

MEDIA RELEASE

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City lands coup with world renowned Environmentalist

Townsville residents will have the opportunity to learn how to become sustainability champions from one of the world's leading experts in environmental psychology, Dr Doug McKenzie-Mohr.

As part of Townsville City Council's Citisolar program and Townsville: Queensland Solar City project, Dr McKenzie-Mohr is in the city this week to deliver a series of practical workshops on new approaches to promoting behavioural change on sustainability.

In addition to the free community workshops, Dr McKenzie-Mohr will meet with Solar City consortium partners from Council, Ergon Energy, Delfin and Honeycombes as well as local education, government, and business groups to help develop innovative community based education and behavioural campaigns.

Dr McKenzie-Mohr arrived in Townsville on Monday and will be in the city running workshops and courses through to Friday week.

For over a decade, Dr McKenzie-Mohr has been incorporating scientific knowledge of behaviour change into the design and delivery of environmentally focused, community based programs.

These programs incorporate a new approach known as Community Based Social Marketing (CBSM) which draws on environmental psychology to increase public participation in sustainability at a community level.

"Traditional information based techniques are good at raising awareness but often fail to change behaviour," Dr McKenzie-Mohr said.

"CBSM provides a framework to overcome barriers to sustainable behaviour. Many people might support the concept of sustainability, but that doesn't necessarily translate into actions and that's what we want to change."

Deputy Mayor and Sustainable Development Committee chair Cr Jenny Hill said the community workshops, supported by Townsville City Council's Office of Sustainability, were a great opportunity for anyone interested in championing sustainable behaviour to get involved.

Cr Hill said the workshops were just one of many initiatives being implemented through the Citisolar program, as well as other Council sustainability initiatives.

"The free community workshops will give residents the capacity to act locally in tackling global concerns such as climate change," Cr Hill said.

"The cornerstone of sustainability is how we behave. Sustainability requires individuals and businesses to act to increase water and energy efficiency, reduce waste and prevent pollution.

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“Citisolar is Townsville City Council’s program directly targeting our behavioural choices in regards to energy consumption and to have a world leading expert in the field assisting us is great news.”

As the founder of community-based social marketing, Dr McKenzie-Mohr has had extensive experience delivering workshops around Australia and the World.

In addition to the community workshops, residents will be able to find out about sustainable products and services for homes at the city’s first Smart Home and Lifestyle Sustainability expo on February 23 and 24.

Two free community workshops will be held on Saturday January 12 at 9am and 1pm at the Mercure Inn. Residents can register their attendance or find out more by ringing Integrated Sustainability Services on 4727 9520 or email sustainable@townsville.qld.gov.au.

Media information >> Cr Jenny Hill 0418 886 992