

Double Glaze Matters

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..DIY double glazing

An information session covering materials and where to get them, costs, construction method, and tips on what works and what doesn't.

Sat 17 September;

10am-12noon

Eltham Living & Learning Centre

\$15

Email for more info

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The Carbon Tax

Well, its finally (almost) here. The government has announced what they plan to do with the Carbon tax. It may not be all that we want, but it is a start.

Most importantly it gives a signal to people that carbon pollution is bad and must be paid for. It attacks the demand side by encouraging people (and especially industry) to use less energy and the supply side by making renewable energy more cost effective

The things I like about it are:-

A separate body to recommend limits. They plan to create a statutory body which will recommend to government each year what the carbon price should be. The idea is that this can be an expert group separated from politics. This is how they do it in England and it works well. It also makes it easier for the government of the day to make the tough decisions—"its not our fault, we are just implementing the recommendations". It is critical though that they employ good people that have the respect of the community.

Significant boost for renewables. A significant amount of money will be directed to implement renewable energy. This will hopefully stimulate the industry and get more electrical energy from renewable sources. While renewable are more expensive than coal, they are not a lot more expensive than new coal fired power plants. Investment will drive down the cost so that they are more competitive.

Send the right message. I think this is the most important part. It will start to change attitudes of people, just like we did against smoking, skin cancer and water wastage.

The major problem is that it does not have bipartisan support. Labour believes that once implemented people will realize that it is not the end of the world and will move on. My concern is that labour is so hated at the moment every thing that goes wrong will be blamed on the carbon tax.

The biggest risk is that if the liberals win they will pull it all out and it would be years before anyone would be game to reimplement it. It also means that the renewable power industry will be on a stop/start roller coaster. These projects are very big and take several years to implement. You cannot do it in a political environment that changes every 3 years.,

I read an article in the Age which I would love to be true, that Malcolm Turnbull should take over the leadership of the labour party. They argued that just as big corporations put the best person in the job and have no problems with them "changing allegiance" why not politics? After all Malcolm has staunchly supported labour on the Republican issue and fighting Climate Change.

To be honest, Malcolm is the one politician who has maintained his integrity throughout. If he was to take over leadership of labour, he would bring a lot of liberal voters with him and stop a lot of labour voters leaving.

It's a bit of a long shot, but I think it is better odds than Julia winning the next election!

Really Cheap Pelmets

Today I talk about installing pelmets for \$4 a window!

After roof insulation, and blocking draughts, one of the most cost effective ways of warming your house is to install curtains. The idea is to trap a layer of air between the window and the curtain. This acts as an insulation layer.

The two biggest failings that people have is that the curtains do not reach the floor and do not have a pelmet. This means that the air enters above the curtain, cools as it drops down and comes out the bottom. If you don't believe me, just place your hand at floor level next to your curtain when it is cold outside and feel the draught. Blocking off the top or the bottom will help, both is even better. However pelmets are expensive and people do not like them.

My solution is a layer of plastic attached along the top between the window frame and curtain track.

Firstly you need to clean the top of the window frame and the top of the curtain track. Then attach double sided sticky tape to each.

Peel of the protecting cover on the sticky tape on the curtain track and attach a layer of plastic. The best plastic I could find is the roll of plastic seal used under windows. It is available at the hardware store and is about 30 metres long. Ask for "plastic sarking" and you should be right. It will be too wide so you attach it to the curtain track and let it extend up the wall.

Push it down to the window frame then cut along the line of the wall where it meets the window frame.

Then remove the protective cover from the double sided sticky tape on the window frame and push down the plastic firmly.

If you have done it properly it will seal well and not be visible from below.

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