



Sterile offices to be packed with plants

KARRATHA offices will be crammed with plants next Wednesday.

March 2 marks the first Plant Life Balance Day – a day to highlight the benefits of plants in the workplace.

The Nursery and Gardening Industry Australia created the day in response to a national survey.

The survey showed two-thirds of office workers preferred to work in a place that had plants, but more than half of the people surveyed had no greenery in their workplace.

Karratha's Poinciana Nursery owner Natasha Selten said the company would be taking part and giving away spot prizes and office plants on the day.

"I've noticed a lot of the offices in Karratha are quite sterile, it would be nice if more people went to work and got to see some greenery," Ms Selten said.

"Also, in our air-conditioned environment, plants help remove toxins in the air."

University of Technology Sydney Plant Environmental Quality Group Professor Margaret Burchett said the group's research showed office plants cut volatile organic compounds by 80 per cent and carbon dioxide by 25 per cent.

Professor Burchett said the compounds were emitted from plastic or synthetic materials in office furniture, fittings, computers and printers, and could cause headaches, loss of concentration and eye, nose and throat problems.

Nursery and Garden Industry Australia chief executive Robert Prince said some people believed they had more energy at work when plants were around.

"That's an incredibly powerful message for all employers about the use of plants to improve their

office environment, boost morale and increase productivity," Mr Prince said.

"We aim to make tending office plants as easy as possible because our work environment will be better off with some plant life balance.

"As comforting as a pet and as beneficial as vitamins, what's not to love?"

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NATASHA SELTEN



Richard Anderson from Poinciana Nursery getting an office plant ready for next Wednesday's Plant Life Balance Day.
 Picture: Chris Lees