

Interest hots up in Tassie road design

LUKE SAYER

A TASMANIAN road design that saves water and reduces carbon dioxide could help turn around global warming, says its inventor.

Austins Ferry scientist John Harrison says interest in his porous pavement is growing rapidly, as concern about climate change and water shortages increases.

He said he was getting worldwide interest.

The porous pavement plan combines another of his company Teclco's developments — eco-cement — which reduces carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

The eco-cement process debuted two years ago on the ABC's *New Invention*, and traps carbon dioxide in the cement using the gas to harden the concrete.

"Our roads are our drainage network and we have to mimic what nature does.

"Our pavement can become carbon neutral just by using this [eco-cement] process and one day the streetscape could become like the Amazon."

The key is creating roadways that absorb and store water, rather than channeling it into stormwater drains and rushing it into rivers and the sea.

Mr Harrison says it is part of his holistic approach, trying to mimic what nature does.

He says there is a phenomenal interest in developing technology that can help turn around climate change.

"We are getting to the point where about 80,000 people a

month are going to our website, and that's increasing by about 10,000 a month," he said.

Also an accountant and economist, Mr Harrison said the key to turning around climate change was finding ways to actually make money from beneficial processes.

"The average person or someone who is starving isn't going to do something because it's the right thing to do, it has to make money," he said.

"If it doesn't have a dollar value to it, you can't convince people to use it."

Mr Harrison says getting interest from the political sphere is difficult.

"My own view is that governments are hanging around waiting for the right political moment," he said.

"A lot of people talk about carbon trading, but I'm saying we should be going a lot further than carbon trading.

"I work incessantly on it, but it has to happen otherwise we are all in a lot of trouble."

This week Mr Harrison will chair an international conference in Melbourne, *Sustainable Materials in the Built Environment 2007*.

Mr Harrison is chair of the group running the conference, the Association for the Advancement of Sustainable Materials in Construction.

The group was formed to promote the use of sustainable materials in construction and their design in the supply chain.



PIONEERING STUFF: Inventor John Harrison's porous concrete can help store water and, he says, help turn climate change around. Picture: SAM ROSEWARNE



Will Hodgman registers as an organ donor.

Organ donors need to register

THE failure by many Australians to register their consent for organ donation is preventing donation in one third of cases.

The difficulty in obtaining consent has been revealed by death audits at 22 Australian hospitals, Australians Donate national organ donation collaborative chairperson Marcia Coleman said yesterday, the first day of Organ Donor Awareness Week.

"This finding highlights the pressing need for Australians to register their consent on the Australian Organ Donor Register and to obtain an organ donor card from Medicare Australia," Ms Coleman said.

Australians Donate is conducting a two-month trial to allow Australians to request information by SMS about registering to donate organs, Ms Coleman said.

Tasmanian Liberal leader Will Hodgman has thrown his support behind national Organ Donor Awareness Week by registering as an organ donor.

Like many Tasmanians he had previously indicated on his driver's licence a willingness to donate organs, but wanted to take the next step to ensure his decision was legally recognised.

To join the national register visit www.medicareaustralia.gov.au