

CASE STUDY

Birdsville



PRODUCTS USED

Earthwool® R-3.5 Ceiling
Insulation – 6,000m²
Earthwool R-2.1 Underfloor
Insulation – 2,024m²

PROJECT

Birdsville

FACTS ABOUT BIRDSVILLE

Population: 120
Max temp: 49°C
Min temp: 0°C



CHALLENGE

Summer in Australia's most isolated town, Birdsville, can be brutal. Temperatures top 49°C and this means rubber soles can melt on the pavement, car wipers stick to windscreens and make-up melts from women's faces.

In the summer of 2013, 29 consecutive days were 40°C or more in Birdsville and Australian weathermen were forced to invent a new colour for temperature charts as the heat was predicted to break record temperatures.

SOLUTION

To demonstrate how effective insulation is at keeping buildings comfortable from climatic extremes and reduce energy costs, Knauf Insulation supported a DIY initiative to install more than 8,000 square metres of its new generation high performance Earthwool® insulation.

A team from Knauf Insulation with the help of the Diamantina Shire Council and Birdsville locals installed wall, ceiling and underfloor products and provided information on the benefits and safety of insulation.

Tackling the areas where heat can escape and enter a building. Earthwool was installed in the ceilings and under floors of every viable home and public building in the town.

Not only will the insulation dramatically reduce the town's energy needs but it will also keep the heat out of buildings in summer and keep the warmth in on cool winter mornings.

Unlike traditional glasswool products, Earthwool is made without the use of added formaldehyde, chemicals or artificial colours, which means it is super-soft and the brown colour is completely natural.

Earthwool is also less itchy and less dusty than traditional glasswool products which made the insulating on such a large scale, more pleasant and comfortable.

RESULTS

The summer of 2014 put Birdsville on the map again for heat extremes, but with Earthwool insulation in place to help keep the internal temperature comfortable, residents were less reliant on appliances to cool down. The average residential home in Birdsville saved over 20% on its energy bills. Birdsville resident, Neale McShane, saved \$138 on his electricity bill for the period October 2013 to January 2014 compared to same period last year; even more significant given energy prices have increased and the billing period was almost a week longer.*

"Electricity prices have risen by 70% in the past five years and there are currently more than a million Australian homes without any insulation," said Stuart Dunbar, Managing Director Australia and New Zealand at Knauf Insulation. "Studies have shown that ceiling insulation alone could save the average home about A\$299 in annual energy costs."

*Electricity bill total of \$665.45, Oct 2012-Jan 2013 (91 billing days) with no Earthwool insulation compared to a total electricity bill of \$527.30 for Oct 2013-Jan 2014 (96 billing days) with Earthwool insulation. Total savings of \$138.15.

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