

Shade Policy Framework



This Shade Policy Framework includes elements SunSmart considers essential to an effective Local Government Shade Policy. Local Government Authorities in Victoria are welcome to use this framework in developing their own stand alone Shade Policy. SunSmart also encourages councils to incorporate statements on skin cancer prevention and shade provision in strategic statements such as the Municipal Public Health Plan, Municipal Strategic Statement and Municipal Early Years Plan.

<NAME LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY> SHADE POLICY

Rationale

As part of creating a healthy and safe environment, local government has a key role to play in providing the community with public places, facilities, open spaces and services that provide protection from sun exposure.

Sun exposure has been identified as the cause of around 99% of non-melanoma skin cancers and 95% of melanoma in Australia.ⁱ Skin cancer is therefore one of the most preventable forms of cancer. Skin cancers account for around 83% of all new cancers diagnosed each year in Australia,ⁱⁱ with at least one in every two Australians being diagnosed with skin cancer in their lifetime.ⁱⁱⁱ

Shade provides good protection from the sun and it can be very easy for people to use. Shade alone can reduce overall exposure to UV radiation by about 75%^{iv}.

Provisions within the Planning and Environment Act 1987 and the State Policy Framework require local government authorities to take UV radiation protection into account in the development of planning schemes and the making of decisions on planning applications. This is because, although UV radiation is not specifically mentioned in this legislation, it clearly falls within the meaning of the terms “health” and “safety”, which are used in these documents.

Aim

The aim of the Shade Policy is to reduce the incidence of skin cancer in the <name local government authority> by increasing the provision of sustainable, quality shade within the municipality and encouraging the sun protection practices of the community.

Shade Policy Statements

- Council aims to provide safe and attractive open spaces and facilities for the community. This includes the provision of sustainable, quality shade. Council recognises that there are opportunities to improve the provision of shade across existing and newly developed council facilities.
- Children’s play areas will be considered high priority for shade provision.
- Community members within the municipality are also to be encouraged to practice personal protection measures as recommended by SunSmart.

- Quality shade provides protection from solar UV radiation at the right place at the right time. Priority areas for shade provision are places where people gather at times of peak UV, in particular between 10am – 2pm Eastern Standard Time and 11am – 3pm Daylight Saving Time during the months of September to April.
- Sustainable shade solutions usually involve strategic planting of trees and other vegetation incorporated with built shade to provide sun protection whilst shade trees are established. This includes the development of a management plan for monitoring the growth and health of the plants.
- Safety should also be a major consideration in the provision of either natural or built shade. The provision of shade should not create safety hazards.

(See *Shade for Everyone, A Practical Guide for Shade Development* for more information).

Policy Actions

- Ensure that consideration of shade is incorporated into urban and open space planning and in the approval of planning permits
- Ensure the consideration of shade when planning and approving public facilities and renovating existing infrastructure including landscape design
- Increase the provision of sustainable, quality shade at particular sites within the municipality including, parks, playgrounds, sporting and recreation facilities and early childhood services
- Increase the provision of shade at community events
- Increase the provision of sustainable, quality shade in new estate developments
- Encourage community members to adopt sun protection practices to reduce individual risk
- Ensure that shade provision is incorporated into other existing policies across council
- Provide signage at community outdoor facilities/spaces encouraging sun protection practices, including seeking shade, for individuals

Set dates for regular review of Shade Policy

ⁱ Gies P, Roy C, Javorniczky J, Henderson S, Lemus-Deschamps L, Driscoll C. Global Solar UV Index: Australian measurements, forecasts and comparison with the UK. *Photochem Photobiol* 2004;79(1):32-9.

ⁱⁱ (a) Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and Australasian Association of Cancer Registries 2004. *Cancer in Australia 2001*. AIHW cat. no. CAN 23. Canberra: AIHW (Cancer Series no. 28) and (b) National Cancer Control Initiative 2003. 'The 2002 national non-melanoma skin cancer survey'. A report by the NCCI Non-melanoma Skin Cancer Working Group. Edited by MP Staples. NCCI Melbourne.

ⁱⁱⁱ Staples M – calculated from the Non Melanoma Skin Cancer 2002 data – personal communication, October 2005

^{iv} Parsons P, Neale R, Wolksi P and Green A. 1998. The shady side of solar protection. *Medical Journal of Australia* 168:327-30