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National fluoro-light recycling scheme hits a high note

The Sydney Opera House Trust has been recognised by the Australian Government for committing to recycle fluorescent lights from its iconic building.



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Senator Don Farrell, Parliamentary Secretary for Sustainability and Urban Water, commended the Trust for joining the national FluoroCycle recycling scheme.

'FluoroCycle has the very important aim of reducing the amount of mercury entering the environment from the disposal of mercury-containing lighting,' he said.

'One of the world's great sights is seeing the Opera House lit up at night. Now, lighting from this landmark building will be recycled and the mercury prevented from entering the environment.'

FluoroCycle – a voluntary recycling program for industry – and the Product Stewardship Act 2011 are cornerstones of Australia's National Waste Policy. Senator Farrell said 135 organisations nationally have signed up to FluoroCycle and he has urged more companies to show the same commitment to the environment.

'Joining FluoroCycle is an ideal way for businesses to do something practical to help the environment.

Along with the Trust, other NSW-based companies, including AusGrid and Essential Energy, have joined up.

'Street lighting is one of the largest lighting sectors in Australia and together these companies service nearly 400,000 street lights across NSW,' Senator Farrell said.

'Not only does street lighting use a large number of mercury-containing lamps, but each lamp can contain much more mercury than the sort of fluorescent light you find in an office building.

'With both these utilities now committed to recycling 100 per cent of waste lamps a significant amount of mercury will be diverted from landfill.'

Sydney Markets, Savills Australia and John Holland Group are other newcomers to FluoroCycle, joining longstanding partners such as Westpac Group.

'Sydney Markets is already recycling over 64 per cent of its general waste and has now added recycling of waste mercury-containing

lamps to their impressive environmental management approach,' added Senator Farrell.

'Savills is a real estate service provider, which in Australia manages 200 shopping centres and about 2.1 million square metres of commercial office and industrial space.

'Westpac was the first bank in Australia to sign up to FluoroCycle and a foundation signatory. It was already recycling fluorescent tubes from its Sydney city offices prior to joining the scheme and now recycles fluorescent lights from all its metropolitan offices across Australia.'

FluoroCycle is coordinated jointly by Lighting Council Australia and the Australian Government on behalf of Australian, state and territory environment ministers.

Source: Australian Parliamentary Secretary for Sustainability and Urban Water

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