

CLIMATE CHANGE READINESS FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES

Information for community services

What is the Climate Change Readiness for Community Services Project?

This project is a joint initiative between the Western Australian Council of Social Service and the WA Peaks Forum. It was established as part of the Federal Governments Jobs Fund scheme, which aims to increase employment in areas in Australia worst affected by the economic downturn. The Climate Change Readiness for Community Services project focuses on the south west region of Perth, where unemployment has increased substantially since the onset of the global financial crisis in 2008.

Climate Change Readiness for Community Services, as the name suggests, harnesses the growing energy and greenhouse industry to not only provide employment for job seekers, but to prepare the community services sector for changes associated with climate change. Participants will be provided with skills to work in the energy and greenhouse sector and use these to advise Western Australian community organisations of strategies to minimise the costs associated with increasing energy tariffs and the proposed Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme.

How does it work?

Potential trainees are identified through partnerships with local employment service providers. If eligible, job seekers will complete specifically developed training in Energy and Carbon Management and Retrofit Skills, before commencing employment with the project as energy auditors. It is expected over 40 job seekers will complete the Energy and Carbon Management and Retrofit Skills Training, resulting in approximately 32 FTE positions in the greenhouse sector.

These auditors will form a pool that will be accessible upon application by community services who wish to undergo energy audits and minor retrofits to reduce their energy consumption. With over 700 energy and greenhouse audits to be completed it is expected all organisations which apply will be successful in accessing audits. Those wishing to undergo minor (up to \$1000) and major (up to \$25 000) retrofits will, however, need to meet certain selection criteria. Retrofits may range from installing energy efficient light globes, weatherproofing and appliance timers to the installation of photovoltaic systems.

Benefits of the Project for Community Service Organisations

The Climate Change Readiness for Community Services project presents several benefits for the community service sector. All organisations who take part in the project will undergo behavioural education for their staff to reduce energy wasting habits and ensure that any retrofits have the maximum benefit. Retrofits themselves will decrease the consumption of energy used throughout the organisations' premises, resulting in smaller energy bills and less greenhouse pollution. These efficiency measures will insulate organisations from the continued rise in energy tariffs and expected cost hikes due to the introduction of the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme. Increasing energy efficiency will also place organisations in a better position to respond to future measures aimed to improving sustainability.

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If you are interested in participating in this project or would like more information, please contact Luke van Zeller on 9420 7222 or luke@wacoss.org.au