Burnie’s West Beach claimed two awards at the Keep Australia Beautiful, Australian Clean Beaches Awards, held in Manly, NSW on 25 March.

West Beach won the Energy Innovation category and claimed equal first in the Heritage and Culture category. Council entered its projects in last year’s state awards, claiming two titles for its waterfront development and qualifying as a national finalist for their North Terrace streetscape project.

Burnie City Council Mayor, Alvwyn Boyd, said all the awards were a great honour for the city, especially for its waterfront to be acknowledged nationally. “The judge, Dr David Moy said West Beach displayed a rich cultural heritage that told the stories of the city and port. He also said the new Makers’ Workshop helped the community and visitors learn about the history, industrial heritage and culture of Burnie.”

Mayor Boyd said that the Makers’ Workshop had been a key element to Burnie claiming the Energy Innovation Award. “According to the judge, our Makers’ Workshop ticked all the ‘green star’ requirements, which is a great honour at a time where energy efficiency is important.”

The changes to West Beach had been in line with the original Waterfront Masterplan, which was accepted by Council in 2006, following more than six months of community consultation.
Kingborough Mayor, Dr. Graham Bury, has joined an international effort to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions by becoming a member of the World Mayors Council on Climate Change (WMCCC).

The WMCCC is an alliance of committed Local Government leaders advocating an enhanced recognition and involvement of mayors in multilateral efforts to address climate change and related issues of global sustainability.

Mayor Bury is the first Tasmanian mayor to join the WMCCC and the fourth Australian member. There are 37 members worldwide.

The WMCCC was founded by then Mayor of the City of Kyoto, Yorikane Masumoto, in 2005 soon after the Kyoto Protocol came into force. The WMCCC aims to promote policies addressing climate change and its impact at a local level, to support effective multilateral mechanisms for global climate change protection and to foster international cooperation of municipal leaders to achieve climate change targets.

The key purposes of the Council are:

• To politically promote policies addressing climate change and its impact at the local level;
• To support effective multilateral mechanisms for global climate protection and advocate an enhanced recognition and involvement of mayors in future global climate governance;
• To help make the multilateral mechanisms for global climate protection effective and, through advocacy, influence negotiations on future global climate protection regimes; and
• To foster the international cooperation of municipal leaders on achieving relevant climate targets under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Millennium Development Goal 7 and other environmental agreements.

Membership will allow Kingborough Council to benefit from the knowledge and experiences of a global network of mayors and provide access to the latest information relevant to climate change. For further information, visit www.iclei.org.au/worldmayorscouncil.

Home Energy Audit Toolkit

The Home Energy Audit Toolkit (HEAT) has been developed through the Southern Tasmanian Councils Authority’s Regional Climate Change Initiative (RCCI) by the Hobart City Council.

The Hobart City Council has four kits available for borrowing and at least one toolkit will be available from Brighton, Central Highlands, Clarence, Derwent Valley, Glamorgan Spring Bay, Huon Valley, Kingborough, Sorell, Southern Midlands and Tasman Councils, as well as Launceston City Council, Sustainable Living Tasmania, the Snug Primary School and the Kettering Cricket Club.

HEAT allows householders to undertake home energy audits in their own time and space and provides practical and affordable suggestions on how to save energy and dollars on energy bills. HEAT information sheets have been specially developed for Tasmanian households and conditions and compliments other home energy audit services and programs. HEAT will enable households to gain a deeper understanding of how their homes use energy that can lead to lasting behaviour change and real savings.

Each HEAT contains:
- a Power-Mate which enables the measurement of electricity consumption of all electrical appliances with a standard 3-pin plug;
- an infrared radiometer used to check for leaks around fridge doors and the effectiveness of ceiling insulation;
- a stopwatch to assist in determining flow rate of hot water from showers and taps;
- a silva compass to identify the home’s orientation for solar aspect considerations and the suitability of the roof’s orientation for hot water and electricity solar panels;
- a thermometer with magnet to measure the air temperature around houses, hot water systems, fridges and freezers; and
- laminated instruction and information sheets. A kit may be borrowed free of charge for up to two weeks from a participating council on presentation of a driver’s licence.
Delivering on the massive capital works program with a coordinated, regional focus on the management of water and wastewater issues projects, improving services to customers and building a strong and united workforce have been the three big challenges facing Southern Water in this, our first year of operations.

