

# Simple Changes Matter



## Our Maggie



*Owner  
Margaret Jackson  
in front of her beachside  
apartments, Shaw's on the Shore at Horseshoe Bay.*

**It comes as no surprise to those who know prominent local business woman Margaret Jackson that Margaret is passionate about doing her bit to help the environment.**

Margaret, owner of Shaw's on the Shore at Horseshoe Bay, has six solar photovoltaic (PV) systems on her home and business.

"I have three 1.5kW systems on the roof of my house and another three on the roof at Shaw's. My roof wasn't doing anything, and even though the apartments are right on the beachfront at Horseshoe Bay, the systems are well installed and out of the way so I'm not concerned about bad weather.

"We have around 320 days of sunlight here on Maggie, so why wouldn't everyone put the

panels on the roof – whether they buy them or host the panels for Solar City as I have done – it all helps reduce emissions for the island.

"I also have the Solar City information in my apartments and so far we've had little comment on the energy saving reminders and prompts in each room. I think that the subtlety of the material is one of its greatest benefits – guests have no issue as it's just there – and no interference in people's lives or holidays, while still helping the environment.

"The Solar City team have gone out of their way to give incentives and provide ideas to save energy, along with tips on other changes you can make like painting your roof white – what a good idea – and it's great that we have access to this kind of energy saving information. We all benefit in the end, so whether it's saving money or the environment, it's good for all of us," Margaret said.

### PROJECT UPDATE

**Hello everyone and welcome to our regular project update.** We have some great results to share with you for the first full year of operation for the project.

We met all our targets this year and in most cases, we exceeded our stretch targets. This is a terrific result and testament to the great support we get from you – the community.

It's also credit to a great team who are passionate about what they do, whether it's installing meters and solar panels and answering the many questions that come with this renewable technology and ownership model, or actively looking for ways to reduce consumption and emissions, while providing you with valuable information and tips to save money.

This year, around 40 per cent of homes and businesses on Maggie have had one of our free energy assessments. According to our data, Solar City participants have reduced their overall energy consumption by six per cent by making simple changes. Overall, even those who haven't had an assessment on the island have not increased their demand as much as those on the mainland.

Local businesses and accommodation providers have saved money as well, with one local resort owner experiencing a drop of \$700 in his monthly power bills following the installation of heat pumps. It's great how



businesses have embraced the project, with the installation team putting in our largest PV system to date of just over 17kW on the roof of X-Base.

We have installed almost all the meters we are planning to during the life of the project, and given the late arrival of the meters it is a great result by the installation team, along with help from the local Ergon Energy Operations guys. This focus on getting in the meters so we can get some baseline usage data has meant installing the solar panels has taken second place, however we have now installed over 70 systems with a total generation of around 180kW.

I hope you have enjoyed hearing about the good things we are all doing to transform Magnetic Island into a Solar Suburb. If you haven't had your free residential or commercial energy assessment that will give you lots of tips on how to save money and reduce emissions, then you can either call or come and see us at the Smart Lifestyle Centre in Horseshoe Bay.

We have also been involved in some great community events during the Bay Days Festival, particularly the Tropical Talent Re-Creation Exhibition and Awards and we hope you enjoyed all the events. There is so much talent here on Magnetic Island and we are really happy to support it where we can – with so many other good things happening on Maggie, lets keep it beautiful and plastic bag free – good on you, Olivia and friends!

*Julie Heath*

Solar City Community Engagement Manager



#### e-Update now available

The Magnetic Island Solar Suburb Update can now be delivered to your computer inbox, rather than your mail box. If you'd like to receive an electronic version of the Update instead of a paper copy, email us at [solarcity@ergon.com.au](mailto:solarcity@ergon.com.au) with the Subject line: Electronic Update.



Visit us at the Smart Lifestyle Centre located on Horseshoe Bay Road, at Horseshoe Bay



Phone the Solar City Project Team on **4758 1674**



#### Check out these websites:

- [www.townsvillesolarcity.com.au](http://www.townsvillesolarcity.com.au)
- [www.environment.gov.au/settlements/solarcities](http://www.environment.gov.au/settlements/solarcities)
- [www.ergon.com.au/evolve](http://www.ergon.com.au/evolve)



### Project team helps out for a worthy cause

Solar City team members (from left) Nicola Rodgers, Melanie Wosner and Bree Nott sprung into action serving guests at the Cancer Council's 'Australia's Biggest Morning Tea' event earlier in the year. The morning tea held at the Smart Lifestyle Centre attracted a large crowd from the local community and raised more than \$5,000 for the Cancer Council to support cancer research, support services for cancer patients and education campaigns.

### Commemorative artwork to leave a lasting legacy

The Townsville: Queensland Solar City project will be immortalised with a piece of artwork commissioned as part of art+place, the Queensland Government's public art fund.

The project forms part of the Q150 celebrations during 2009 and will reflect the underlying theme of 'Connection – Transformation – Dissemination'.

Two teams of artists have now been commissioned to present a concept proposal to the judging committee, before a final decision is made on which artwork will be developed.

The artists recently visited Magnetic Island to take part in an onsite briefing and attend a community meeting at the Solar City Smart Lifestyle Centre to begin talking with local residents about the project.

The final artwork will commemorate and embody the objectives of the nation-wide Solar Cities program, while celebrating the selection of Townsville as Queensland's only Solar City as well as the involvement of Magnetic Island residents in the Solar Suburb project.

## Commercial assessments identify savings for business

It's amazing the impact a few kettles can have on electricity use – but when you're providing backpacker accommodation for about 175 visitors at any one time, the demand for electricity can be significant.

This was the situation discovered at X-Base backpacker's hostel on Magnetic Island where Solar City Energy Assessment Manager Graeme Pollock recently carried out a detailed energy audit.

"We replaced about 54kW of old fashioned electric hot water systems with 8.4kW of heat pumps, which is expected to result in an 80 per cent reduction in kilowatt hour usage, along with a reduction in electrical demand of about 45kW in the crucial peak demand periods," Graeme said.

"Hot water supply to the bathroom facilities has not been adversely affected and in fact, feedback has been that the hot water supply seems to have improved.

"This one change in itself is a significant cost saving, however we have also identified a number of additional areas where further electricity use reductions, and accompanying cost savings, can be made."

Graeme said commercial premises could look at installing automation controls on certain items such as extraction fans, to ensure they are only operating when required.

"We are also recommending businesses install photoelectric cells on all communal lighting as well as spotlights, security lights and walkway lights.

"Photoelectric cells detect when light levels have fallen below safe levels and switch the lights on, then automatically turn them off at dawn."

Graeme said maintenance of electrical equipment could provide additional improvements and was important not just for businesses, but for householders as well.

"Compressors for any refrigeration and cooling equipment – including cold rooms, air conditioners and fridges – need to be kept clean and in good working order to operate efficiently.

"There are also opportunities to retrofit this equipment with a device that can improve efficiency and reduce operating costs by around 30 to 40 per cent."

Additional options for businesses to consider include replacing electric hot water systems with gas instantaneous units, replacing refrigeration seals, replacing incandescent spotlights with energy efficient bulbs and installing demand reduction enabling devices on hot water systems.

X-Base has also joined the transition of Magnetic Island into a Solar Suburb with the installation of a 17.2kW solar photovoltaic system on the roof, providing renewable energy and reducing greenhouse gas emissions for the Island.



Solar City Energy Assessment Manager Graeme Pollock looks for potential energy and cost savings from equipment at X-Base backpackers.



Australian Government  
Solar Cities



Queensland Government

