



MEDIA RELEASE

The Hon Peter Garrett MP

Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts

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MINISTER OPENS NEW FACILITY FOR A SUSTAINABLE LIGHTING FUTURE

Environment Minister Peter Garrett today opened a new facility for the development of leading edge technology for improving energy efficiency in lighting.

The BluGlass facility in Silverwater, Sydney, houses the development of unique technology aimed at sharply reducing the cost of highly efficient light emitting diodes (LEDs) - key to a sustainable lighting future.

“Yesterday the Government released its Green Paper on the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme to tackle climate change by reducing carbon pollution. Improving our energy efficiency, including through improved lighting, will be essential in reducing our greenhouse gas emissions.

“Light emitting diodes are already in use in countless applications including traffic signals, mobile phone screens, and street lighting and offer a more efficient, less energy intensive alternative to traditional forms of lighting.

“They will play an increasingly important role in the future of lighting worldwide, including in our homes,” Mr Garrett said. “The BluGlass process is an Australian innovation, and advances in this area by this leading edge company will make significant inroads in reducing the costs of LEDs.”

BluGlass was created from research at Sydney’s Macquarie University. In 2007 the Australian Government awarded BluGlass a \$5 million grant to progress its innovative technology.

Mr Garrett said lighting currently represented around 25 per cent of greenhouse emissions from the commercial sector and around 12 per cent of emissions from households.

“Changing your lighting is a quick, easy way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and save on energy bills. The work being done here at BluGlass will help ensure the future viability and affordability of LEDs.”

Mr Garrett said the Government had accelerated the phase-out of traditional incandescent light globes on World Environment Day this year, and import bans on the inefficient globes would come into effect from November 2008, with the support of the lighting industry.

“With residential energy use expected to grow by 56 per cent from 1990 to 2020, the accelerated phase out is part of a suite of measures the Government will take to help

householders take practical action to tackle climate change, reduce energy usage and save money.”

Mr Garrett said the Government had committed more than \$1 billion through the Budget for energy efficiency including:

- low interest loans to assist families to invest in water and energy savings
- assistance for landlords to install insulation in rental homes
- the expansion of labelling and new standards for energy-efficient appliances, and
- grants of up to \$50,000 to make every Australian school a solar school through the National Solar Schools Program.

“Action to tackle climate change can begin at home and I commend the work of innovators like BluGlass in helping provide Australians with the tools for action.”