Late last year, the Tasmanian Government confirmed metering for all water customers. This will be the largest roll out of water meters anywhere in Australia for many years, with 65,000 residential customers and around 10,000 commercial customers involved. Fewer than 20,000 customers in southern Tasmania already have water meters and anecdotal evidence indicates that this has already led to a reduction on water wastage.

The universal installation of meters will increase equity across the customer base and enable us to introduce two-part pricing based on a fixed charge and a volumetric charge. This pricing regime already exists for our customers in Brighton, Southern Midlands, Glamorgan-Spring Bay and Sorell municipal areas. Getting meters into every property in southern Tasmania is critical if we are to deliver a more sustainable water service to all our customers.

Project Delivery
Price, availability, reliability and quality of water and wastewater services are top of the agenda for the State Government and for our customers. For us, that means delivering on our program to upgrade and develop new infrastructure, and listening closely to our customers and the community. Community consultation programs have been initiated in relation to several key projects including the Swansea Water Supply scheme, the Huon Valley Regional water scheme, and the upgrading of the water treatment plant at Ellendale.

Improving water quality was a key driver behind our decision to begin a program to cover water reservoirs across the southern region. Contracts have been signed for the roofing program and we expect work will begin shortly on covering the Lindisfarne reservoir. Problems facing several smaller communities on permanent boil water alerts also are being addressed.

Uniting the Workforce
We have also made significant progress towards our goal of consolidating our Hobart-based operations. The corporation has entered into a lease agreement with the owner of two adjacent properties in Moonah. Bringing the team together on a single site is a significant step forward in improving our business efficiency and will ensure we continue to build a strong and united workforce. Work will start immediately on the fit-out of these sites and we expect office teams to be moving into the new buildings between the end of 2010 and 2011.

We also launched our first ever workplace survey in March to understand the needs of the 330 people working for Southern Water. With a 94% feedback rate, we are looking forward to finding out our people’s views so that we can gauge what progress we’ve made in the past eight months, and how the Southern Water workplace culture is developing. It is our intention to use the honest feedback from each and every member of the Southern Water team to assist in shaping our decisions and provide a benchmark for assessing our progress as a company in the years ahead.

Planning for the Future
In April, our Corporate Plan was approved by the Board. This plan sets out the strategic direction of Southern Water for the next three years and highlights the capital works, key actions and the measures by which our success will be benchmarked.

Building the Future
We’re very much aware that we are building on the work that was begun by Local Government. The infrastructure we have inherited represents not just a financial investment by councils but, more importantly, a significant human investment in terms of the skill and dedication of our workers – many of whom are now working for Southern Water. By managing the water industry in a sustainable and efficient way, not only will we be able to improve the health and wellbeing of the community, we’ll also be able to maximise the distributions we pay to our council owners. That’s why we’re determined to deliver to the standards expected by the community – for both Local Government and for the people of Tasmania.
The issue of bituminous emulsion storage is an ongoing issue, purchased in 200 litre drums and used for surface preparation before applying asphalt to potholes and patches in the municipality. Previously, emulsion was decanted from the drums using manual pumping systems, or receptacles into the Flocon Asphalt unit and applied using a triggered lance on a retractable hose.

The problem with the 200 litre drum storage was the necessity to continue revolving and agitating the drum to reduce heavy particles from settling and solidifying. This was time-consuming and rarely alleviated the problem. The purchase of roller-mounted drum storage and dispensing units was not enough. The level of wasted product did not reduce. Drums at that time were recycled, leading to drums being in poor condition and resulting in difficulty when attempting to rotate damaged drums on the rollers. Consequently, an even distribution of particles within the product was not achievable, resulting in blockages of the emulsion lance during application in the field.

About two years ago, the supplier stopped taking back the drums, so they then became a landfill item. Also, waste product needed to be dried before being allowed at landfill. Other disposable options included interstate shipping and were very expensive. Purchasing emulsion using 200 litre drums had many problems associated with it, including: creation of waste product and drums to landfill; dispensing issues; OH&S issues; and lost time in depot and on-site due to poor efficacy of the product, particularly during colder months.

