

Calling on Canberra

NECA continues to represent our industry on a range of political matters and this means flying our flag in Canberra.

In June, NECA held numerous meetings with the Government and the Opposition which included Senator Mathias Cormann and the Hon Greg Hunt.

NECA met with Senator Mathias Cormann to discuss policies dealing with education leading into the federal election. Senator Cormann is responsible for preparing much of the policy on Vocational Education Training (VET).

The Hon Greg Hunt, Shadow Minister for Climate Action, Environment and Heritage, has been responsible for managing the federal opposition's position on the failed Home Insulation Program.

NECA has ongoing dialogue with the Shadow Minister's office and recently discussed the legislative pricing for



Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) and options for both the Foil Insulation Safety Program (FISP) and Home Insulation Safety Program (HISP).

NECA continues to work closely with the Government on Flurocycle and expects this program will create opportunities for the electrical industry. NECA's advocacy on behalf of the industry cements our position at the forefront of environmental policies.

Flurocycle is an initiative designed to reduce the amount of mercury entering the environment from the disposal of used mercury-containing lamps.

This program will see a reduction in fluorescent tubes ending up at the rubbish dump and this is good news for the environment. It is estimated 95% of used tubes end up in landfill.

NECA expects many electrical contractors will be able to develop new business opportunities as a result of our representation to government when they sign-up to Flurocycle.

NECA stays on top of insulation challenges

The National Electrical and Communications Association (NECA) continue to lead the electrical industry through the ongoing challenges of the federal government's Home Insulation Program (HIP).

NECA was the first organisation to warn the government of dangers associated with the HIP. NECA provided expert industry advice to government as early as 16 February 2009, however, the government continued with the HIP. The tragedies and problems associated with the program are now well known.

The encouraging news for the industry is that the Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency approached NECA to prepare the procedures to safely inspect and remove foil insulation. NECA has been in close consultation



with PricewaterhouseCoopers and the Program's rollout coordinators, United Group, and the procedures will be used by contractors when conducting inspections under the government's Foil Insulation Safety Program (FISP).

NECA has also been approached by the government to provide advice on the inspection process for non-foil insulation installations.

The FISP procedures are very thorough and if followed correctly by contractors will reduce the likelihood of further tragedies associated with the government program.

The need to develop the procedures demonstrates the requirement for more robust education and stronger industry consultation by the government on electrical safety issues. ■