



JECO

The Jewish Ecological Coalition

JECO eNews - March 2017

A special welcome to our new members who signed up at the In One Voice festival on Sunday.

Upcoming events

Free community presentation

... featuring (among others) JECO's very own Eva Light

Glen Eira Garden Tour

Join us on a garden tour — visit and learn about three creative and inspiring private gardens in Glen Eira.

The tour includes a visit to three inspiring private gardens, including:

- Roxanne's edible oasis, featuring raised vegetable gardens and chickens;
- Suzi's native haven with its regular visitors of birds, butterflies and bees; and
- Eva's incredible zero-waste garden and home, featuring creative composting systems.



The tour will be facilitated by Council's Sustainability Unit.

WHEN: Sunday 26 March 10am–1pm

WHERE: Participants will be advised of the meeting point when they register.

OTHER: Participants will be transported between the three gardens in a private bus.

BOOKINGS ARE ESSENTIAL!

For further information and to RSVP, contact Council's sustainability education officer on 9524 3333 or email sustainability@gleneira.vic.gov.au

... and continuing the garden theme:

Dream Big

A talk on the celebration of ten years of the Murrumbeena Community Garden

Glynis Ramsay, one of the three power-girls behind the dream of utilising the land around the Koornang Uniting Church, will talk about the establishment of the Murrumbeena Community Garden and reflect on its ten years of providing much to many. There will be tears, laughter and a cup of herbal tea.



When: 11.15am Sunday 2nd April

Where: Koornang Uniting Church
117 Murrumbeena Rd
(Parking at Rear)

Coming soon

Solar – Is it for you?

A talk by Andrew Gelbart who describes himself as an ‘elderly’ engineer who finally made the leap to having it installed after considerable evaluation and watching the technology develop and emerge.

Sunday 21st May 7:30pm ... more details to follow.

Tour of a recycling plant

What happens to all that ‘stuff’ that you put in your recycling bin?

We are planning a group tour of a recycling facility. Unfortunately these tours only run on weekdays.

Car pooling will be arranged to minimise the environmental impact – if we have enough people we’ll arrange a mini-bus.

To register your interest, email flitman@optusnet.com.au. Please include phone contact details.



Reports from past activities

Clean up Australia Day

Though few in numbers, our team of six that cleaned up Sinclair, Selwyn & Gordon Sts Elsternwick was high on energy and enthusiasm. Together we picked up over 100 cigarette butts and filled 6 bags (3 with recyclables).



Did you know?

It takes 1/20th of the energy to produce a recycled aluminium can than a new one.

In One Voice and our petition

Our stall at the festival had three main themes:

- Sustainable transport, featuring a display of a plug-in hybrid car and electric bikes together with information about them as well as about public transport options
- More sustainable catering through the use of [alternatives to plastic plates and cutlery](#)
- A [petition to Josh Frydenberg](#), Minister for Environment and Energy calling on him to withdraw backing of the Adani coalmine and support renewable technologies.

We encourage everyone to download and print a copy of the petition, collect as many signatures as possible and return it to us by 30th April. (Unfortunately scanned copies of petitions are not valid; originals will need to be posted or delivered to President JECO, c/- Lamm Library, 304 Hawthorn Rd, Caulfield South 3162)

Featured article

One of JECO's aims is "to educate and encourage individuals to 'tread softly on the face of the earth'; i.e. to minimise their environmental footprint." With the warm weather coming late to Melbourne, this month Frank Goldstein gives us some tips to help minimise use of electricity, expense and greenhouse gas emissions whilst still obtaining the benefits of air conditioning.

If you would like to contribute an article of your own, please email me flitman@optusnet.com.au

- Evelyn Flitman, JECO President

(Cost) effective use of air conditioning

This piece does not go into the pros and cons of which system (evaporative/refrigerated) is better, or which to buy to meet your house/personal requirements. It assumes you have some form of system up and running but will lean heavily to reverse cycle split systems.

Ensure that the air conditioning unit is the correct capacity for the area(s) you want to cool.

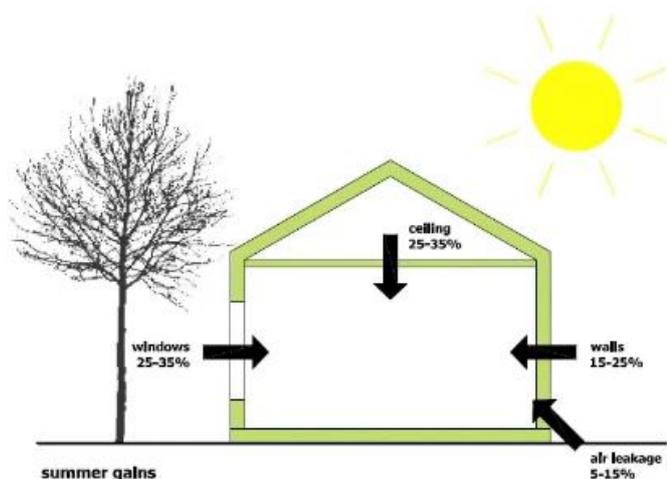
My air conditioner keeps me awake at night ... not the noise, it's worrying about how much it's costing me!



