



Senator the Hon Don Farrell

MEDIA RELEASE

Parliamentary Secretary for Sustainability and Urban Water

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SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE LIGHTS TO BE RECYCLED

The Sydney Opera House Trust has today been recognised by the Australian Government for committing to recycle fluorescent lights from its iconic building.

Senator Don Farrell, Parliamentary Secretary for Sustainability and Urban Water, presented certificates to the Trust and major NSW-based companies including AusGrid, Essential Energy, Savills Australia and Westpac, in recognition of them joining the national *FluoroCycle* recycling scheme.

“*FluoroCycle* has the very important aim of reducing the amount of mercury entering the environment from the disposal of mercury-containing lighting,” Senator Farrell said at the Opera House today.

“Having the Sydney Opera House on board is a huge boost for the scheme. One of the world’s great sights is seeing the Opera House lit up at night. Now, lighting from this landmark building will be recycled and the mercury prevented from entering the environment.”

Senator Farrell said 135 organisations nationally have signed up to the initiative and urged more companies to show the same commitment to protecting the environment.

“Joining *FluoroCycle* is an ideal way for businesses to do something practical to help the environment,” he said. “The Australian Government’s support of *FluoroCycle* includes \$600,000 in funding for the first three years of the scheme and is part of our commitment to reducing the impact of waste disposal on the environment and improving the efficiency of resource use.”

AusGrid and Essential Energy were congratulated on joining the *FluoroCycle* scheme.

“Street lighting is one of the largest lighting sectors in Australia and together these companies service nearly 400,000 street lights across NSW,” Senator Farrell said. “Not only does street lighting use a large number of mercury-containing lamps, but each lamp can contain much more mercury than the sort of fluorescent light you find in an office building. With both these utilities now committed to recycling 100 per cent of waste lamps a significant amount of mercury will be diverted from landfill.”

Senator Farrell also welcomed Sydney Markets, Savills Australia and John Holland Group to the scheme and acknowledged the Westpac Group’s longstanding commitment to *FluoroCycle*.

“Sydney Markets is already recycling over 64 per cent of their general waste and has now added recycling of waste mercury-containing lamps to their impressive environmental management approach,” he said.

“Savills is a real estate service provider, which in Australia manages 200 shopping centres and about 2.1 million square metres of commercial office and industrial space. Savills will be recycling the waste lamps it maintains and, as a *FluoroCycle* Facilitator, encouraging its tenants to do the same.

“Westpac was the first bank in Australia to sign up to *FluoroCycle* and a foundation signatory. It was already recycling fluorescent tubes from its Sydney city offices prior to joining the scheme and now recycles fluorescent lights from all its metropolitan offices across Australia.”

FluoroCycle and the landmark *Product Stewardship Act 2011* are both priorities under Australia’s *National Waste Policy*. A product stewardship initiative such as *FluoroCycle*, where industry voluntarily agrees to take action, makes an important contribution to reducing the impacts of products on the environment and human health.

FluoroCycle is delivered jointly by Lighting Council Australia and the Australian Government on behalf of the Australian, state and territory environment ministers.