

SNAPSHOT: The First Year of REEN, 2007

The first year of REEN, 2007, has proved to be a big success. The following is a brief description of programs implemented throughout the year.

Quarterly REEN meetings and newsletters

High turn outs (12- 25) of school representatives to each quarterly network meeting occurred during 2007. There was also a fairly high response to programs offered and numerous examples of positive feedback offered from schools regarding the network and newsletters.



(Above) Catchment Chronicles in Ryde

Catchment Chronicles

This program examines the effects that humans have on our waterways and how littering, dumping and other inappropriate activities affect our catchments. Solutions and alternative behaviours are assessed using the catchment model. 13 schools signed up for the interactive and fun Catchment Chronicles program sponsored by the City of Ryde.

Clean Up Australia Day

Schools across Ryde enthusiastically got involved in this year's Schools Clean Up Australia Day, collecting over 2 tonnes of garbage from across the Ryde Council area.



(Above) CUAD at Ryde Public School



The Wonderful World of Worms

Earlier this year students at 8 local schools were introduced to the 'Wonderful World of Worms' and were shown by the Waste Education Officer how they can set up their own Worm Farm at home. West Ryde Public School (pictured left) and several other schools have now set up compost bins and a worm farm and

students collect their food scraps from lunch to feed the worms and to build up the compost. Worm farms have also been donated to Truscott Public School and Ermington Public. Goulding Hill preschool also received a compost bin and was given a talk on composting.



Environmental Library Storytime

Children aged 2-5 enjoyed environmental story time across the 5 libraries in the Ryde locality on several different sustainability topics, including water, waste, energy and biodiversity (pictured left). Interactive environmental and craft activities helped children to build a nature appreciation.

World Environment Day Competition

City of Ryde hosted an environmentally themed poster competition for all primary schools in the Ryde area with 15 local school children winning free tickets to visit Taronga Zoo.

Sustainability Roadshow

City of Ryde and the Field of Mars (FOM) Environmental Education Centre have been working together to create a sustainable schools education program. The program involves different workshops which students rotate through during the day. Education focus areas include sustainable house, waste and alternate modes of transport. The Roadshow was a huge success with a trial running at North Ryde Public School (below) in November 2007.



Teacher professional development course

In July 2007, Ermington Public School received a short professional development workshop as part of their Staff Development Day from City of Ryde's Sustainability Officer. Issues discussed during the workshop focused on saving water and energy, reducing waste and increasing biodiversity within the school grounds and buildings. Office and classroom environmental practices were also discussed

and included issues such as purchasing (e.g. recycled paper and office supplies), sustainable behaviour (e.g. double-sided printing, reporting dripping taps) and tips for reducing our environmental impact in everyday living.



Left. Compost bins at Ermington Public School, installed early 2007.



Streamwatch

Streamwatch continued in 2007 with Ermington Public School joining the program. Schools involved in the program include Epping Boys High and Marsden High. The program provides fantastic hands on education for students whilst assisting in City of Ryde data collection to assess the health of local catchment areas.

(Left) Ryde High School completing water quality testing, September 2007.

Sustainability DVD

In 2007, City of Ryde designed and developed a DVD on sustainability within Ryde. Still to be named, the DVD will be ready in 2008 for schools, libraries and local community groups to utilize. The DVD is broken up into 3 sections: Energy, Water and Waste and discusses important issues, local to Ryde, including catchment health and biodiversity. Local school children and community members star in the production.

School Eco Fetes

City of Ryde attended and supported the Boronia Park Public School Eco-Fair in conjunction with Hunters Hill Council. Sustainable living demonstrations were given by Council officers and interactive displays and giveaways occurred. City Of Ryde also had a presence at Eastwood Heights Public School Fete providing information for parents and students involved in the schools after school eco-gardening program.

Truscott Public School also attended City of Ryde's Sustainability Expo (below) in September 2007 showcasing a display of their school environment initiatives.



Rubbish Free Lunch

This year Ermington Public (below) and Putney Public participated and won \$100 each from Council



Grant Winners

In October 2007, Ermington Public School was awarded a \$5000 grant through the WSN Grass Roots sponsorship program. Ermington Public School will use the funds to design and create an outdoor learning space which includes an organic garden, environmental murals and outdoor furniture. REEN provided support during the application process.



Above. Ryde Public Schools, organic vegetable garden, irrigated by rainwater tank water