Senator the Hon Don Farrell

MEDIA RELEASE

Parliamentary Secretary for Sustainability and Urban Water

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SA COMPANIES SWITCHED ON TO REDUCING MERCURY LEVELS

South Australian companies have been recognised by the Australian Government for their commitment to reducing the amount of mercury entering the environment from the disposal of fluorescent lighting.

Presenting several South Australian signatories to the *FluoroCycle* scheme with certificates in Adelaide today, Parliamentary Secretary for Sustainability and Urban Water, Senator Don Farrell, said the companies involved are helping protect the environment from the harmful effects of mercury.

"*FluoroCycle* is a national initiative with the very important aim of reducing the amount of mercury entering the environment from the disposal to landfill of mercury-containing lighting," he said.

"I congratulate the 100 organisations nationally that have already signed up to this worthwhile initiative."

Senator Farrell said an estimated 95 per cent of lamps that contain mercury end up in landfill each year, posing a potential risk to the environment and human health.

"The Australian Government's support of *FluoroCycle* is part of its commitment to reducing the impact of waste disposal on the environment and improving the efficiency of resource use. We've backed up this commitment with $600,000 for the first three years of the scheme.

Local and national organisations based in South Australia that have signed up to *FluoroCycle*, include: ETSA Utilities; Hills Holdings; Gerard Lighting; Kmart Australia Ltd; Westpac, NAB; City of Mount Gambier and Iluka Resources.

Senator Farrell is particularly pleased to welcome ETSA to the *FluoroCycle* scheme.

"ETSA Utilities is the first electricity distributor in Australia to become a signatory and, as an organisation responsible for more than 200,000 public streetlights in South Australia it will make a real difference to reducing the amount of mercury going to landfill," he said.

"I encourage more companies to sign up, particularly in the lead up to changes in the management of waste fluorescent lamps in South Australia."

FluoroCycle and the landmark *Product Stewardship Act 2011* are both priority initiatives 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.