Software controlling energy efficiency and comfort

CSIRO scientists have developed software to help commercial building owners reduce energy consumption and costs, improve tenant comfort and cut greenhouse gas emissions.

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The BuildingIQ Energy Management System is designed to continuously optimise a building's energy management control systems, resulting in reduced energy consumption and costs, and higher National Australian Built Environment Rating System (NABERS) star ratings. The technology is being commercialised worldwide under exclusive license by BuildingIQ Pty Ltd.

A trial of BuildingIQ last year at the CSIRO's 4.5 star rated Newcastle Energy Centre achieved cost and energy savings of up to 30 per cent.

The initial focus for BuildingIQ is heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems, which consume up to 60 per cent of energy in commercial buildings.

BuildingIQ includes an add-on called ComfortIQ, which allows tenants to provide real-time feedback on comfort levels to building managers and the BuildingIQ system. ComfortIQ also broadcasts information to tenants about energy prices and the amount of energy being consumed or saved in their building.

Federal Environment Minister Peter Garrett recently announced that in 2010 all buildings over 2000 m^2 must publicly disclose their energy efficiency whenever they are sold or leased.

Changes to the 2010 Building Code of Australia to increase the energy efficiency of new buildings were also announced recently. Implementation of the new commercial building standards will commence in May 2010, and States and Territories have undertaken to implement the new residential standards no later than May 2011.

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