



# Solar 'the way of the future'

A factory in western Sydney will rely on the sun for up to 100kW of its electricity after becoming home to NSW's largest rooftop solar-power system.

Blacktown's Cadbury Schweppes factory is now capable of producing enough electricity each year to power 21 homes, while saving 140 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions – the equivalent to taking 35 cars off the road.

Climbing on to the factory roof yesterday for the project's official launch, Federal Environment Minister Peter Garrett signed one of the 640 solar panels, writing "a solar nation" beside his name.

"The rooftop solar highway here at Cadbury Schweppes is truly spectacular – if you stood its 640 solar panels end-to-end they would tower above Sydney's Centrepont Tower," he said.

"This is the way of the future – it's what fighting climate change is all about."

The factory is the first project in the Blacktown Solar City, one of five cities around Australia to become part of the Federal Government's \$75 million Solar Cities Project which aims to encourage industry, business and the community to rethink the way they produce energy.

"This solar system is a great example of the innovative approaches Solar Cities is enabling across Australia," Mr Garrett said.

"Under the Solar Cities trials, we are bringing together industry, power companies and households to combine solar power, smart meters, energy efficiency and market reform. We're laying the foundations of a sustainable energy future."

Other solar cities include Adelaide, Townsville, Alice Springs and central Victoria.

Panels for the Blacktown factory were manufactured at BP Solar's Sydney facility.

BP spokesman Brooke Miller said, "Like Blacktown, there are many other



**FOUNDATION:** Peter Garrett signs a solar panel on a large factory rooftop. Picture: AAP

regions across Australia where literally vast fields of commercial roof space lie dormant.

"These rooftops could be turned into mini-power stations allowing

many more Australian businesses to produce emission-free electricity at the very time of the day when energy prices are often at their peak," Ms Miller said. **AAP**