

Climate Change

The early effects of climate change are already being felt in the ACT. As a community, Canberra must be ready for the challenges these changes present.

ACT Labor is making sure our community is prepared for the impact of climate change and is helping all Canberrans do their bit to make positive choices about our resource use.

The ACT Labor Government has implemented a comprehensive climate change strategy and is providing the serious funding needed to address climate change in our region. We have invested over \$242 million in climate change initiatives, including \$100 million in the 2008/09 Budget.

ACT Labor is leading by example in our Government's operations – by ensuring our car fleet are 4 cylinder or less vehicles, by purchasing green power and by implementing sustainability practices in our agencies in the areas of water, energy, waste, climate change and natural resource management.

We're also providing Canberrans with a range of practical assistance options so we can all do our bit for the environment.

The ACT Labor Government legislated for green power to be the product of first choice offered to all new electricity customers - turning an opt-in system into an opt-out system.

We have introduced the nation's most generous feed-in tariff for Canberrans feeding electricity into the grid from renewable sources and the idea of a solar power station is a step closer to becoming a reality as the ACT Labor Government has gone to the market to find potential investors.

To help Canberrans reduce their carbon footprint, the ACT Labor Government has cut stamp duty on fuel-efficient motor vehicles, and invested in our ACTION bus network to encourage people to use public transport.

The ACT Labor Government introduced the ACT Greenhouse Gas Abatement Scheme – the first carbon trading scheme in the country.

The ACT NoWaste program has increased the overall recovery of recyclables in domestic kerbside garbage to 82%, the highest it has ever been, and is successfully reusing methane from landfill to generate electricity.

Street lights are being retrofitted with energy-efficient bulbs and schools are becoming energy-efficient as a part of the Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative.

ACT Labor has invested in upgrading our public transport system, with new efficient natural-gas buses being added to the ACTION fleet and an investigation into the feasibility of a light-rail network in the ACT.

ACT Labor has been able to do all this, and deliver much more, because we have been responsible economic managers. We believe it is the responsibility of Government to do all we can to assist the community adapt to climate change and to reduce our collective carbon footprint. A re-elected ACT Labor Government will continue our strong commitment to the environment and climate change to prepare our community for the future.

Jon Stanhope
Chief Minister and
Minister for Water and
Climate Change

Katy Gallagher
Deputy Chief Minister

John Hargreaves
Minister for Territory
and Municipal Services

A Proud Record of Tackling Climate Change

ACT Labor has been implementing a comprehensive climate change strategy. *Weathering the Change* was released in 2007 and outlines 43 actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, assist Canberrans minimise their carbon footprint and preserve our natural environment. Our targets have been set to reduce emissions by 60% by 2050.

ACT Labor has developed a program of rebates and assistance measures to help all Canberrans do their bit for the environment. Making it easier for households, businesses and Government to make more sustainable choices every day.

ACT Labor has also invested in the conservation and care of our natural environment and the security of our water supply.

Our Record

The ACT Labor Government has:

- invested over \$242 million in climate change initiatives, including \$100 million in the 2008/09 Budget;
- legislated for green power to be the product of first choice offered to all new electricity customers - turning an opt-in system into an opt-out system;
- cut stamp duty on fuel-efficient motor vehicles;
- introduced the nation's most generous feed-in tariff for Canberrans feeding electricity into the grid from renewable sources;
- released a sustainability policy, *People Place Prosperity*;
- released a Sustainable Transport Plan and developed the '*Think Water Act Water*' campaign to support community efforts to reduce water use;
- introduced the ACT Greenhouse Gas Abatement Scheme – the first carbon trading scheme in the country;
- released a whole-of-government climate change strategy, *Weathering the Change* which responds to the climate change challenge in practical ways;
- transformed our own Government car fleet to 4-cylinder vehicles. 2.5% of the fleet is electric/hybrid;
- pursued energy efficiency in Government buildings. For example, solar lighting has been installed in the carpark of Macarthur House;
- through the ACT NoWaste program, increased the overall recovery of recyclables in domestic kerbside garbage to 82%, the highest it has ever been, and is successfully reusing methane from landfill to generate electricity;
- committed \$20 million to retrofit Government housing with energy-efficient appliances and features;
- doubled the shrub and tree allocation for new home owners to \$220, to encourage the planting of drought-resistant species;

- retrofitted street lights with energy-efficient bulbs;
- helped schools become energy-efficient as a part of the Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative and committed \$20 million to help schools become carbon neutral;
- started to add efficient natural-gas buses to the ACTION fleet;
- Gone to the market to seek expressions of interest in investing in a solar power plant for the ACT and made a provision in our infrastructure fund for potential Government input into a future solar station development of up to \$30 million; and
- established a business-academic roundtable on climate change.

