

MEDIA RELEASE

ENVIROSMART SCHOOL BLITZES LOCAL ENVIRONMENT

Embargo: Friday 18 February 2005

The backyard of Douglas Park Public School has been “blitzed” by a team of students, parents and volunteers as part of a state-wide environmental grants program.

The one-day makeover (*on Friday, 18 February 2005*) was the official launch of the EnviroSmart Grants program which will help 24 schools across NSW make a difference to their local environment.

EnviroSmart Grants are being awarded by the NSW Minerals Council (NSWMC) to encourage, promote and recognise environmental excellence by schools that develop and implement a School Environmental Management Plan (SEMP) based on the same model used by mine sites around the State.

On Friday nearly 100 Year 6 students, school and community volunteers descended onto the school to implement the schools’ successful project in just one day – the transformation of desolate and unused land behind the school grounds into an outdoor classroom including native vegetation and garden supported by rainwater collected in an underground storage system.

Local businesses and suppliers including the Wollondilly Shire Community Nursery and Hayters have joined with regional EnviroSmart sponsors BHP Dendrobium to support the one-day schoolyard blitz, providing volunteers and in-kind resources to help the school get its back yard in order.

The refurbishment included the installation of pumps, planting of native species, demolition of an old incinerator, new pathways and learnscapes, paving, mulch and the turfing of land between classrooms.

NSWMC Chief Executive, Dr Nikki Williams, said the project was a great way of bringing the community together, improving the school environment and teaching students about the benefits of planning and caring for the native environment.

The EnviroSmart Grants program follows on from the successful SEMPs handed out to schools by the NSWMC since 2001. This program recognises and supports environmental planning initiatives based on the EnviroSmart school environment planning kit developed by the Minerals Council of Australia.

All successful schools will receive a minimum of \$500 towards the cost of implementing their plan. Successful grant winners in 2005 include:

- Blayney Public School - Waste Land Regeneration Project
- Cargo Public School – Native Vegetation Regeneration Project
- Euchareena Public School – Art of the Land Project
- Hayes Park Public School – Rainwater Storage Project
- Molong Central School – Energy Use Reduction Project
- Zig Zag Public School – Environmental Area Project
- St John Vianney School Morisset – Recycling Project
- La Salle Academy Lithgow – Recycling and Waste Audit Project
- Blackalls Park Public School – Biodiversity and Stormwater Mitigation Project
- Douglas Park Public School – Watering System & Vegetation Regeneration Project
- Fassifern Public School – Water Saving Project
- Forbes High – School Oval Regeneration Project
- Parkes Holy Family Parish School – Native Garden Project
- Morisset Public – Shade Trees and Bush Tucker Garden Project



- Mt Kembla Public – Resource Management and Waste Control Project
- Mullion Creek Public – Soil Erosion Project
- Nashdale Public – Native Vegetation Regeneration Project
- Orange Christian School – Recycling Project
- Parkes High – School-wide Recycling Project
- Port Kembla Public – Native Garden & Reclamation Project
- St Anthony's Picton – Recycling Project
- Trundle Central School – Rainwater Project
- St John Vianney School Morisset – Recycling Project
- Tullamore Central – Native Tree Propagation Project

The program has been sponsored by BHP Billiton's – Dendrobium Project, Newcrest's Cadia Valley Operations, Centennial Coal and Northparkes Mine.

EDITORS NOTE: Work on site will commence at 9am and is scheduled to be completed by 2pm on Friday, 18 February 2005. Douglas Park Public School is located at 111 Camden Rd, Douglas Park.

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