

Launch of National Scheme to reduce mercury-containing waste

Posted Wednesday, 21 July 2010

The commencement of a pioneering scheme to recycle used commercial and public lighting fluorescent lamps, FluoroCycle, is a significant step toward a more sustainable future, Environment Protection Minister Peter Garrett said today.

The FluoroCycle scheme will be administered by the Lighting Council of Australia and is backed by a \$600,000 commitment over three years from the Gillard Government.

“Given that commercial and public lighting accounts for approximately 90 per cent of all lighting waste in Australia, taking it out of the waste stream and putting it into recycling means that we are increasing the recycling of mercury containing lamps and reducing the amount of hazardous waste, like mercury, going to landfill.

“FluoroCycle is the latest instalment in our commitment to better work with industry and with the States and Territories to improve our waste management, cut red tape and better deal with emerging issues to ensure a more sustainable future.

“Through the National Waste Policy we’re looking at waste from the national perspective for the first time in almost 20 years and already we’re getting runs on the board.

“Next year will mark the start of the first nationally supported program to recycle used computers and TV’s and the experience gained through the rollout of FluoroCycle will also help in the design of future strategies for keeping household waste lamps out of landfill.”

Mr Garrett said a major component of the scheme is an outreach program which will recruit new members to the Scheme, and work with industry to develop recycling programs suited to their business models.

Businesses and organisations responsible for the commercial and public lighting in office blocks, shopping malls, streets, highways, industrial sites and sporting venues can become signatories to the scheme.

“I encourage businesses and organisations to find out more about the scheme, to begin recycling, and to apply for signatory status to receive recognition for their commitment,” Mr Garrett said.

The Minister congratulated Lighting Council Australia on its appointment as the FluoroCycle Administrator. Minister Garrett also acknowledged the support provided by stakeholders such as CMA EcoCycle, Chemsal, SITA, Lamp Recyclers, the Property Council of Australia, the Facility Management Association of Australia, the National Electrical and Communications Association and the Australian Council of Recyclers in the development of the scheme.

To sign up to FluoroCycle, visit www.fluorocycle.org.au

This funding will be provided from existing allocation to the Environment Protection and Heritage Council.