

# Joint Safety Project

Ecoglo and Horizon International recently teamed up to improve the safety of the front steps of the Palmerston North Court House during its recent redevelopment. The Building Act 2004 (section 3) has a requirement that people who use buildings can do so safely. Slips, trips and falls are a leading cause of injury in New Zealand and steps are a major contributor to these. Jake Pauls, a world leading expert on this topic, was recently on a speaking tour in New Zealand. He identified the main factors causing stairway falls to be step geometry, visibility and handrails. Steps that are inconsistent or have inadequate rise-run ratios cause many a misstep. Secondly if the step edge is difficult to identify people will overstep or understep causing a fall. Lastly the handrails need to be usable not just decorative. Consideration should also be given to the aging of the population and the fact that stairs become more difficult as vision deteriorates with age and mobility is restricted.

Ecoglo provides a range of step nosings, step edge strips, and handrail strips that overcome these problems. The photoluminescent strips provide high visibility 24 hours a day because the step edge is clearly defined and as daylight diminishes the strips give off a bright glow that lasts all night. Ecoglo's patented 'baked in' process ensures the products are very hard wearing and can be installed both indoors and outdoors. The product range includes different combinations of photoluminescent strips and anti-slip mat in a range of colours.

The Palmerston North Court House architect Opus International Wellington was keen to incorporate Ecoglo into the design and asked Horizon International if it would be possible to incorporate the photoluminescent contrast strips into the pavers rather than having the strips adhered to the pavers after installation. The



*Ecoglo step nosings incorporate a hard wearing anti-slip mat as well as a photoluminescent component to prevent slips and falls 24 hours a day.*



*Ecoglo was incorporated into the Stonevue pavers.*



Stonevue pavers ([www.stonevue.co.nz](http://www.stonevue.co.nz)) that were to be used already have outstanding slip resistant properties so the Ecoglo G5001 product ([www.ecoglo.co.nz](http://www.ecoglo.co.nz)) was chosen. Horizon International were able to create a special routed 1/2 bullnose paver to accommodate the strip. The Stonevue range has both excellent durability and style, these large format pavers create openness while providing texture and detail in open spaces. With the addition of Ecoglo strips they not only look very smart they also greatly enhance safety.

The Building Act also requires that people who use buildings can do so without endangering their health. This incorporates not using hazardous materials and substances. All Ecoglo products have been through extensive international testing and are non toxic, non radioactive, non flammable and are readily recycled at the end of a building's life. Additionally because the photoluminescent pigment harvests sunlight you can be assured that when you use Ecoglo you are taking a step towards sustainable building practices by reducing reliance on electricity.