

Small changes cut tax

Educational seminar on carbon levy in pipeline

CARBON BY NUMBERS

THE TAX : The 500 largest polluters in Australia will be taxed at \$23 a tonne of carbon emission from July 1, 2012, before switching to a cap and trade system after three to five years.

THE FUNDS : The money collected will be returned to homes and businesses to assist in the transition to renewable energy.

THE COST : Families will face a \$9.90 increase in cost of living, but will on average be compensated \$10.10.

ADAM VIDLER

ASHBURY resident Stuart Gibb believes simple misunderstanding is fuelling the backlash against the federal government's carbon tax.

Mr Gibb said the wider community believed that the tax would fundamentally re-order their lives, but he said impact would be minimal.

"It's about getting people to make small changes in their own lives," he said.

The Gibb family is perhaps ahead of the curve on this topic, as they are already an energy-conscious clan.

The family of four has made an effort to reduce their own carbon footprint with some simple changes at home.

Low-flow taps and showers, solar panels, energy-efficient lightbulbs and maintaining a single car help the Gibbs to keep their energy consumption low. As



Stuart Gibb and Jodie Goldney, with children Finlae and Jesse, support the tax. Picture: NICK BLOUKOS -PP455961

well, they supplement their grocery budget with some home-grown produce.

Fruit trees, chickens and even beehives mean the Gibbs can keep their home well-stocked with self-produced food.

"We'll never be self-sufficient for food - we still have to go to the shops," Mr Gibb said.

"But if we can produce some of our own locally, then it helps cut down on the impact of long-distance food transport."

Mr Gibb, who works as a community development manager for Landcom, said the "bottom line" was that people were consuming too much of the world's resources at an unsustainable rate.

CANTERBURY Council will hold a seminar later this year to inform the community of the facts behind the carbon tax.

Greens councillor Linda Eisler said the seminar would not be political in nature, but would focus on the facts of what the tax was and how people could reduce their energy use.

"I understand that a structure for the event has been set up, and it still has to be approved by the committee," she said.

"We're hoping it will be in place and ready by September."

Cr Eisler said the seminar would be of particular benefit to the Canterbury community.

"We have a lot of lower-middle class families and a lot of families from a non-English speaking backgrounds, that will have concerns (about the tax)," she said.

Canterbury Council has been a strong supporter of the carbon tax.

A motion of support for the tax was passed unanimously, gaining the approval of even a Liberal councillor.

Cr Eisler said she hoped people would recognise the benefits the tax would bring to lower-middle class families and pensioners.