



News Release

DIANE BEAMER

MINISTER FOR JUVENILE JUSTICE, MINISTER FOR WESTERN SYDNEY
ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND PLANNING
MEMBER FOR MULGOA

NOT FOR PUBLICATION OR BROADCAST BEFORE 14TH April 05

GOVERNMENT SEEKS MORE COMMENT ON SUSTAINABILITY INDEX

The Government is seeking more comment and consultation in the lead up to the introduction of its BASIX energy and water use standards for new homes in regional NSW.

Assistant Planning Minister, Diane Beamer, announced today that the public exhibition phase of the regional introduction of BASIX (Building Sustainability Index) will be extended for a further two weeks until 16th May.

“We’ve extended the exhibition period to allow for more feedback and comment which will be used to further refine the regional BASIX program before it becomes mandatory on 1st July,” Ms Beamer said.

BASIX is a web-based design tool that measures water and energy use of new homes against the average for existing dwellings. Home designs must show a 40% reduction in water use and a 25% reduction in energy use compared to the average. A BASIX certificate is needed for building approval.

“BASIX has been in place in Sydney for around nine months, and is already achieving great success in the sustainable use of water and energy in our new homes,” Ms Beamer said.

“From 1st July this year, all new homes throughout NSW will require a BASIX certificate to gain building approval – BASIX will also apply to all new unit developments.

“Not only do BASIX-compliant homes have a positive impact on the environment, we’ve found that they can reduce household bills by between \$300 and \$600 a year.

“The introduction of BASIX throughout NSW is part of the Carr Government’s strong and detailed plans to meet the challenges of a growing and ageing population,” Ms Beamer said.

Ms Beamer denied claims that BASIX doesn’t take into account regional differences in NSW.

“Quite the opposite, regional differences such as rainfall and climate have been built into the BASIX program. But what we have done is make the BASIX interface common across the state so that builders and consumers have the same process wherever they work.

“BASIX measures a range of design features including site orientation, use of natural light, insulation, use of rainwater tanks, types of household appliances and garden design and assesses those features in the context of specific regional conditions and requirements.

“Requirements for houses in Dubbo will be different for homes in Byron,” Ms Beamer said. 2/

BASIX for regional NSW and an associated discussion paper are currently on exhibition on line at www.basix.nsw.gov.au to allow industry and consumers to see how it works and to test run the program for themselves.

A series of information sessions are being held across NSW for council staff and the home building industry.

Since being introduced in Sydney, the impact of BASIX on new home designs has found:

- All homes monitored included rainwater tanks with an average size of 4,000 litres;
- All homes opted for efficient shower heads and tap fixtures;
- One in four opting for solar hot water systems;
- Over 40% of homes monitored included performance glass and double glazing;
- Eaves for shading windows have been built into virtually all of the homes monitored.

“When BASIX is fully implemented we expect that, over a ten year period, it will save around 9.5 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions – that’s the equivalent of taking 2.6 million cars off the road - and save 287 billion litres of water in NSW,” Ms Beamer.

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