

Environment Policy

The Department of Human Services (DHS) covers the responsibilities of the Ministers for Community Services and Housing. The Department is responsible for *improving people's lives and reducing their experience of disadvantage by providing housing and community services to support and protect Victorians most in need*. The Department recognises that disadvantaged and vulnerable groups are more likely to be affected by the negative effects of climate change and is committed to minimising the environmental impacts of its operations. DHS will strive for continual improvement in minimising our environmental impacts by integrating considerations of environmental sustainability in our business operations.

In order to achieve our environmental goal, we commit to the following principles and practices:

- Managing, monitoring and measuring environmental performance and establishing objectives and targets to minimise these impacts.
- Communicating our environmental performance through the annual report and other internal and external reports.
- Reducing the energy, water and paper consumption associated with operations.
- Minimising the production of greenhouse gases associated with the vehicle fleet and air travel.
- Purchasing Green Power and investigating the use of alternative energy sources.
- Reducing the amount of waste we produce, and maximising the amount reused and recycled.
- Considering environmental aspects in the purchase of products and services, and endeavouring to ensure the suppliers also meet high standards of environmental performance.
- Ensuring that all new capital works programs incorporate comprehensive environmental sustainability principles.
- Committing to principles of pollution prevention and continual improvement.
- Recognising that all staff have a responsibility to assist the Department to meet the commitments in this policy.
- Empowering staff to minimise our environmental impacts through raising staff awareness and encouraging participation in environmental management.
- Working closely with our employees, contractors, suppliers, clients, and the community to develop and implement environmental initiatives.
- Providing leadership to the community and industry by demonstrating best practise methods of delivering sustainable initiatives.
- Complying with relevant Commonwealth and Victorian Government environmental policy, practices, regulations and legislation.
- Communicating this policy to all employees, contractors and other stakeholders as well as making this policy available to the general public.

This policy covers the operations of the department in all office and non office corporate facilities.



Gill Callister
Secretary
Department of Human Services
August 2010