

Green awareness lift for company

AN Ipswich company that was considered on shaky financial ground in 2008 is investing more in its "green" credentials to secure a future for its 150 workers.

For the 50 years that Australian Hardboards at Bundamba has been established, harm minimisation of the environment has been at the forefront of its operations, says executive chairman Louis Niederer.

The manufacturer has developed a new marketing strategy to create more awareness about its green credentials.

"Our output from the water treatment plant now goes into composting. We've found industries for all of our waste streams," Mr Niederer said.

The company's recent investment in the plant was a sign that it considered the business viable, he added.

In 2008, fears were held for workers when Bremer Park Ltd, owners of Australian

Hardboards, recorded a loss for the second year running.

"Over the past few years the demand for green building materials has escalated exponentially and we intend to take full advantage of this evolving trend," Mr Niederer said.

"Our flagship product masonite, which is an iconic building product, is made from waste wood product. A number of other building products contain harmful chemicals such as formaldehyde whereas ours does not.

"It's this heritage that we intend to build upon to really take advantage of the increasingly green-hungry and government-mandated building products market."

GREEN TINGE: Australian Hardboards training co-ordinator Bryan Davies believes in his product.

Photo: Sarah Harvey DE1709HL



Crossword puzzle – P35

Commencement of the *Sustainable Planning Act 2009*—changes to Queensland's planning, development and building laws

On 18 December 2009, Queensland's new planning and development legislation commenced, replacing the *Integrated Planning Act 1997*.

The new *Sustainable Planning Act 2009* (SPA) will help deliver a smarter, simpler and better planning, development and building system focused on sustainable outcomes for all Queenslanders.

SPA introduces important changes to the process for making development applications.

Development applications made on or before 17 December 2009 will continue to be assessed under the *Integrated Planning Act 1997*.

SPA will apply to all applications lodged after 17 December 2009 and you will need to use the new SPA compliant application forms.

To find out more contact your local council or visit www.dip.qld.gov.au/spa.

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Vehicle-related crime down for Christmas

POLICE say increased public awareness has helped keep the number of car break-ins and thefts down during the Christmas period.

Ipswich police district tactician Acting Senior Sergeant Greg Smith said 76 car break-ins had been reported in the first half of December, which was down slightly on last year's figures.

Of those 76 reported offences, 55 involved the theft of property from parked vehicles and 21 involved the theft of the vehicle itself.

In a concerning trend, 24 of the vehicle-related offences were reported to have occurred within or near a shopping centre car park.

"These offences are mainly

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concentrated around the CBD, North Ipswich, Springfield and Redbank – basically where all the big shopping centres are," Acting Senior Sergeant Smith said. "People who leave Christmas presents sitting in cars in full view are presenting a smorgasbord for offenders.

"A lot of the vehicles are being stolen by opportunistic offenders who notice keys in the ignition or windows open."

Older vehicles were increasingly becoming targets for thieves and police encouraged the owners of earlier models to fit an engine immobiliser or steering wheel lock as an extra barrier.

Christmas gifts should be stored out of sight or in the boot if they are going to be left in an unattended vehicle.

Acting Senior Sergeant Smith said the rules applied to valuables such as wallets, mobile phones and navigation systems.

Earlier this month, thieves targeted a Brassall neighbourhood, breaking into seven cars and stealing tools, money and electrical equipment. Some of the vehicles had been left unlocked, police said.

"Being Christmas time, there are a lot more shoppers around and a lot more people wanting to break into cars," Acting Senior Sergeant Smith said.

Anyone seeing suspicious activity should call their local police station or Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.

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