

Edstein Stone finalist in Environment Day awards

TAREE firm Edstein Creative Stone has been listed as a finalist in the World Environment Day Awards for 2010.

Last year Edstein Creative Stone commissioned a water recycling and rainwater harvesting plant on the site of its Taree stone production facility.

The plant is the culmination of three years' research and design and is unique in the Australian stone industry.

Edstein Creative Stone was using 2.5 million litres of mains water every month.

The Australian Federal Government supported the project to the tune of \$56,000 under the re-tooling for climate change program as it recognised the po-

tential for water saving through implementation of the system. The total project required an investment in excess of \$220,000.

The plant captures water from the production facility and through twin dosing of flocculent and coagulants the water is treated and cleaned ready for re-use throughout production.

Secondary treatment of the water allows the usage on the company's CNC machines which require a higher level of clarification so as not to damage the electronic components which require water cooling.

In addition to the water treatment, rainwater harvesting was also key to the

project whereby rainwater is collected off the factory roof and stored in a 250,000 litre tank for topping up the system.

The results have exceeded the project's expected outcomes with a saving of 98 per cent of water purchases in the latest quarter.

The United Nations Association of Australia World Environment Day Awards recognise achievements of businesses, government agencies and the community.

Award finalists were announced last week and Edstein Creative Stone says it was very pleased to be recognised in the sustainable water management category for its business practices.

The Legal Light!



By Justin Stack

THE DANGERS OF 'CHAT'

These days, saying goodbye to friends at school only means, goodbye until I get home and log on. SMS, email and social networking sites are just part of life for today's youth. While there can be little doubt that technology has done amazing things for education, most of us are fairly aware of the dangers lurking online.

Facebook scares many parents. The recent murder of Nona Belomesoff, the teen who was lured on a 'work experience' camping trip, believing her facebook 'friend' worked for an animal welfare group and would help her get a job, sends an important message. Friends we meet online are essentially strangers.

While many point the finger at Facebook, there are tons of sites attracting young people which offer chat room facilities. Many sites claim to be safe for kids because the chatroom is 'moderated', meaning that someone monitors the behaviour of users and makes sure nothing untoward is said.

But the moment someone chooses to enter a private chatroom this is no longer the case.

Most law enforcement agencies investigating internet crime would agree; private chat rooms provide an easy way for sexual predators to gain access to young people. Predators can lurk in public chat rooms, looking for a vulnerable young person to invite into a private chat. Then the manipulation, or 'grooming', can commence, often with the intent of meeting the child face to face with a view to sexual activity. Typically, the predator will pretend to be younger and have similar interests to the child.

This is the stuff of horror for parents.

The Criminal Code governs telecommunications offences in Australia. Someone who is 18 or over, who uses the internet or mobile phone with the intention of getting an under-16 year old to engage in sexual activity with them, faces a maximum of 15 years in gaol. It's also an offence to 'groom' an under-16 year old to make it easier to get them to engage in sexual activity, which carries a 12 year sentence.

But while there are laws to protect young people online, catching perpetrators is not always easy. For a start, unless a child comes forward and alerts someone about inappropriate chat, no one may ever know.

And even when authorities have been alerted, having enough evidence to make an arrest can be a challenge. For example, unless the chat includes a specific request to meet the child face-to-face, proving intent can be difficult.

Technology isn't going away. The best protection we can offer our kids would seem to be education. Keep personal details private, block people who use inappropriate language, stay out of private chat rooms unless you know who you are talking to, and let someone know when a line has been crossed.

Responsibility for comment is taken by Justin Stack.

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NO WIN
NO FEE



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No decision on R18+ gaming classification

DESPITE a record number of Australians signing a petition at GAME stores calling on the Federal Government to create an R18+ gaming classification, the country's censorship ministers still feel the issue needs "more consideration".

In a history-making petition, in just eight weeks more than 89,000 Australians signed a petition in GAME stores across the country in support of a change in PC and video game ratings.

A total of 400 signatures was gathered at the Manning Mall store.

The in-store R18+ PC and Video Game Petition is set to beat any other "wet signature" petition in the shortest period of time, eclipsing the November 2005 Work Choices online petition count of just over 85,000.

Architect of the recent record-breaking petition, director of the games website PAL Gaming Network (PALGN), Roland Kulen and Rob Lukic, GAME managing director, both agree that the country's Attorneys-General have let down Australian families

by failing to make a decision on gaming censorship at the recent SCAG meeting in Melbourne.

"Censorship ministers have not yet made a decision on whether or not an R18+ classification for computer games should be introduced and have requested further analysis of community and expert views," home affairs minister Brendan O'Connor said recently.

Rob Lukic said this week, "More than 89,000 people walked into GAME stores in a two-month period and physically signed the petition calling on the Government to create an R18+ gaming rating. Our petitioners are mums, dads, grandparents, young adults, new gamers, core gamers - everyone."



GAME managing director Rob Lukic, left, with Federal home affairs minister Brendan O'Connor and petition organiser Roland Kulen.

So what's next for GAME's quest to establish an R18+ classification?

In early July GAME's auditors, BDO, will confirm the official petition count and then GAME will table the petitions in the Australian Senate.

Roland Kulen says that, "tabling the petitions in the Senate is a key step to showing the Government that everyday Australians really

want an R18+ gaming classification. To put the GAME/PALGN petition in perspective, the 'Work Choices' online petition count was a key issue, among others, that brought down the Howard Government.

"Rob and I feel our petition count represents the 'voice of Australian society' on the R18+ game classification issue."

Telstra offers clubs funding grants

TELSTRA has committed more than \$1 million to support eligible junior sports and community clubs across Australia with equipment grants as part of the 2010 Telstra Assistance Fund.

Since 2003, the Telstra Assistance Fund has provided over 5700 sports and community clubs across Australia with more than \$7 million worth of equipment.

These equipment grants are available for eligible junior rugby league, AFL, swimming and surf life saving clubs, and the program will be expanding to include the Telstra Country Music program and The Australian Ballet.

Telstra area general manager North Coast NSW, Michael Sharpe, says he is

pleased to offer local community organisations the chance to receive these equipment grants.

"Through the Telstra Assistance Fund, we are able to provide the opportunity for our local clubs to get hold of the equipment they need to provide a better service for

their members," Mr Sharpe said.

Telstra's commitment to supporting these clubs through Telstra Assistance Fund equipment grants means that more people in the community can reap the benefits of what these clubs have to offer.

Council hosting Biggest Morning Tea

GREAT Lakes Council will host a Biggest Morning Tea to raise funds for the Cancer Council today, beginning at 10am in the council's administration office foyer.

All members of the Great Lakes community are invited to attend and share a cuppa

with council staff and councillors, for the cost of a gold coin donation.

Many generous sponsors have donated food for the occasion, the council says and sends its thanks to: Coles Forster, Woolworths Forster, Donut King, Ridgey Didge

Pies, Subway, Michel's Patisserie, Temptations, Forster Kebabs, Baker's Delight, Muffin Break, Butterfingers Bakery, Colleen's Cakes, Chilli Jam, Perry's Fruit and Vegetables, and Forster Keys Mini Mart.