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### Walpole takes WA's tidy crown

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The town of Walpole has taken out the Tidy Towns-Sustainable Communities Award for 2007.

Walpole received the prestigious honour at the annual Keep Australia Beautiful Tidy Towns-Sustainable Communities awards ceremony, opened by Environment and Climate Change Minister David Templeman today.

Mr Templeman praised the Walpole community for embracing the spirit of the Tidy Towns program and working together to create a better, cleaner, greener and more sustainable place to live in.

"The dedication of the community is admirable and sets an excellent example to the rest of the State," he said.

The Minister said the town of Walpole had shown great commitment to educating its residents about water conservation, weed removal and waste reduction.

"I am told the judges were impressed by the focus on sustainable living practices, including litter reduction," he said.

"Indeed, the judges did not see any litter at all when they visited Walpole due to the hundreds of hours local volunteers spend picking up litter in and around the town each year.

"But in our drying climate, Tidy Towns is about much more than litter. Tidy Towns rewards communities who are acting now for the future to protect and improve their environment."

Other projects put in place by the community included the Walpole Primary School's UR Walpole Eco-Education program, waste-wise practices, a weed removal program, nature conservation activities and town clean-up events to remove litter.

Mr Templeman said the State awards recognised and rewarded communities for their contributions towards improving the appearance and environment of their towns.

Regional winners were also announced at the State awards ceremony:

- South-West - Walpole
- Pilbara - Cocos (Keeling) Islands
- Kimberley - Djarindjin
- South Coast - Hopetoun
- Great Southern - Cuballing
- Central Wheatbelt - Wongan Hills
- Mid-West Gascoyne - Badgingarra
- Goldfields - Kambalda.

“These communities have put in a significant amount of work on projects that support and encourage sustainable living and which aim to protect our environment for future generations,” the Minister said.

“They’ve demonstrated how we can all make a difference through our individual efforts and more importantly, how we can come together as a community to make those positive changes.

“They have all shown remarkable determination and innovation in taking up the challenge - and should be proud of what they have achieved for themselves, for their community and for the State.”

Walpole is now in contention for the national Tidy Towns-Sustainable Communities awards to be held in Hobart in April 2008. The national judge is expected to visit Walpole next month.

A total of 56 towns entered this year’s awards. Walpole takes over the State title from the previous winner, Cue, which went on to win the Litter Prevention award at the national ceremony.

The Tidy Towns Sustainable Communities Awards is sponsored by the Packaging Stewardship Forum and supported by Department of Environment and Conservation.

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