

LIGHTS OUT DURING EARTH HOUR

EARTH FIRST

By Nick King, ECCO

Earth Hour History

Earth Hour started in Sydney in 2007. Approximately 2.2 million people and 2,100 businesses took part in the first year. In 2008, Earth Hour involved nearly 60 million people in 370 towns and cities around the world, including Chicago, Toronto, Copenhagen, Dublin, Atlanta, and Bangkok.

In 2009 the concept truly went global, with Earth Hour triggering people to “switch off” all over the world—from the Eiffel Tower in Paris to Times Square in New York. Millions of people in over 4 000 towns and municipalities throughout 88 countries took part.

Earth Hour theme

The theme for 2010 is ‘Earth Hour is every hour’. This does not mean living in the dark for the rest of your life! It simply means doing something to care for the planet at work or at home all year round.

Make a resolution for the Earth

Earth Hour is the perfect time to make a resolution for the environment. It can be just one thing that will reduce your impact on the planet and help us move to a more sustainable world. During the hour of darkness, there is time to think about the people and the planet that you cherish and how to be part of the solution.

Turning the lights off for an hour is a powerful symbol, but there are lots of other steps too! For example:

- Learn about your carbon emissions from all sources at home, work and school.
- Learn about the rest of your “footprint”, for water, transport and materials.
- Make a personal resolution for 2010 - the Earth Hour website has many suggestions, from simple things to more substantial positive changes.
- Take action to reduce your environmental footprint every day.

Participate in Earth Hour

Earth Hour 2010 will be held between the hours of 8.30pm and 9.30pm on Saturday, March 27, and anyone can take part. Some of the things we can do to participate are:

- Turn off all unnecessary lights at home and work! Unnecessary lighting contributes to unnecessary carbon emissions, and global warming. It would be wonderful to see non-essential lighting belonging to private dwellings, businesses and public buildings go off all over Orange for Earth Hour.
- Join other families at Orange’s ‘Picnic under the Stars’ (see details below) and see the lights of Orange switch off.

- Businesses in the hospitality industry could host an Earth Hour candle-lit dinner or drinks, or offer a 100-km local produce menu for the night. Participating businesses can be publicised in the Central Western Daily – if you contact ECCO.

For further idea's or advice about actions that can be taken to reduce your environmental footprint, contact ECCO on eccoorange@gmail.com or write to ECCO, PO Box 1582, Orange, NSW 2800.

Green tip for the week: Reduce your environmental footprint by growing your own vegetables. Get advice from the experts at the Central West Garden and Lifestyle Expo this weekend.

Future Environmental Event: Earth Hour 'Picnic under the Stars'. On Saturday March 27 from 7.30pm to 9.30pm at Rotary Park on Mount Lindsay (off Dalton Street). Bring your own picnic and a torch. There will be live entertainment. Lay back, watch the stars and see the lights of Orange go off during Earth Hour.