

Sydney Water Corporation Wins 2006 Stockholm Industry Water Award



Photo: Sydney Water

Sydney Water's Project Officer Sarah Baulch with EDC Business partners Investa on the rooftop of their commercial property. Rainwater captured from the roof is being reused for the irrigation of balcony and rooftop gardens replacing the use of drinking water.

The Sydney Water Corporation of Sydney, Australia has been awarded the 2006 Stockholm Industry Water Award for its "Every Drop Counts (EDC) Business Program". The programme demonstrates how the utility is working in partnership with business, industry and government to help ensure the long-term sustainability of Sydney's water supply. The prestigious industry award will be presented during the annual World Water Week in Stockholm, August 20-26, 2006.

This is the first time this award has been won by an Australian organisation. Sydney Water won the award among many applicants from around the world.

Sydney Water is the largest water utility in Australia, the driest inhabited continent in the world, and supplies water to 4.2 million people. As part of its operating license requirement, Sydney Water is required to reduce per capita consumption by 35% during the period from 1991 to 2011. The EDC Business Program is a water conservation program for the business, industry and government sector, which represents around 30% of the total water use in the Sydney region.

EDC saved 20 million litres daily

The EDC Business Program addresses these challenges by promoting water management as a business issue rather than a technical issue. It begins by getting commitment from senior management, then implementing a process for ongoing diagnostic and improvement with the identification of specific op-

portunities for water conservation for each organisation participating in the program. Since its inception in 2001, more than 310 organisations have joined the program achieving water savings of over 20 million litres a day – equivalent to around 20 Olympic swimming pools. The direct benefits in terms of water conservation are significant and are enhanced by the indirect benefits of energy savings and reduced wastewater flows.

A business case for water conservation

Sydney Water's EDC Business Program is an exemplary model of how a local player in the water industry can support this goal. The company has succeeded in demonstrating the business case for water conservation in

diverse sectors of activity. It has developed practical methodologies, fact sheets, case studies, best practices and benchmarking data that not only support the program participants, but that are also available and easily accessible for businesses, industries and government organisations anywhere in the world, creating a rich potential for replication in other water scarce regions. It has gone beyond technical issues and provided an innovative financing mechanism to enable businesses to implement water conservation measures.

"We are pleased to recognise the achievements of Sydney Water in engaging the broader business community in the critical issue of sustainable water use," said Mr. Björn Rosén, chair of the Award Committee. "Water constraints are becoming more acute and widespread throughout the world, and Sydney Water and its business partners provide inspiration and practical guidance for all."

Sydney joins distinguished group

The Stockholm Industry Water Award is an honorary award that recognises innovative corporate development of water and wastewater process technologies, contributions to environmental improvement through improved performance in production processes, new products and other significant contributions by businesses and industries that help improve the world water situation. An award committee established by the Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences reviews the submissions and selects the winning company.

Previous recipients include Procter & Gamble; the Staple Fibre Division of Grasim Industries Ltd, India; ZENON Environmental Inc, Canada; Kaldnes Miljøteknologi AS, Norway; The General Motors de Mexico Ramos Arizpe Complex, Mexico; and Northumbrian Water Limited, United Kingdom.

