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Phoenix fridge project

The Phoenix Fridge Project aimed to increase the energy efficiency of second-hand fridges. This project was originally supported by Moreland Energy foundation but is now run solely by the Brotherhood of Saint Laurence.

Phoenix Fridges recycles, repairs and retrofits donated fridges to make them more energy and cost efficient, and decommissions fridges that are no longer useful.

Overall this project:

- Helps reduce greenhouse gases
- Enables low-income earners to make their homes more energy efficient
- Reduces electricity bills, and
- Offers training to job-seekers in an expanding green industry.

Why?

The humble fridge humming in our kitchen is a quiet, yet major user of energy. Refrigeration accounts for about 14 - 17% of household greenhouse gas emissions in Australia. Ironically as the community attempts to grapple with global warming, our thirst for cooling - refrigeration and air conditioning, is rising dramatically. One third of Australian households now have at least two refrigerators, while half own an additional freezer.

In response to these alarming statistics the Phoenix Fridge Program has focused on reducing fridge overuse, developing practical methods to increase efficient use and responsible disposal.

The Concept

New fridges have increased energy-efficiency, driven by programs such as the Mandatory Energy Performance Standards (MEPS), the star rating we now see on new appliances. When people purchase a new fridge, the old unit tends to 'head to the shed' to be used as a drinks fridge, resulting in a net increase in energy use. At the same time, low income households who cannot afford the cost of new high-efficiency models often have second-hand or old fridges that are costing them a lot to run.

What's Possible?

A feasibility study conducted by MEFL demonstrated that simple improvements to the old fridges could deliver a 15% increase in efficiency. More complete retrofits returned an over 50% increase. The study found that fitting new door seals could result in a 10% efficiency increase

while installing more insulation gave 15 - 25% increases. Replacing a faulty compressor with a commonly available modern unit returned greater than 50% improvement.

Phoenix Fridges is now a partnership run by the [Brotherhood of St Laurence](#) and supported [TRUenergy](#), the [Adult Multicultural Education Service](#) and [Sustainability Victoria](#).

To arrange to donate your unwanted fridge phone: 1300 366 283 or visit the [Brotherhood of Saint Laurence website](#).

Reconditioned fridges can now be purchased at Brotherhood community stores.

And on the subject of fridges, [The Family Handyman](#) have a step-by-step guide on how to avoid refrigerator repairs in the first place. View their [6-Step Guide to Fridge Maintenance](#).



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