

## Sustainable Cities 2011 - Western Australia

**Recipient:** City of Subiaco      **Pop:** approx. 18 000

**Location:** 4kms west of Perth

**Category:** Community Action & Partnerships

### Highlights:

The SUBIACO City Councils partners with various groups to host a range of seminars and workshops to educate the community regarding sustainability issues. Notable examples include a biodiversity seminar evening as part of the Kings Park Wildflower Festival in conjunction with WESROC (Western Region of Councils) and bushland friends groups, a Great Gardens Synergy Energy workshop, Great Gardens Food Workshop, a general Great Gardens Workshop and active environmental community group, Earthcarers.

Council assist residents and businesses to convert existing verge treatments to low growing native plantings: The 2010 Sustainable Verge and Garden Award received nominations of high standard, and for the first time awarded the business category.

The city supports and complements the Australian Government Green Loans Program providing over \$3 000 in rebates to residents for improvements that include the installation of solar photovoltaic systems, energy efficient lights, light sensors, roof insulation, door seals, water efficient shower heads, window tinting or ceiling air vents.

Council also partners with residents and community groups wishing to undertake sustainability initiatives through a community grants program. Grants have been awarded to a group that formed as a result of one of the city's living smart programs. This group aims to promote a vegetarian diet as a way that people can be more environmentally sustainable within their everyday life.

The Green skills organisation is another recipient of such a grant which will allow the group to host free home energy efficiency workshop for the city's residents.

The community is instrumental in helping define the parameters for the development of management plans, in partnership with Council, for numerous areas throughout the city to enable the protection of the biodiversity of respective sites.

**Category:** 'Dame Phyllis Frost' Litter Prevention

### Highlights:

SUBIACO City Council provides a comprehensive street cleaning and litter control service throughout the year to ensure the health of the community and the amenity of the surrounding natural environment is protected.

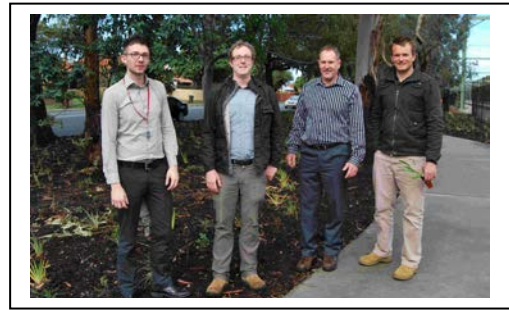
Both sides of residential streets are swept twice each month to remove litter, sand, leaves and hazardous materials, such as hydrocarbons that build up on road surfaces. The city's regular sweeping aims to reduce the amount of pollution entering the local environment especially the city's two lake systems.

Council participated in the Keep Australia Beautiful 'Bin Your Butts' campaign by providing butt bins throughout the city as well as promoting the campaign through displays and distributing promotional materials such as posters, stickers and flyers.

Information on reducing litter is provided to residents and businesses through the city's website and other information sources.

The city supports the Keep Australia Beautiful 'Adopt a Spot' program which further contributes to the reduction of litter throughout SUBIACO.

The city also supports Clean Up Australia Day by providing bags for residents who wish to undertake a clean up as well as removing bags following clean ups. Council was unable to locate a site for Clean Up Australia Day in 2011 due to no sites that were not already covered by community groups where enough rubbish was in place to warrant a community clean up due to effective policies in litter reduction.



**Category: Resource Recovery & Waste Management**

**Highlights:**

Weekly residential and commercial recycling has been implemented with no limit of the quantity removed. Extra bags are provided to residents and businesses, that wish to recycle more materials than will be accommodated within their recycling bins and commercial recycling has been implemented with no limit of the quantity removed.

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Public place recycling stations spread over 14 sites at 7 different major locations throughout the city.

To increase the uptake of green waste and organics recycling discounted compost bins and worm farms are provided for residents. The services' availability is promoted through council's information sources.

Council's organic waste recycling system uses the DiCOM bioconversion process, an auxiliary value-adding system for the bio-gas and compost produced. The DiCOM technology is a patented, hybrid biological process which converts the organic content of waste into market-quality compost and biogas. The biogas powers the process, with surplus exported to the grid as renewable energy.

A range of 80L, 120L, & 240L rubbish bins have been introduced along with financial incentives to use a smaller bin therefore paying less and recycling more. 120L recycling bin sets have been introduced to residents for a small one off payment.

An innovative extended range of plastics are being collected, codes 1 to 7, along with plastic bags therefore having a major reduction within landfill sites.

**Category: Environmental Innovation & Protection**

**Highlights:**

Council reviewed and adopted an Environmental Design Policy – Residential, which encourages residents to incorporate sustainable design features when building or renovating.

Council contributes to programs that establish regional greenways. Notable examples include community members planting over 3 000 native plants in the rail reserve as part of National Tree Day 2010, Rosalie Primary School students planting 1 000 native species within the city, and Council planting 2 000 native rushes and sedges at the eastern revegetation section of Lake Jualbup.

Murdoch University Ecology students completed a vegetation survey of Jolimont Primary School Bushland. The site was found to be of significant ecological value, with the highest species richness of several sites surveyed in the western suburbs. The city provided the school with a herbarium and will guide volunteers to undertake weed removal and restoration works.

The city initiated a scholarship with UWA to fund lake wildlife student research projects to investigate the population size and genetics of the oblong turtle. Council is arranging nesting boxes for native wildlife installed within parks and reserves to further protect and increase local biodiversity. Boxes for microbats are installed around the city's lakes to act as natural insect control devices.

