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Caloundra - Queensland’s Tidiest Town

Caloundra tonight was named Queensland’s Tidiest Town for 2008, taking out the overall title in this year’s prestigious Ergon Energy Tidy Towns competition.

The Sunshine Coast community out-performed 173 other entrants to claim the coveted title at a gala awards ceremony at the Sofitel Reef Hotel in Cairns and was presented with its award by the Acting Chief Executive for Ergon Energy, Ian McLeod.

In recognition of Caloundra’s achievement, Ergon Energy Chief Acting Chief Executive Ian McLeod announced that “Ergon Energy will donate ‘clean energy’ to power a community facility within the town, providing renewable energy to power a facility the whole community can use and enjoy for six months.

Renewing Ergon Energy’s principal sponsorship of this iconic program, Mr McLeod said their focus in the coming years would be on Energy Conservation and he announced Ergon Energy will offer an additional award in 2009.

“Ergon Energy will proudly sponsor the Energy Conservation Award, to encourage communities to become more environmentally friendly and work towards sustainability through becoming moreenergy efficient.

“The major prize for this award will be 12 months of Clean Energy, drawn entirely from clean renewable energy sources and fully accredited by Green Power,” Mr McLeod said.

Mr McLeod said the clean energy – from solar power, windmills or hydro electricity - would be used to power a public building within the town, where the general public could go to learn more about energy conservation activities through a public display of educational material. It could be a library, town hall, museum or other community facility.

“Ergon Energy is proud to continue to partner with Keep Australia Beautiful Queensland to show our ongoing commitment to supporting the communities in which we work and live.

“This partnership also reflects our philosophy of sustainability by giving us an opportunity to promote green energy, environmental awareness and regional development in Queensland.”

Keep Australia Beautiful Queensland CEO Carole Miller said Caloundra’s win was the result of outstanding partnerships between Council and the community, “And that includes everyone - residents, businesses, community groups and schools.

“Caloundra is blessed with a beautiful environment, and they work hard to keep it that way. Everyone is friendly, and recognises the importance of their beaches not only for their own enjoyment but for the economic benefits they bring from tourism. Volunteers, business people and council staff have worked hard together to come up with this result.

Ms Miller said it wasn’t easy to win the title and become Queensland’s Tidiest Town and most Sustainable Community. “Caloundra was up against stiff competition from the other Tidiest Town finalists. With 174 towns competing, winning was never going to be easy and now Caloundra has a lot to live up to, with last year’s Tidiest Town, Toowoomba going on to take out the BIG ONE – Australia’s Tidiest Town award. But I believe they’re up to it.

“The rest of Australia can eat their hearts out at the tidiness and the beauty of our towns,” she concluded.

Caloundra will now go on to contest the Australian Tidy Towns Awards in April next year.

Other highlights of the night included Marburg being named Tourism Queensland’s Friendliest Town and some four towns sharing the Australia Post Bush Spirit Award. “Marburg, is certainly one of the friendliest places on the planet, not just Queensland,” commented Ms Miller, “Just call in and you’ll see why they won,” she said. “As for Glenmorgan, Hungerford, Aramac and Boulia sharing the prize for Bush Spirit, their battle against drought tugs at the heart strings,” she said. “Our judges were so impressed with their indomitable spirit, their initiative, their good will, their determination to survive regardless of what nature or anyone else, for that matter throws at them. This is the Australia, the Queensland, that won ‘t take ‘no’ for an answer, whether from governments or that great rainmaker,” she concluded.

As well as Ergon Energy’s Queensland’s Tidiest Town, 11 outstanding awards were announced:

1. *Tourism Queensland’s* Friendliest Town | **Marburg**

2. *Grundfos Pumps* Sustainable City Award | **Magnetic Island Solar Suburb**

3. *Australia Post* Bush Spirit Award | **Glenmorgan, Hungerford, Aramac, Boulia**

4. *RACQ* Litter Prevention Award | **Hervey Bay & Airlie Beach**

5. *Do the Right Thing* Resource Recovery Sponsored by Packaging & Stewardship Forum |

Yeppoon

6. *OneSteel Recycling* Partnerships Award | **Quilpie**

7. Paradise & Bishopp Outdoor Advertising Heritage Award | **Port Douglas**

8. Grundfos Pumps Water Conservation | **Ravenswood**

9. *mint* Individual/Group Outstanding Achievement Award | **Greg McKean & Mothers Helping**

Others

10. Environmental Protection Award | **Logan**

11. Queensland’s Young Legends | **Eungella State School**

12. Sustainable Solutions | **Caboolture**

Keep it Up!

Ms Miller said the outstanding award winners were the cream of the crop in their categories. “The Ergon energy Tidy Towns competition continues to go from strength to strength, with exceptional councils and communities working together to help us keep Queensland beautiful, greener and healthier,” she said **-**