



News Release

DIANE BEAMER

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

1 July 2005

BASIX TO DELIVER BETTER QUALITY HOMES TO ALL NSW

The NSW Government has taken another major step towards reducing energy and water consumption while at the same time ensuring better quality housing right across the state.

Assistant Planning Minister, Diane Beamer, today officially launched the Government's energy and water saving Building Sustainability Index, BASIX, for regional and rural NSW.

Ms Beamer also launched a new BASIX information CD/DVD to further assist councils and industry in the implementation and use of BASIX.

BASIX requires all new single lot houses, including dual occupancies, to use up to 40% less water and 25% less energy compared with the average home of that type. Today's launch took place at a BASIX-compliant home, at Bonny Hills near Port Macquarie in the Hastings.

"With over 90% of NSW in drought, uncertain weather conditions and the world wide need to reduce greenhouse gasses, it is vital we are all water and energy efficient," Ms Beamer said.

From today, all new single lot houses and dual occupancies right across NSW will require BASIX compliant certificates as part of the council building approval process.

"The application of BASIX is part of the Carr Government's strong and detailed plans on water and energy conservation. BASIX is online, freely available for anyone to use, extremely flexible and a vital component of the Government's planning reforms," Ms Beamer said.

Ms Beamer said BASIX was introduced in the Sydney metropolitan area 12-months ago and is delivering outstanding results including:

- 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.

"We expect over a ten year period BASIX 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 said.

"However, the Carr Government recognises the contribution country people have already made to conserve water as well as the diverse weather conditions that exist across regional NSW," Ms Beamer said.

“We have spent 12-months consulting with industry, consumers and Councils to best fit BASIX to the requirements and conditions of regional NSW.

“Earlier this year I ordered an extension of time for public comment. BASIX now incorporates regional variations such as climate, rainfall and evaporation rates, and in May we announced that water saving targets would vary between 0 and 40%, according to location.

“Put simply, BASIX recognises the difference in weather conditions and water saving in Bourke and Bondi, and in Cobar and Coffs Harbour,” Ms Beamer said.

Today’s launch was held at an innovative home in the Hastings area where a number of builders are already meeting BASIX water and energy saving targets.

“By joining with local builder Rob Tate, Hastings Council is clearly a forerunner in ensuring sustainability for its community. This house is one of the very first regional homes that complied with BASIX – long before it was mandatory – and is an excellent showcase of practical and affordable features.

“The inclusion of features such as a rainwater tank, 3A rated showerheads, insulation, and greenhouse efficient hot water systems mean this home will be better to live in and cheaper to run over time, more than compensating for the minimal additional up-front cost.”

“Hastings Council is also to be congratulated for creating a new role, BASIX Certificate Officer, ensuring the building approval process is as simple and clear as possible.

“We conducted a BASIX briefing session in Port Macquarie in March this year and I’m told that the majority of people supported the system and considered themselves well prepared for its implementation,” the Minister said.

Ms Beamer added that BASIX would bring a boost to sustainable industries in the Hastings.

“BASIX provides certainty for people involved in the manufacture, distribution, retailing and installation of products such as solar hot water systems, rainwater tanks and water efficient tap-ware.

Ms Beamer said the Hastings, like so many NSW regions, has not escaped water restrictions due to the Hastings River flows and storage levels in the Port Macquarie and Cowarra dams.

“As a partner in delivering the home we are in today, Hastings Council has shown what can be done when Government, business and the community work together to address our resource issues practically and effectively.”

Media contact: Steve Adams 0411 253 345 9228 4130
BASIX Unit contact: Emma Bailey 0414 969 348 9228 6478

For more BASIX information see www.basix.nsw.gov.au