Make sure that your air conditioning system is regularly maintained to run as efficiently as possible. Not just the mechanical operation of the air conditioning unit(s) but also such items as ducting is fully sealed, external compressors are free of debris, etc.

In winter, doors and windows need to be properly sealed and ceilings and walls insulated to prevent heat loss; the same insulation will prevent cool air from escaping in summer. Of course this is not relevant if you use evaporative cooling as you have to keep windows and internal doors open which somewhat negates the effect of insulation.

In the summer, as during the winter months, good sealing and insulation will trap the hot air, so it makes sense to do as much as possible to keep the heat out. External blinds, reflective film on window glass, and/or curtains will help with this, particularly for rooms that face north, west or east. A cooler room will need less air conditioning to bring to the required level of comfort.



Another good tip is to have deciduous trees planted outside these windows – these will provide shade in summer, and lose their leaves in winter to let the sun through when you want it for warmth.

Myth: Setting the thermostat to a temperature that's colder than you are normally comfortable with will cool the room faster.

This is not the case. The area will cool down to your desired level of comfort just as quickly if you set it to your target temperature.

Use the air conditioner in the economy mode as often as possible.

Getting the balance right

Don't run the air conditioner when no-one is in the house so it is instantly cool the moment you enter; this just increases electricity usage and expense. The room will cool quickly enough when the air conditioning unit is switched on.

Preferably use the air conditioner only in the area you are occupying and close doors to other areas. This stops the air conditioner having to cool unnecessary space.

Make use of ceiling and portable fans where ever possible. They won't make the surrounding air any cooler but can more effectively distribute the cooler air and create a 'wind chill' effect.



Sit in front of a pedestal fan in a damp t-shirt and for night use a cooling gel pad as a pillow.



Be aware of the outside temperature so you will know when to turn the system off and open windows and doors to the now cooler air outside.

Make use of the timer, especially when going to bed. For most nights there is no need to keep the air conditioning on all the time.

Note the outside temperature; you want a differential when cooling, not an absolute minimum. The smaller the difference between the outside and inside temperatures, the smaller the cost.

Turning the thermostat up by one degree can help cut cooling costs by 10%.

On hot days try to minimise the use of heat generating (electrical) equipment as much as is practical. This may not be the day to be cooking a roast dinner for twelve! Note also that halogen downlights are good at generating excess heat. This should be an incentive to change them to LEDs. This comes with a double benefit; less electricity consumed for lighting and less heat generated to cool away. (There are currently heaps of organisations willing to do the changeover for free using government incentives.)

Disrobe - though clearly there's a limit to how far you can take this. However, if you find you are still in long sleeves, pants or are pulling the doona over yourself during the night, you probably have the thermostat set too low!

In other news

Good news from the Climate Council

South Australia and Victoria have announced large-scale battery storage developments, taking a critical step towards a clean, smart energy future.

What is battery storage and how does it work?

Get the low-down and share it all around [in this short & snappy explainer video](#).



Energy storage development is critical in Australia. **Renewables with storage technology mean zero emissions, affordable power and electricity that's available every hour of every day.** Battery storage not only builds resilience in the power grid but also maximises supply.

And importantly, new large-scale battery storage provides significant economic opportunities spanning **manufacturing, delivery and operations**.

What we need now is leadership at the federal level. The development of a national energy plan is critical to ensure the transition to renewable energy continues.

Smart, clean, renewable energy and storage technologies are the future of Australia's energy system.

Let's keep pushing.

Bayside Climate Change Action Group (BCCAG)



The BCCAG run some outstanding activities – like the public forum they held in February with Tim Flannery as the keynote speaker, talking about why we must declare a climate emergency. Alison Rowe spoke about how discussions with businesses need to begin with asking them if they have done a risk assessment on the effects of climate change on their business. This is critical as the directors can be held liable. We need to help them to identify risk and turn it into opportunities – then they will listen.

Some other interesting points from the evening:

- The Great Barrier Reef earns Australia \$6billion a year (in tourism etc) and supports more than 65000 jobs.

- We are adding 50 gigatonnes of greenhouse gasses to the atmosphere each year. To draw this down by as little as 10% by planting trees we would need to plant trees to cover an area as large as North America.
- There was climate change during such periods as the ice age, but it happened 30 times slower than what is happening now.
- Politicians have a great deal of difficulty representing what the people want. When you rely on politicians to get things done you are always disappointed. Politicians don't lead – they follow us.
- The ACT will be on 100% renewable energy by 2020.
- Cleaner coal-fired power stations cost about twice as much to build as renewables.
- If you look at the issues of climate change on your own it's really depressing; when you connect with others you can be more resilient. No-one can do everything, but everyone can do something.

