



RAINFOREST RETREAT

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## ***Ecotourism Pioneer saving the planet***

O'Reilly's has always had a strong environmental philosophy but by choosing **earth'schoice** from ENERGEX the eco-friendly retreat is going even 'greener'.

By purchasing 20% of its electricity from green and renewable sources such as solar, wind, hydro and biomass, O'Reilly's is saving almost 290 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions each year – the equivalent of taking 68 cars off the road for a full year or planting almost 1200 trees!

Managing Director Shane O'Reilly said choosing **earth'schoice** renewable energy is just one way the eco-retreat is helping to save the planet.

"We have an Environmental and Social Sustainability Policy and a very comprehensive Environmental Management Plan (EMP) that commits us to conserving resources, preserving the World Heritage values of surrounding Lamington National Park, as well as educating guests," Mr O'Reilly said.

"We enjoy national Advanced Accreditation in Eco-Certified Tourism as well as international accreditation through the prestigious Green Globe organisation."

Through the EMP, O'Reilly's implements a range of measures that have cut electricity, gas and water consumption, achieving results well below acceptable levels of usage against Green Globe benchmarks, according to General Manager Matt Perry.

"Our electricity usage averaged just over 7.5 kilowatts per guest night, against an acceptable target of 27.5 kilowatts," Mr Perry said.

"Water usage figures are even more impressive, with our consumption coming in at just over 1/7<sup>th</sup> of the acceptable level set for Green Globe benchmark recognition."

Mr Perry said the good results were the result of both practical measures and behaviour changes to conserve resources.

“We have an electronic load flattener that reduces peak period consumption, timer controls on the spa and sauna, a pool cover to reduce heat loss overnight, pre-set temperature hot water systems, energy efficient appliances, minimal external lighting with low-voltage lights and timers and we are replacing incandescent globes with energy efficient lighting,” Mr Perry said.

“We’re also using our own alternative energy with solar panels for hot water heating on the newest accommodation buildings in combination with gas, solar panels for pool and spa heating, and gas for cooking and heating.”

“Our vehicles are well maintained and emissions tested, and we optimise the use of vehicles whenever we can.”

And while renowned for spreading the message about nature conservation, O’Reilly’s is also encouraging guests to save water and energy when they return home.

Guests are provided with registration forms so they can make the switch to **earth’s**choice at home and work and O’Reilly’s supports conference and accommodation prizes for businesses and residents who sign on.

“Businesses like O’Reilly’s are great role models demonstrating that choosing the environment is not only good for the planet but also a smart business decision,” according to **earth’s**choice Manager James Woods.

“Most of Australia is currently suffering the impacts of climate change and there is global consensus that unless we start changing our ways things will just get worse. That will impact every aspect of our lives at home and at work. **earth’s**choice from ENERGEX commends O’Reilly’s for leading by example and joining us to encourage individuals and businesses to take climate action now.”

Guests can feel comfortable knowing they are truly taking a ‘green holiday’ and helping to stop global warming by escaping the heat, avoiding the air conditioning, forgetting the phone ringing and getting up from in front of the plasma screen or computer (there are no distractions of in-room phones or TV’s, saving energy and promoting relaxation).

After pioneering ecotourism in Australia 80 years ago, the O’Reilly family has combined old-fashioned experience with modern best practice to become one of the most highly regarded eco-tourism operators in Australia.

And O’Reilly’s new eco-friendly development, the 48-villa ‘Mountain Villas’, due for completion next year, will ensure guests continue to enjoy the beauty of the environment, while treading lightly on the earth.

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