In the most recent ACT Budget the ACT Labor Government has provided:

- \$30.8 million over four years to plant trees as a part of the One Million Trees initiative;
- \$1.7 million over two years to advance the EastLake sustainable urban renewal initiative;
- \$62.95 million toward public transport over the next four years including \$49.5 million to purchase 100 new efficient, wheelchair-accessible buses; \$500,000 for new Park'n'Ride and Bike'n'Ride programs; and \$12.95 million for the implementation of Action's new *Network 08*;
- \$3 million to install energy-efficient street lights and \$500,000 towards energy efficient public housing;
- \$1.6 million to help schools become carbon-neutral;
- \$2.5 million to help establish a Climate Change Adaptation Research Centre at the Australian National University; and
- \$1.273 for new programs in the areas of water, energy, waste, climate change and natural resource management.

Moving Forward

Household Energy Efficiency Rebate Scheme

A re-elected ACT Labor Government will introduce new and enhanced rebates programs to make it easier for all Canberrans to do their bit for the environment.

- Rebates for energy efficient appliances

A re-elected ACT Labor Government will provide \$3 million over four years to create an energy efficiency program to assist Canberra householders who buy energy efficient appliances or insulate their home. Up to \$400 will be made available to eligible purchasers as a cash-back rebate.

This new program will cover fridges and freezers that have a 4 star or above energy rating, refrigerated air conditioners that have a 5 star or above energy rating; controllers for lighting bands, air conditioners, fans and other high energy consuming equipment which are commonly left on when not required; and home insulation for homes over five years of age. This program will also involve a hand-back strategy, to ensure that old whitegoods are disposed of appropriately.

- **Assistance for low-income earners**
A re-elected ACT Labor Government will commit another \$3 million over the next term to help householders who are concession card holders or low income earners to install window and door seals, window coverings, insulation, insulation on exposed pipes and other energy-saving additions.
This new program will provide direct funding for home-owners to increase energy efficiency. The scheme will target people on low incomes who hold concession or seniors cards living in homes over five years old.
- **Rebates for renters**
A re-elected ACT Labor Government will commit a further \$3 million over four years to support renters in the ACT who make the choice to buy more energy efficient appliances. This scheme will apply to portable consumer goods with a five star or above energy rating. The rebate will be capped by household.
- **Solar hot water systems**
A re-elected ACT Labor Government will encourage the phasing out of electric hot water systems and the take-up of solar hot water systems. ACT Labor will commit \$1.5 million to simplify and extend our existing solar hot water rebate scheme to provide up to a \$1000 rebate for new solar hot water systems that replace electric storage systems.

Water wise Canberra

- **Reducing salinity in our waste water**
A re-elected ACT Labor Government will enlist the help of all Canberrans to reduce the increasing salinity of the water that flows out of the ACT. \$150,000 will be provided annually to promote the benefits of choosing products low in salts, and other measures to reduce salt levels.
- **More free grey water hoses**
A re-elected ACT Labor Government will commit \$250,000 to start Stage two of the popular free grey water hose program. This program will provide free grey water hoses so households can divert their washing machine rinse-water to the garden.
- **Rebates for water efficient washing machines**
A re-elected ACT Labor Government will introduce a \$1.5 million new rebate program to residents that purchase a five or six star water efficient washing machine. \$150 rebates will be available on five star machines and \$200 rebates for six star machines.
- **Home water tanks**
A re-elected ACT Labor Government will provide \$470,000 to extend our existing water tank rebate scheme to apply to new tanks with or without an internal plumbing connection. The rebate will be higher for tanks with an internal connection.
- **Assistance for businesses**
It is important that businesses are prepared for the effects of climate change. A re-elected ACT Labor Government will provide \$600,000 to support water audits and water management plans, undertake business continuity planning and support businesses to implement key water saving measures.

Alternative Energy

- **Supporting the switch to green power**
A re-elected ACT Labor Government will promote the take-up of green power in the community. New energy customers will sign-up to an opt-out system, thanks to changes introduced by the ACT Labor Government. ACT Labor will fund a \$150,000 communications campaign over four years to increase awareness and knowledge of green power and encourage more people to switch to green power.
- **Smart meters**
Smart metering allows householders to track their electricity consumption by showing hour by hour and day by day usage levels. This helps customers choose when they use electricity in peak, shoulder, or off-peak periods so they can take advantage of lower electricity prices during periods when there is lower demand. A re-elected ACT Labor Government will support an expanded smart metering pilot program to test the technical limits and utility of available systems.

Better choices

- **Eco-Buy program**
A re-elected ACT Labor Government will invest \$155,000 to create an eco-buy program which will provide accessible information to assist consumers in choosing the most environmentally-friendly products to buy.
- **Community gardens**
A re-elected ACT Labor Government will provide \$60,000 over three years to support local community gardens to help build community strength and support Canberrans to grow their own produce and beautify their suburbs. Proposals will be accepted annually and funding will be targeted to projects that encourage usage of community gardens.

