

# Multicultural Services Centre of W.A. Inc

## *Organisation Overview*

**Location:** North Perth, Western Australia

**Size:** 10 fulltime employees Building style:  
Brick single story

**Energy use:** heating and cooling, office  
equipment



Multicultural Services Centre of W.A. is a community services organisation established to:

- Meet the settlement, welfare, education and training, cultural and related needs of culturally and linguistically diverse Western Australians;
- Undertake research and community education activities related to their needs; and
- Establish Foundations/Trusts for this purpose.

***Between them MSC staff can speak a total of 60 languages other English.***

An initial audit was conducted in April 2010 on 20 View St North Perth, and found that a better understanding of their energy costs would help MSC to manage their costs. The auditor also identified that air conditioning used a large proportion of energy use, and staff advised that temperature in the building varied significantly between seasons. Windows on the western and northern walls are single glazed, and are not protected from the sun by awnings or eaves, so winter heat loss was significant, and the sun's radiant heat in summer drives up the need to

use the split system air conditioner. The need for artificial light was also significant due to a lack of natural lighting throughout some offices.

## *Opportunities*

In the three years post audit a number of recommendations have been implemented which has reduced energy consumption noticeably on the bills. These include:

Adjustment of thermostats to 22°C for heating temperature in winter, and 20°C minimum for summer;

- Doors and windows opened when possible to allow natural air and light, and
- Vents, ducts and skylights are regularly cleaned.
- Staff are reminded to turn off non-essential appliances at the power source at the end of the day.
- Freezers and fridges are regularly defrosted
- Ceiling fans or portable fans are used in individual rooms rather than adjusting thermostats for the whole building
- LED lights have replaced fluorescent lighting.

The audit identified other actions that could be implemented in the future:

- finance forward electricity and water bills to a dedicated staff member who could record electricity and water usage, and flag any unexpected changes with management;
- ceiling fans be installed. Most ceiling fans use as much power as a 60W lightbulb, which is equal to less than 1 cent per hour. Ceiling fans would help with cooling and better distribute cold air from the split system air conditioner;
- a qualified insulation installer inspect the roof cavity and install insulation if required;

- MSC consider installing an inexpensive double glazing technology, such as 'magnetite', to the frames of
- existing windows;
- Roller shutters be installed on eastern and northern windows;
- Weatherproofing be installed on external door frames to help reduce drafts and heat transfer; and
- Solar tubes be installed in offices to replace artificial lighting.

In conjunction with these practical changes in organisational behaviour, energy use is also now a regular item on the agenda for staff meetings. This provides the opportunity to reiterate good practices in this area to new staff, and to involve all staff in the process of increasing sustainability. The MSC Board has also adopted an environmental policy for MSCWA.