

MEDIA RELEASE

Queensland certified world leader in environmental living

An environmental rating tool launched today (11 October 2006) places Queensland at the front of the environmental race by allowing new home buyers to identify greener homes.

The certification and branding system – EnviroDevelopment – provides independent verification that a development has achieved leading edge environmental outcomes across six areas of sustainability.

By providing consumer-friendly symbols for certification in – ecosystems, waste, energy, materials, water and community – the branding system will allow Queenslanders to identify and select homes with top environmental credentials.

The system is the first environmental ratings tool in the world for residential developments. Created by Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA) Chief Executive Brian Stewart, EnviroDevelopment will provide unprecedented motivation for both homebuyers and developers to invest in environmental sustainability.

UDIA Queensland President Brent Hailey said the initiative has been designed to increase public awareness of the value of sustainable living, thereby boosting the conversion to greener lifestyles.

“Ultimately, EnviroDevelopment is designed to educate the public about what constitutes an environmentally outstanding development and the value of investing in a sustainable home or workplace,” Mr Hailey said.

“By improving awareness, thereby increasing the demand for sustainable living, EnviroDevelopment will provide greater incentive for industry to deliver more sustainable developments,” he said.

“It is also hoped the system will remove some of the confusion in the public arena as to what kind of test to apply to a development which is advertising itself as sustainable.”

Mr Hailey said Queensland’s water crisis and greater public exposure to messages about global warming through mainstream media including Al Gore’s *An Inconvenient Truth* had boosted the public’s desire for greater sustainability.

“We feel the time is right to enable an increasingly aware and motivated public to act on their concerns for the environment by making changes to daily lifestyle,” Mr Hailey said.

The first five residential developments to trial the system were presented with formal EnviroDevelopment certification by Brisbane Lord Mayor Campbell Newman at the launch today.

The EcoVillage at Currumbin, Mebbin Springs (Northern NSW) and retirement-focused Redland Bay Leisure Life were awarded certification in all six EnviroDevelopment elements – ecosystems, waste, energy, materials, water and community.

Coomera Waters and Pacific Harbour at Bribie Island received certification in ecosystems, waste, energy, water and community.

The projects will now incorporate the relevant logos into marketing items like billboards, print and television advertisements and websites to promote their achievements.

Mr Hailey said the first five certified EnviroDevelopments represented exemplary models of sustainable development, having achieved certification in so many elements.

“The technical standards used to measure EnviroDevelopment applications have been set by environmental, academic and industry experts and represent the benchmark in current sustainable practices,” he said.

“Certification in any one of the EnviroDevelopment elements is a significant achievement.”

The UDIA’s long-term vision for the system includes negotiation with councils to provide incentives to EnviroDevelopment certified projects possibly through rebates and fast-tracking development applications.

“The strength of the EnviroDevelopment model is its focus on partnerships with government and industry to achieve the common goal of a more sustainable way of life,” Mr Hailey said.

“Local councils particularly are in a position to encourage a greater rate of sustainable development occurring in their community by introducing incentives for EnviroDevelopment certified projects,” he said.

Mr Hailey confirmed at least six other major development projects had been waiting for the EnviroDevelopment launch so that they could apply for certification.

Other state branches of UDIA are investigating launching EnviroDevelopment locally with UDIA Western Australia at an advanced stage of considering applying the system.

Media:

For more information please contact Susan McCosker on 0422 567 667. Images of each of the first five EnviroDevelopment projects and the EnviroDevelopment logos are available on disc (if not included).



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