

Australia's leading not-for-profit organisation, promoting sustainable technology and practice in order to protect our environment



ATA's highlights 2008/2009

Bathroom greywater and your garden

In collaboration with RMIT University's Environmental Science Department, ATA conducted research into which bathroom products are suitable for use in greywater. A list of commonly used soaps and shampoos were tested to determine their pH, electrical conductivity (EC), sodium, potassium and phosphorus levels.

The study showed that most hard soaps produced greywater that is likely to damage soil structure due to generally high levels of sodium. The report recommends the use of liquid body washes instead of hard soaps.

Water advocacy

ATA is the sole representative from the environment sector on the National Water Reform Roundtable. ATA is representing the interests of sustainable householders in the face of coming widespread water reform.

Domestic wind turbines for urban areas

In June 2009, the *Victorian Urban Wind Resource Assessment* was launched by ATA for Sustainability Victoria. This report looks at typical wind regimes at 10 sites within 25 kilometres of Melbourne's CBD and comments on the suitability of urban locations for installation of micro wind turbines.

The gathered data suggests that common domestic sites are not likely to have sufficient available wind energy to make micro wind turbines an attractive option. The report recommends that further research concentrate on establishing standards for measuring turbulence in urban environments and modelling the effects of turbulence parameters on performance.

Lobbying for feed-in tariff legislation

ATA has been active in the past 12 months arguing for strong solar feed-in tariffs that pay householders for all of the electricity they produce (called a gross feed-in tariff), not just for the surplus electricity that is fed back into the electricity grid (called a net feed-in tariff). Feed-in tariffs have been progressively enacted at a state level, with differing tariff designs and eligibility.

ATA is keeping a close eye on the progression of each scheme with a view to lobbying for a strong national scheme in the future.



ATA conducts research on behalf of Sustainability Victoria into the suitability of micro wind turbines in urban areas.

Advocacy on emissions trading and renewable energy targets

In the lead up to the introduction of the Renewable Energy Target (RET) and the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS) bills into federal parliament, ATA actively advocated for changes to the design of both pieces of legislation. ATA has concerns that the current design of both schemes would act against the interests of households trying to achieve sustainability. ATA met with federal policy advisors, Liberal and ALP politicians and made detailed submissions on our preferred designs for the schemes.

National energy market reform

ATA has been actively engaged in the process to reform the national energy market. ATA is a member of the national steering committee to develop and review the functionality of smart meters. The federal government has committed to rolling out smart meters to all Australian homes over the next decade. ATA is looking at this technology's interaction with solar PV and other forms of micro-generation and its contribution to household energy efficiency generally.

GreenPower research

ATA conducted research into the motivations for households who choose GreenPower. For 54% of respondents the primary motivation for purchasing GreenPower was to increase the amount of renewable energy installed in Australia. A further 39% stated that their primary aim was to reduce carbon emissions. The results of this survey have been very useful for ATA's lobbying and policy work.

Renewable energy installations in East Timor

The sixth year of ATA volunteer projects in East Timor was marked by the installation of solar PV systems in schools, clinics and homes. It was a big year for the village lighting scheme with 100 households accessing solar lighting. ATA volunteers also conducted training courses for local technicians, and gave the trainees on-the-job experience. In total the ATA's International Projects Group (IPG) installed 7.4kW of solar power in 31 separate installations.

The IPG also expanded to Vanuatu, partnering with local NGOs to conduct a wind resource assessment.

ReNew: technology for a sustainable future magazine

ReNew magazine continued to attract many new readers with a 10% increase in subscriptions over the last twelve months. Newsagency sales also remained strong, with various media promotions introducing new readers to the magazine.

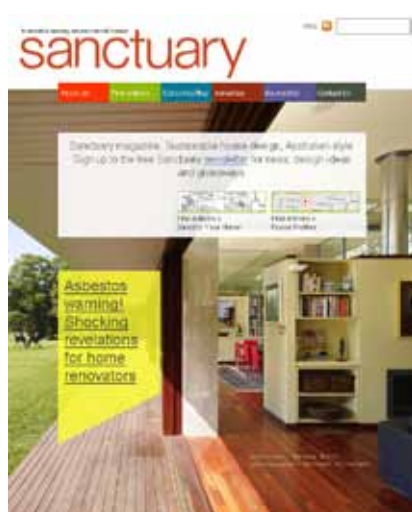
Readers continued to shape and inspire content, with the ReNew Sustainable Sheds Competition attracting many unique entries from across Australia and New Zealand.

ReNew readers responded to the 2009 Readers Survey in droves, with 868 people reporting back on what attracts them to ReNew and what they'd like to see from a new website to complement the magazine.

Sanctuary: sustainable living with style magazine

In late 2008, Sanctuary magazine expanded from two issues a year to four issues. Readers have embraced the move, with a 51% increase in subscribers.

May 2009 saw the launch of the Sanctuary website, a showcase of sustainable house design. The website features



a Google Maps portal, so you can zoom straight to your climate zone to find relevant house profiles. There's also a cutaway sustainable house that you run your cursor over and explore. Click on areas of the house—such as lighting, solar panels, windows— and the relevant Sanctuary articles pop up.



Home shows and community events

The ATA has been promoting sustainable living at major sustainability expos, home shows and community events across the country. By attending a range of events, ATA has been able to share its knowledge on sustainable living with hundreds of thousands of Australians.

The ATA was also contracted by the federal Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts to attend major home shows to raise awareness of the federal government's new sustainability program—Green Loans.

Sustainable living seminars

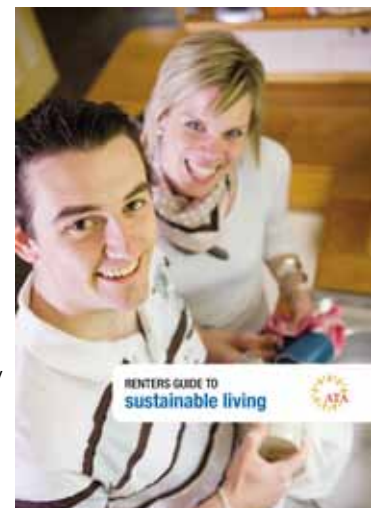
ATA presented at a number of seminars throughout the year. These seminars covered water, waste and energy issues and were conducted for councils, community groups and trade shows. In early 2009, the ATA created a 'speed-learning' structure for seminars allowing greater audience participation and interaction.

Renters guide to sustainable living

Renters can make changes to their home to make it more comfortable, save money and reduce their environmental impact. The ATA's *Renters Guide to Sustainable Living*, is a 16 page booklet that is free to anyone looking to lighten their carbon footprint as a tenant.

The booklet also has handy information about how to negotiate changes with a landlord, rebates available and eligible tax deductions.

The guide was funded by the Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts' Green Loans Program.



ATA Branches

ATA branches are groups of like-minded ATA members that meet regularly to exchange information, experiences and ideas with those interested in sustainable living. This contributes to building capacity and resilience around sustainability in their local communities.

Branches have been involved in a wide range of activities over the past year, including holding regular meetings featuring speakers on a variety of sustainability topics; participating in Sustainable House Day; running information seminars; and attending fairs, festivals and other events which involve managing an ATA stall and presenters.

For more information on ATA's activities go to: www.ata.org.au