

Saving planet comes at cost, Penrith businesses told

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CLIMATE change could force the price of power, building materials, fuel, service and labour to skyrocket, Penrith business operators were told recently.

Carbon Reduction Institute managing director Rob Cawthorne spoke at the last Penrith Valley Economic Development Corporation CEO dinner before it transforms into a new economic development entity in January.

Chairman John Bateman said the new entity would be charged with increasing the number and quality of jobs in the city by promoting economic development and enhancing the economic culture and profile of the region.

Mr Cawthorne spoke on the business implications arising from impending government regulations flowing from the carbon pollution reduction scheme.

This includes measuring and managing carbon footprints, emissions reporting and creating a carbon neutral business.

"The proof is there. We have been experiencing a rise in average temperatures since 1880 so we have to act now," Mr Cawthorne said.

He discussed the expected hike on power bills (up 10 to 40 per cent), the 2.5 per cent rise in construction materials, a 5c per litre boost to fuel costs, a 0.1 to 0.5 per cent rise in service and labour costs, and an overall increase in costs for goods and services in Australia.

He suggested businesses and consumers would be encouraged to choose NoCO₂- and LowCO₂-certified products and services.

Corporation acting head Steve Willingale said many business people were worried the carbon reduction scheme would lead to higher costs to industry.

Edition: 1 - MB

Page: 004

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