New waste initiatives

- **Electronic waste**
A re-elected ACT Labor Government will introduce a new \$1.9 million initiative for ACT households and businesses to make it easier for them to recycle electronic waste through free drop-off facilities for electronic items such as computers, IT equipment, and televisions. This free scheme will replace the current pay-to-drop-off scheme.
- **Bulky waste collection**
A re-elected ACT Labor Government will assist Canberra households to dispose of bulky waste through investing \$1.5 million to trial a voucher system for the annual pick up of bulky waste from households. A maximum limit will apply to the amount of waste that will be collected from any one household. Classified polluting wastes such as engine oil, paints, chemicals and asbestos will not be collected through this service.
- **Reducing waste to landfill**
A re-elected ACT Labor Government will commit \$4.7 million to reduce waste to landfill by up to 20,000 tonnes every year through processing waste at the Mugga and Mitchell Transfer Stations through a materials recycling facility.

- **Reducing waste in hospitality and supermarket industries**
A re-elected ACT Labor Government will explore the introduction of an accreditation scheme to recognise best practice waste management in the hospitality and supermarket industries. ACT Labor will consult with hospitality and supermarket operators, to gauge interest in an opt-in accreditation scheme that would allow businesses to badge themselves as a WasteWise business.
- **Working with business**
A re-elected ACT Labor Government will progress the outcomes of a recent expression of interest process for businesses to develop new and innovative waste recovery industries in the ACT.
- **Supermarket Composting Handbook**
A re-elected ACT Labor Government will work with the supermarket sector to develop a Composting Handbook to encourage recycling of organic and biodegradable wastes by these businesses. The Composting Handbook will provide a resource guide to help supermarket managers implement and sustain an efficient and effective composting program.

Addressing the impacts of climate change

A re-elected ACT Labor Government will make sure we have the tools to assess the flow-on impacts of climate change for Canberrans, particularly those on low or fixed incomes. ACT Labor will develop a vulnerability risk assessment tool to measure the social impacts of climate change, including hardship tool options.

Climate change will have far reaching effects on all members of our community, including the small business sector. A re-elected ACT Labor will provide \$200,000 over four years to support advice for small business, including online resources, to assist business plan for and adapt to climate change.

Leading by example

- **Carbon neutral Government**
A re-elected ACT Labor Government will move toward carbon neutrality in Government by mandating agency reporting on energy and water use. We will also set targets to improve energy and water efficiency. These steps will contribute to achieving the ACT's emissions reduction goal of 60% by 2050.
- **Government purchase of green power**
A re-elected ACT Labor Government will invest \$300,000 to increase its uptake of green power from 23% to 30% in the first year of Government. Additional increases will be considered for future years taking account of the changing cost and availability of energy from renewable sources.
- **Solar schools**
A re-elected ACT Labor Government will lead by example and introduce solar energy to ACT public school students by installing solar panels at every public school in the ACT. This program will be funded at \$2 million over the first three years.

- **More hybrid and fuel efficient cars in the Government fleet**
A re-elected ACT Labor Government will increase the percentage of hybrid cars in the Government car fleet from 3.5% to 5%. This will help reduce emissions from Government transport and reduce fuel costs. Labor will also continue its policy of using fuel-efficient four-cylinder cars where there is no technical or service requirement for another capacity.
- **Energy efficient lighting for Canberra's streets**
A re-elected ACT Labor Government will trial solar and LED street lighting in Civic pedestrian areas and selected new suburbs. ACT Labor will assess the outcomes of the trial with a view to making solar and LED street lighting the standard approach in other development projects.
- **Green buildings**
A re-elected ACT Labor Government will provide \$75,000 towards a study to be undertaken with the Property Council and the Green Building Council, to look at refurbishing existing buildings to achieve a Green Building Council Green Star rating. ACT Labor will also consult with property owners and tenants on the feasibility of introducing energy efficiency audits of private rental properties.
- **Sustainable urban renewal**
A re-elected ACT Labor Government will continue to support the second stage of planning for sustainable urban renewal at Kingston's EastLake - a partnership with the CSIRO to develop innovative urban sustainability on the edge of Lake Burley Griffin. This project is being used to develop tools for sustainable planning that will contribute to sustainable renewal outcomes initially at EastLake and potentially to urban renewal projects elsewhere in the ACT.
- **Moving forward on climate change**
As a part of its second annual report on the implementation of *Weathering The Change*, a re-elected ACT Labor Government will consult with the community and businesses to ensure the Strategy's ongoing implementation will not disproportionately effect individuals or businesses.