A figure of $9,000 was included in Burnie City Council’s 09/10 plant budget which included power installation to the external storage site. A bulk storage unit was required that could both agitate and heat emulsion to a desirable temperature. Coming from a dairy farm at Riana, my first option was to try and source a second hand milk vat. A 1,100 litre stainless steel vat was subsequently purchased from a Smithton farmer and was set up and powered with only agitation available initially. A 1,000 litre plastic pod was also purchased to transport the emulsion from our supplier (Downer EDI) in Launceston.

Emulsion is then gravity fed from the pod to the storage unit directly through the raised butterfly lid of the unit. The installation of timed agitation at five minutes per hour had an immediate impact on product manageability. Also the Flocon’s emulsion pumping system allows direct connection to the vat outlet for the Flocon’s emulsion tank filling. A heating element, thermostat and switches were then installed by an electrician and welder. The heater element is set at 18°C and will only be used through the colder months of the year. This, together with agitation, is maintaining an excellent product for use all year round.

The total cost of setup was $6,100 which included $3,400 of power installation to the site. The cost of emulsion purchased in the 200 litre drums was $1.71 per litre, compared to $1.29 for bulk purchase resulting in a saving to Council of 42c per litre. A conservative estimate of 5,000 litres of emulsion used annually and an expected life of 10 years plus of the emulsion storage unit, gives Council a good return on investment, saves time in the field, improves efficiency and staff morale, reduces manual handling issues and alleviates waste to landfill.
“Which bin to put it in?”

With an increase in the amount of information on labels, variation in the types of recycling logos used and differences between councils as to what packaging they accept for recycling – it is fair to suggest there is some confusion out there about what can and cannot be recycled.

Shane Eberhardt from Dulverton Waste Management recently received $120,000 of funding from the National Packaging Covenant to help educate Tasmanians as to the correct bin to put used packaging in and to reduce contamination from engaging in the wrong recycling practices.

In April, a new TV campaign and website was launched to educate Tasmanians about good recycling practice. To date, the project has diverted some 11,527 tonnes of recyclable packaging from landfill.

The project is statewide, involving regional Local Government waste bodies and Veolia Environmental Services. It aims to increase the amount of recyclable packaging material recovered through kerbside collection services and decrease the quantity of contamination from households. It will reclaim a large proportion of recyclable material still going into household garbage and subsequently landfill at time of application.

As existing kerbside collection contracts across the state expire, Local Government is upgrading collection service from crates to mobile garbage bins. The changes in service are to improve recovery rates for recyclable materials, with the expected improvement in recovery to be around 2.3 to 2.5 times that of the existing crate service. Councils provide information to residents at a local level but there is a need for a more consistent approach across the state.

An advertising campaign has been launched to educate, inform and increase awareness of households on why we should recycle; the change of service; the concept of co-mingling material; and the correct materials to recycle. The advertising campaign will be promoted via television, radio and newspapers for up to twelve months.

The Recycle Tasmania website is located at www.recycletasmania.com.au.

Tasmanian Protected Species Signage

After meeting a number of tourists in recent times, Latrobe Council felt that visitors to the state may not be aware of all of our protected species, as protection status varies between states.

To help raise awareness, Latrobe Council recently designed and erected an information sign which will assist in educating tourists and locals about the characteristics of the Spur-winged Plover. Latrobe Mayor Mike Gaffney said whilst Parks and Wildlife did not have a prototype for the signs, we have received positive comments from Parks and Wildlife officers regarding this initiative.

For councils interested in displaying the protected species signage in their area, the signs may be ordered from D. Signs and Promotional for $98. For more information, email admin@d-signs.com.au, or visit www.d-sign.com.au.

PARTNERING WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Veolia Environmental Services provides a full range of waste management, resource recovery, environmental and industrial services to councils across Tasmania.

Specialising in waste and recyclables collection, we work closely with local government and have assisted many Tasmanian councils to develop waste management solutions that meet local requirements.

Veolia can help design and implement collection systems for the entire recyclable and general waste streams.

Council-specific waste and resource management plans may incorporate options for resource recovery, waste minimisation strategies, hard and green waste services, collection and recycling services, as well as supporting education initiatives.

To talk about your waste management solution, contact 1300 134 242

www.veolia.com.au