

This moveable pool cover storage system doubles as attractive seating around the pool deck.

ESD made easy

Uncovering the true value of pool covers

The key purpose of Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) is to **reduce impacts** in both the **construction and use** of buildings, structures and facilities on the natural environment, whilst at the same time improving comfort and amenity for the inhabitants and/or those using the facilities.

With that in mind, it's also clear that when it comes to 'best practice' ESD, indoor pools and large aquatic centres can present some of the largest challenges in terms of design, construction and ongoing operation.

From energy consumption; water consumption; and reducing emissions, through to chemical use; public and staff health & safety requirements; and maintenance requirements (in what can be an extremely harsh and corrosive environment) – 'ticking all of the ESD boxes', whilst at the same time providing a facility which is fun, safe and financially viable, is no easy task.

Importantly, there is one easy, highly cost-effective and proven method of significantly reducing the environmental impact of both new and existing pools and aquatic centres – install a pool cover.

Bernard Schenk, Commercial Sales Manager with leading commercial pool equipment specialists Elite Pool Covers, explained:

"Installing a good quality commercial pool cover can not only significantly reduce water loss through evaporation, it can also, quite literally, end up saving the facility owner tens (or even hundreds) of thousands of dollars in operating and maintenance costs."

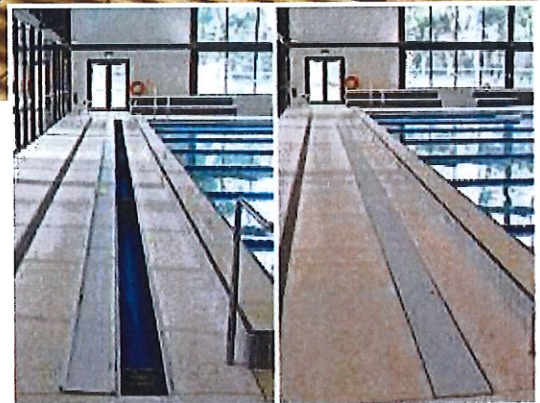
"From reduced energy bills for water heating, through to the extended painting and maintenance intervals that can result from reducing the amount of condensation being generated in indoor aquatic facilities, a commercial pool cover can not only significantly boost a facility's ESD credentials, it's also an excellent financial investment," he added.

Alarming, despite these many ESD and cost benefits, around 50% of commercial pools still don't have pool covers fitted, with pool owners/operators citing reasons including capital cost, limited space for covers, no staff available to operate covers, etc. Indeed, even where a pool cover had been included as part of the pool construction or refurbishment project, the pool cover is often the first item to 'get cut' in an attempt to reduce costs if the project has run over time and/or over budget.

Considering that the average 'payback' of the capital cost of a commercial pool blanket in direct water and energy savings is around 18 months, there's a fair argument that pool blankets should no longer be considered as an 'optional extra' – rather as a mandatory inclusion.

As for the available floor space argument, that too is no longer an issue – thanks to a number of innovative new designs from Elite Pool Covers.

"Massive increases in the cost of land, has meant that buildings are getting smaller and facilities are becoming more compact," Bernard Schenk explained.



Now you see it – now you don't. This built-in pool cover system makes the most of valuable space by storing the pool cover under the pool deck when it's not in use.

"The square metre value of floorspace is significantly higher than it was 10 years ago and it continues to go up – and facility owners don't want to spend that money to simply provide space to store a pool cover when it's not on the pool".

"With that in mind, we've developed a range of solutions to overcome that issue, including built-in systems which are concealed in the pool deck and movable systems which double as seating around the pool deck," he said.

"These options, combined with the many ESD and financial benefits, mean that there really is no excuse for not including a pool cover as part of your pool design."

"Most importantly, like most things, pre-planning delivers the best results," he added. "Including a pool cover in the design of a new facility or in refurbishment plans for an existing facility enables us to design and deliver the most efficient solution – in terms of both environmental performance, aesthetics and usability."

For further information, please contact Elite Pool Covers on T: 1300 136 696 or visit the website: www.poolcovers.com.au