



CLIMATE RESCUE WAGGA

Solar solutions mean business

AS electricity costs rise many local businesses and organisations are getting ahead of the game by installing commercial solar panel systems on their rooves.

While household solar systems can generate from 2-5 kilowatts (kW) of electricity for the family, commercial systems can produce between 10-200 kW, depending on the roof or ground space that is available. Solar is often a good fit for businesses, particularly if much of their power use is during the day.

Solar Wise Wagga has installed

systems on businesses ranging from an ice works in Cootamundra to a roadhouse in Lockhart.

"Businesses are a great fit for solar power as they use most of their power during the day when solar generation is at its peak. Basically they feed the solar power direct to their workshop or office," Solar Wise Managing Director, Alex Manley said.

Like other installers, Alex has seen a steady increase in commercial installations as the prices of solar systems have reduced by 80per cent and the price of electricity has soared.

One of the largest PV systems in Wagga has been installed at the Rules Club as a part of the Solar in Clubs program of Clubs Australia. The 76 kW system reduces carbon dioxide emissions by 130 tonnes a year and will make significant savings to the club's electricity bills.

"The solar panels were part of our commitment to our environmental goals inspiring other businesses and residents to follow our lead." Club Manager Jack Jolley said.

Manager of Foodworks at the Lake Albert Shopping Centre, Rod

Porter, also sees the business logic of solar and installed a 45kW system at his supermarket.

"I can only see the cost of electricity going up in future and this is a practical way to get some control over costs," Rod said.

To make sure that the business takes full advantage of the new system, Foodworks has also changed from old style lighting to modern LED globes which they expect will save a further \$1400 on power bills.

Using a different approach, Climate Rescue of Wagga (CROW) is establishing the

Riverina Community Solar Farm. This will be a group of small local shareholders who will install and manage a 80-100kW solar system that sells the generated electricity to the "host" business where the panels are installed.

This approach is an innovation that is taking off around Australia and, indeed, across the world. Not only does it help drive the shift to clean, renewable energy, it ensures that energy profits stay with small local investors and directly benefit the local economy, rather than lining the pockets of large, multinational companies.

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Commercial solar systems can produce between 10-200 kW, depending on the roof or ground space that is available.

WAGGA WAGGA City Council

RENEWABLES WRAP

Did you know Wagga Wagga City Council has solar arrays for heating of hot water, solar path lighting and generation of renewable energy at various facilities?

The power generated in the last 12 months from these systems is around 70 MWh - enough to power 10 average homes for a year!

Council also purchases 100% GreenPower for the Civic Centre and this has reduced our carbon footprint by more than 1,620 tonnes of CO2e per year. That is like taking more than 500 cars off the road for a whole year!

Council is also investing in a number of energy efficiency projects which include the installation of a co-generation system at the Oasis Aquatic Centre, as well as lighting retrofits, timer and sensor systems at a number of facilities.

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New energy era dawning in Australia

WE are seeing the beginning of Australia's Solar Age.

For the past year there have been no development proposals to build new coal or gas fuelled power stations in Australia - all have been for large scale solar or wind farms, which can produce electricity 15-20 per cent cheaper.

The first commercial-scale PV power plant in Australia at Greenough River Solar Farm near Geraldton opened in October 2012. It had a capacity of 10 MW (10,000kW)

By comparison the Nyngan Solar Plant will have a capacity of more than 100 MW, the largest in the Southern Hemisphere. It will use an array of photovoltaic cells similar to a normal house installation.

Using a slightly different approach called concentrated photovoltaic (CPV), a demonstration 1.5MW plant was opened in Mildura in June.

CLIMATE RESCUE OF WAGGA

Your local community organisation finding answers for a low carbon future

CROW PROMOTES

- Alternatives to conventional fossil energy
- Energy efficiency and low energy housing
- Solar and wind technologies

This year CROW has won a NSW Government grant to set up community solar farms. These are medium scale (about 100KW) solar arrays located on the roofs of host organisations who will purchase the electricity the panels produce at better than grid prices.

RIVERINA COMMUNITY SOLAR FARMS

Your chance to be part of a cleaner, brighter future.

We are looking for Wagga Wagga citizens who are interested to become part owners of a solar farm. CROW has already identified several local businesses and organisations that are keen to become involved as hosts. It is intended that a cooperative or unlisted company will be formed to raise funds to build a solar farm.

INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE:
Register at www.crow.org.au

