

Café Koula

Accommodation and food services

'It is great to be doing something for the hip pocket and the environment at the same time.' -
Fay Carolou, owner

Fay Carolou has owned Café Koula for five years and has always loved the space. Recently changing to the lighting inside the business and planting organic fruit, herbs and vegies outside have changed the atmosphere of the cafe, making it an even friendlier environment for the young families of Northcote.

A typical small business can use around 20,000kWh of electricity in a year – a considerable amount that can be cut through simple actions.

Lighting

Café Koula's lights had significantly dropped in performance with age and were very dim. They decided to sign up to the Darebin Council's Light\$mart program to get support in upgrading their lights with something more efficient. In January 2011 they installed large energy efficient compact fluorescents to save money, energy and greenhouse gas emissions and have loved the difference!

Replacing old lighting with more efficient lighting is a straightforward task that can save between 30% to 90% of the electricity required.

For Café Koula, they chose to use 65 watt large compact fluorescent light globes to replace 105 watt metal halides. The large compact fluorescents give an equivalent light output compared to a metal halide while using significantly less energy.

'The result has been great,' says Fay Carolou. 'We have much better light in our work areas now and everything looks brighter.'

In the yard

Café Koula grows as much of its own organic fruit, vegies and herbs as possible to reduce the food miles of the cafe ingredients. And these are watered thanks to the rainwater tanks installed around the property.

'Parents can point to the produce growing in the garden and help their kids make the connection with the food on their plates,' says Fay about the bonus learning opportunities of an on-site vegie patch.

Café Koula also recycles, with much of its food waste going to local chickens.

What does not go to the chickens is recycled through their 240 litre retrofitted wheelie bin worm farm.

The worm castings and juice produced from this are used as fertiliser on the café gardens. They also recycle cardboard, paper, plastics, glass bottles and aluminium cans.

The savings

Looking only at the lighting replacements, Fay has appreciated saving:

- more than \$140 a year on electricity and maintenance costs
- 576kWh of electricity per year
- 790kg of greenhouse gas emissions

'It is great to be doing something for the hip pocket and the environment at the same time,' says Fay.