

Ten star challenge of thong and singlet test

March 23 2013

It's the ultimate challenge, the holy grail of building sustainability: to achieve a ten star sustainability rating. But in the great Australian tradition of reductionist language, most tradies now refer to it as the "singlet and thong test".

This is where new thermal housing designs allow homeowners, even in cooler temperate climates, to comfortably wear only thongs and a singlet inside the home year-round without any artificial heating or cooling.

The designs often draw on new techniques using directional facing aspects, windows and wall and floor heat sinks, amongst other things, that combine to achieve a thermal performance which maintains a stable and comfortable inside temperature.

The "Ten Star Rating Challenge", announced last week by the Building Designers Association of Victoria's (BDAV), is designed to showcase the state's latest cutting-edge environmentally sustainable designs.

The ambassador for the program, television personality James O'Loughlin, said "Australians are paying more attention to energy use in their homes and its impact on the environment".

"The 10-Star Challenge will test building designers' expertise in eco-friendly design that not only meets energy standards, but is cost-effective and innovative. This initiative will go a long way to dispel the myth that higher energy star ratings are unattainable."

For the first time, the 10-Star Challenge will be expanded to all Australian climate zones this year. BDAV president Michael O'Sullivan said the introduction of 6-Star energy standards in Victoria in 2011 has led to more design professionals designing new homes that are well beyond the regulatory standard.

"The need to develop more sustainable and energy-efficient homes has never been greater, with rising greenhouse emissions and household bills," Mr O'Sullivan said.

"Sustainable design is vital for all buildings in Australia, which is why building design professionals must challenge themselves to create homes for Victorians with higher energy star ratings that also meet aesthetic demand.

"The BDAV is committed to helping reduce greenhouse emissions. Our members have long seen sustainable design as best practice. The 10-Star Challenge highlights our commitment to the future of sustainable design."

Submissions for the 10-Star Challenge close on 29 April 2013. For entry criteria and more information, visit bdav.org.au or contact the BDAV on 9416 0227.



A winning design by EME Design Pty Ltd in collaboration with Greensphere Consulting, from the 2012 Ten Star Design Challenge.