



MASSMART

GROUP UPDATE

# Builders Warehouse makes saving the planet and saving money easy

As the world's natural resources edge closer to depletion, going green has gone from a lifestyle choice to the only sensible response to a critical situation. With consumers also starting to feel the impact of rising electricity costs, Builders Warehouse is integrating the eco-aware brand, Eco-Wise, into every possible aspect of home improvement to address the real issues.

## Did you know? Eskom offers solar heater rebates

If you buy an Eskom-accredited solar water heater system, you'll get money back off your purchase. The current refund is just under 50% of the purchase price on a 150lt geyser and subsidies will remain at this level until 2011. A 150lt solar water heater saves around 4.5kWh of electricity per day. Eskom estimates the investment pays for itself within three to four years. Eskom-accredited solar water heaters are now available at Builders Warehouse stores. For rebates, consumers must purchase an Eskom-approved system and have it fitted by an accredited installer. Trained salespeople at Builders Warehouse can provide information and advice on appropriate systems and accredited installers.

## What are the issues?

The reality is that in South Africa, electricity costs are rising. Not only that, but because South Africa relies on coal-fuelled power stations it is also the highest carbon emitter in sub-Saharan Africa and one of highest carbon emitters per capita among developing countries. Using less electricity is good for the natural environment and for customers' pockets.

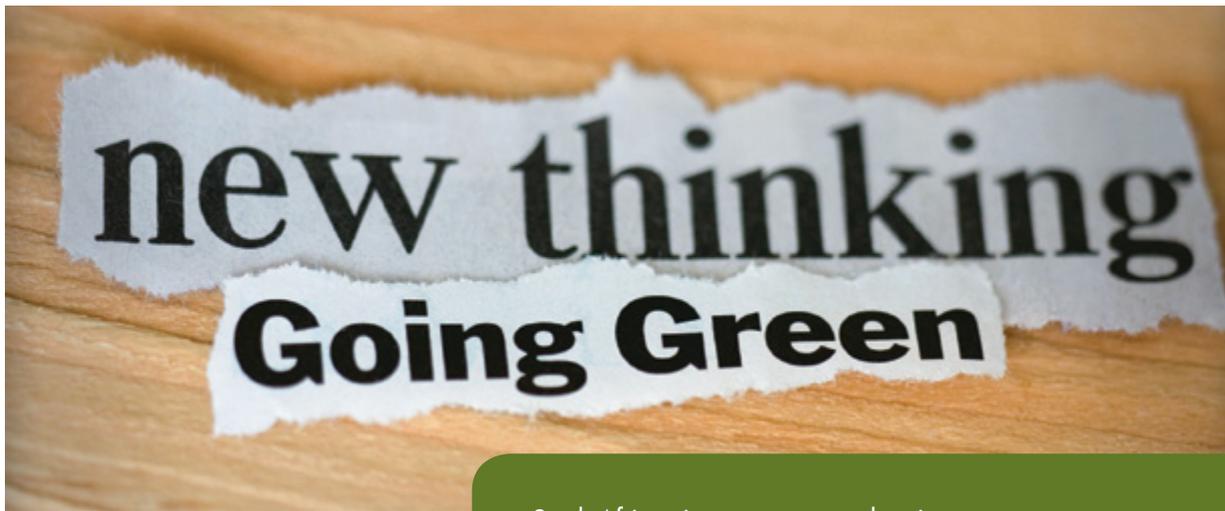
Besides the issues linked to electricity consumption, South Africa also faces the challenge of being a water-stressed region. This means products bearing the Eco-Wise label must be more than just nice-to-haves; they need to be solution-driven electricity- and water-saving tools. As a result, the Eco-Wise range includes energy-saving solar water heaters, energy efficient LED and

solar lights, household lighting timers switches to help save reduce consumption, energy monitors to keep track of the electricity usage at homes as well as dual-flush toilets and JoJo tanks for easy harvesting of rainwater.

## How does Eco-Wise work?

Eco-Wise provides an easily recognisable, environmentally responsible product range that includes both private brand and national brand products. Builders Warehouse's goal is to grow awareness about products that offer energy and water saving solutions, encourage recycling and highlight responsible use of natural resources.





Rather than creating an area dedicated to these products, Builders Warehouse has integrated the Eco-Wise choices into the broader product range of products on the shelves. The chain has seen that finding an environmentally responsible alternative is not always a priority for consumers, but if these options are on-shelf and clearly marked, they create awareness of enabling responsible environmental choices at the point of purchase. The Eco-Wise message is reinforced by carefully constructed advertising material that spells out for customers how choosing the greener alternative need not be the most expensive option.

### How can a kitchen tap save water?

A kitchen tap aerator reduces flow by about 50 to 75%. This is water that normally flows straight down the plug hole.

### Where can customers find Eco-Wise?

Eco-Wise products are clearly labelled with the Eco-Wise logo and an 'Eco-Fact' detailing the environmental and savings advantages of each product at point of sale. The purpose of including facts is to educate shoppers about

South African is a water-stressed region. Saving water should be everyone's priority.

### How can a toilet save water?

Dual-flush and multi-flush toilets can save as much as 20% in water consumption compared to traditional units. The dual-flush has two fixed settings, a light setting for liquids and a heavier one for solids. The multi-flush allows users to flush as much or as little as required by simply lifting the handle to stop water flow.

the environmental issues linked to the products they buy.

All timber products under the brand are Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC) certified, so that sustainable timber supply is supported. There are also goods that encourage recycling and offer solutions to reducing household waste. Examples include picture frames made from recycled polystyrene, interlocking floor mats made from 100% recycled rubber, earthworm farms and composters used for making fertiliser from kitchen food waste.

### Applying eco principles to stores operations

Massbuild has deployed an in-house sustainability team to review the chain's own operations and identify opportunities to reduce energy and water consumption. As a result of their ongoing assessments, the chain uses harvested rainwater in its nurseries as well as in the garden areas found in front of some stores. The stores themselves are also continually built to be more efficient with in-lighting and cooling systems.

Builders Warehouse is also engaging in its employees in training to keep environmental responsibility top of mind. Knowledgeable staff are better at creating customer awareness and changing buying behaviour, so Builders Warehouse is being armed with useful information. The Eco-Wise electricity efficiency training, an awareness and education programme currently being run in association with Eskom (South Africa's national energy supplier), gives energy-saving training to Massbuild staff. Each staff member is provided with advice to help them save money in their own homes and encourage customers to do the same.

With Eco-Wise products on the shelves and staff members being trained in environmental responsibility, Builders Warehouse customers should be able to find green solutions down every aisle. ■

