happy New Year to all subscribers of Env-e-News!
Thanks for your support in 2006, and I look forward to working with you in 2007.

If you no longer wish to receive this electronic newsletter, please e-mail Jenni at the Local Government Association of Tasmania.

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