The city is leading the way on the Perth-Fremantle Rail transit corridor project which aims to enhance the environmental, social and cultural values of the multiuse transit reserve linking Fremantle to Perth. The city is scheduling in works and has budgeted funds to complete planting and revegetation of its section of this project over the next 2-3 years. The city is undertaking a direct seeding trial to try different methods of revegetation with the results of which will be communicated to other project partners to assist them with their efforts to fulfil their elements of the project.

The city has all of its susceptible parks and reserves treated for Phytophthora Dieback on an annual basis according to the City's Dieback Management Plan. The city has also recently installed a dieback wash down station within one park to prevent the spread of the disease from this reserve. This is the first wash down station to be installed within a local government area within metropolitan Perth.

**Category: Water Conservation**

**Highlights:**

Council joined the ICLEI Water Campaign in 2007, and was awarded Milestone 4 Corporate and Community, in June 2010. The city also implements groundwater actions outlined in the Water Conservation Plan and Groundwater Operating Strategy. Council received the WA Water Awards Local Government – Best Water Conservation Plan in the past with the City awarded the Australian Water Award (WA) for Best Water Wise Council in 2010.

The award recognised the city's water conservation efforts saving over 250 000 KL of water over the past 12-18 months through projects such as retrofitting facilities with water efficient appliances, customising irrigation schedules and replacing areas of lawn with native vegetation.

Council's top five water consuming facilities were audited, and appliances exceeding recommended volumes or flow rates were replaced with 3 or 4 Star WELS rated appliances.

Fourteen soil moisture probe sensors were installed in reserves, partly funded by the Australian Government Community Water Grants. The probes allow each irrigation controller to be disabled by remote during periods of high soil moisture content.

All of the City's 28 groundwater fed bores had flow meters installed and calibrated annually to ensure  $\pm 2\%$  accuracy of actual flows. Flow meters are read monthly to record groundwater use.

Perimeter areas of lawn at Council's major parks and reserves have been replaced with mulch and native vegetation, and the irrigation schedule reduced to one day per week or removed as part of a Hydrozone approach. These are in place to act as demonstration site for the local community.

Council provides a variety of policy incentives, water efficiency education and support programs for community members including an Environmental Design Policy – Residential. The policy mandates water conservation features for new homes and renovations, including 2 500 L rainwater tanks plumbed into toilets and laundries.

Incentives are provided for further water conservation features such as waterwise landscaping and greywater systems. A \$101 rebate is offered to residents, in addition to state government rebates, to encourage installation of greywater systems.

Council's Think Water! education campaign included a series of seven Think Water! brochures and magnets delivered to all residents and businesses, providing information on water saving in the home and garden.

**Category: Energy Innovation**

**Highlights:**

Council completed a six month climate change risk assessment and adaptation project, the first step in addressing the potential impacts of climate change on the city.

The City of SUBIACO joined the ICLEI Cities for Climate Protection (CCP) Program in 1999 and committed to a 20% reduction of corporate greenhouse gas emissions on 2000 levels by 2010. The City's progress towards achieving that goal is currently being reviewed by ICLEI. An internal review of electricity and gas consumption, vehicle fuel use and waste indicates that the City has achieved the 20% target.

As part of a trial to investigate the use of renewable energy in public areas, the city's first solar lights were installed in October 2010, with further installations planned in parks. A combination of wind/solar light trial is currently underway adjacent to the city's administration centre.

The city is investigating and finalising details of a partnership with the utility provider Western Power to trial a fleet of electric vehicles and the associated infrastructure required to power the vehicles. The effects and possibilities of such infrastructure being in place on the energy supply and grid will be a key result of this initiative.

**Category: Heritage & Culture**

**Highlights:**

SUBIACO's local history museum deals more with social heritage, and this heritage is protected by the museum collecting and documenting it then interpreting it to the community through exhibitions, walking guides, and public programs. The museum collects social heritage through people donating objects to the museum that tell stories of past and present SUBIACO, interviewing people related to the area to capture their past memories in their own words, and the Local History Awards where people are invited to submit their story.

The City also has strong planning policies in place to protect the city's built heritage.

SUBIACO is well known for its cultural events, in the summer months the city offers the free sunset@subi concerts in various parks around the municipality. The city also hosts popular free sunday@subi concert series at the SUBIACO Arts Centre.

Other cultural program offered by the city is the "See Subi on Sunday" free guided walks through the city that allow participants to enjoy its history, heritage and beauty. The walks encourage participation and pleasure and take approximately one and a half hours and are suitable for people of all ages. Participants are encouraged to enjoy exhibitions at the Museum, which is open at the conclusion of each walk.

**Category: Young Legends**

**Highlights:**

A large portion of the city's services and initiatives for young people are coordinated through the SUBIACO Voice of Youth (SVY). SVY is made up of a group of young people who are interested in issues facing youth and ways to address those issues. The group meets monthly to develop and present events and initiatives. Additionally, SVY acts as an avenue for disseminating information to young people and the wider community, and encourages greater participation by young people in a range of community initiatives.

The City has a number of programs set up to support young people including our youth achievement support program. The program incorporates two support opportunities, the Youth Achievement Grants and Awards.

The City also offers support for local schools to get involved with environmental projects. Recent examples include the production of a herbarium for Jolimont Primary to assist students to learn about the natural flora existing within the school grounds. Planting activities, weed mapping and control have also recently been undertaken on the last piece of remnant bushland within the suburb.

The City also provides support for the School's national tree day through the provision of subsidised native plants, species selection and placement advice. When requested the city will organise and run planting days for students from local schools. A recent example being Rosalie Primary school assisting in planting native plants within hydrozoned areas of Rosalie Park.

The City also provides information and support for local teachers wishing to run environmental events within their schools. Recent examples of this advice have been for an edible garden at the SUBIACO Primary School and promotional materials on local environmental initiatives for the Perth Modern School for an Earth Hour event.