You can view the complete forum at <https://youtu.be/fzPzwvbgDs> and <https://youtu.be/S93PlE-IBY> , or from the BCCAG website <https://bccag.org.au/>.

Sign the online petition re Climate Emergency. You'll find this at:
<https://climateemergency.good.do/climateemergencypetition/climateemergencydeclarationpetition/>

Coming BCCAG activities:

Leonardo di Caprio's acclaimed and moving documentary and call to action.

Screening at
Sandringham Uniting Church Hall
21 Trentham St Sandringham
Wed. 26 April 7.30pm



Reuse! Because you can't recycle the planet

- A documentary directed by Alex Eaves, reviewed by Eva Light who saw it at the Transitions Film Festival at the Sustainable Living Festival.

Director Alex Eaves takes us on a cross-country adventure to 48 U.S. states. We visit individuals and businesses that practise creative, quirky and fun solutions to reusing what would otherwise be waste products headed for landfill.

Did you know that it takes 400 gallons (1514L) of water just to grow the cotton for one t-shirt? At a reuse t-shirt factory the artists redesign existing t-shirts and the orders for them are shipped out in cereal boxes.

Alex Eaves shows us how traditional recycling isn't enough. It utilises too many resources. The reuse mission involves everyone, and is more sustainable. It reduces waste and is a solution that's reachable for people who can use their skills whether they be in building housing or furniture, making clothes and jewellery, constructing homewares, machinery, gardening containers and so on.

This process expands your awareness and creativity and gives you a sense of accomplishment while helping to save our planet. Eaves' argument is that recycling items not only uses resources but also reduces the amount that ends up in landfill.

Eaves' invites us to listen to nature. He advocates using poop juice treated with bacteria to make safe fertiliser, avoiding chemicals and pesticides.

We meet people who reuse old wood for design and construction, keeping tons of it out of landfill. A community garden is 100% made out of tornado debris from Hurricane Katrina that's been turned into fountains and structures for growing edibles providing affordable things to people in need.

"Save money", Eaves says, by creating a fashion statement from the op-shop. "Don't make new things!" Art made from trash exposes waste and is creative. A house relocated and restored using reused materials costs the homeowner only \$60,000. A school fete offers reused toys and educational materials. Monstrous cement silos are transformed into an interior climbing gym. Animals are adopted from shelters that are made from reused materials.

A theatre company blossoms in a shipping container. Skateboards are made out of wine-casks. Medical equipment, wheelchairs, crutches, frames and hospital beds are refurbished and sold at a fraction of the price of new ones. Discounts are given at cafés if you bring your own keep-cups.

Eaves maintains that thousands of new stores, new jobs and billions of dollars in sales prove that this is a popular solution. Reuse methods for everyday items inspire us and increase our creativity. We are helping our planet that's in trouble. We can't afford to produce new things. We can't recycle our planet. So join the joyful, fun and constructive movement and REUSE!



...and from other environmental groups

From Environment Victoria – a short video

**4 out of 5 Victorians
support renewable energy...**



For regular updates from Environment Victoria go to <http://environmentvictoria.org.au>

Climate for Change

‘The only organisation in Australia specifically focussed on helping people to have conversations with their peers on climate change – something that is now being recognised by experts as key to building public support for the action we need on climate change.’ See <http://www.climateforchange.org.au/>

Australian Network for Plant Conservation

- a not-for-profit organisation that publishes plant conservation techniques and guidelines, holds workshops and courses in conservation and rehabilitation techniques, and promotes an ecological focus in on-ground conservation, rehabilitation and management of remnant vegetation, threatened plants and ecological communities. See their website <http://www.anpc.asn.au/>

Biodiversity across the Borders Conference 2017

This conference, to be held on Friday 9th June at the Mt Helen campus of Federation University in Ballarat, will focus on restoration challenges for the 21st century. [Follow this link](#) for more information.

Environmental Justice Australia

Describing themselves as “the environment’s legal team”, this is a group of lawyers who are experts in using the law to protect Australia’s natural environment. They do this by taking cases to court, and by working to make our environmental laws better. See <https://envirojustice.org.au>

If you have any relevant activities or organisations you would like to promote through JECO eNews, please email details to info@jeco.org.au.

You can now make an online tax deductible donation to JECO at <http://www.givenow.com.au/jeco>.

JECO is on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/JECO.AUS>.

JECO works to deepen the Jewish community’s commitment to caring for the earth. We believe there is a religious as well as a moral obligation to protect the environment. To this end we work with Jewish, secular and multi-faith groups in supporting activities that promote sustainability. We are not affiliated to, nor promote or endorse any political stance or organisation.