



Australian Government

Solar Cities



Blacktown
solar city

press release

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Less energy and lower emissions inspire Blacktown community

The Blacktown Solar City project today revealed its range of exclusive energy-saving packages, all of which are now available to help the community's nearly 300,000 residents to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and save up to \$3 million on electricity bills each year.

With funding under the Federal Government's Solar Cities initiative and an additional \$22 million contributed by consortium members, the project's packages were made available for the first time at today's official launch, attended by the Hon. Malcolm Turnbull, Federal Minister for the Environment and Water Resources.

Covering 47 suburbs in Western Sydney, the project is the first of the five Solar Cities to announce the details of its packages, kick-starting its campaign to save 25,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions each year, equivalent to taking 6,000 cars off Sydney's roads.

Today's launch was part of a community celebration hosted by Ian Kiernan, AO OAM, in the Blacktown Civic Plaza, attended by hundreds of local residents and business representatives. The event was the first opportunity for the Blacktown City community to sign up to the project's 15 packages, the complete range of which will be available for the next two to six years.

On behalf of the Blacktown Solar City consortium, BP Solar's Regional Director, Brooke Miller said "By bringing together leading companies in the energy, finance and housing sectors, we have created a selection of packages that greatly improve the accessibility and affordability of energy saving measures. Solar energy systems in particular will be considerably more economical, with discounts and financing options providing savings of up to 50% on system prices.

"We are making it easier to save energy, and we are making it especially easy when the sun is shining, air conditioners are running and energy use is at its heaviest. Over the life of the project we expect that more than 800 solar electricity systems and more than 400 solar hot water heaters will be installed on homes, public housing and commercial buildings, helping to tackle the region's energy challenges.

"Solar Cities is about providing Australians with the power to change their energy future," said Brooke Miller. "Nearly 1,000 members of the local community have already registered their interest, demonstrating that from Prospect to Mount Druitt, the community is ready and willing to make a difference to their future."

Residents and businesses will also have access to expert advice on how changes to their behaviour can save energy, as well as gaining access to other energy saving products such as discounted insulation, free compact fluorescent light bulbs and low-flow shower-heads.

“The project’s packages go well beyond solar power,” said Brooke Miller. “By combining a range of approaches to saving energy this project will deliver valuable data that will be critical to developing future government policy.”

Some of the innovative packages available to residents include the opportunity to participate in a range of energy studies that will help households use energy more efficiently. With the use of smart meters and other forms of technology available today, participants will be able to save money simply by changing the times they use energy or by adjusting the use of particular appliances such as air conditioners on hot summer days.

The Blacktown Solar City project also encourages residents from non-English speaking backgrounds to take part. The project will distribute information throughout the community in 10 different languages via community champions, energy education hubs and the project website (www.blacktownsolarcity.com.au).

“Community involvement is essential to the success of this project,” said Brooke Miller. “With over 3,500 energy efficiency consultations and more than 30,000 energy efficiency packs available, we invite the community of Blacktown to show that saving energy can be easy and with the right help it can be done today.”

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For any inquiries please contact:

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Notes to Editors

The 15 Blacktown Solar City packages

Solar Home offers

1. Supply and installation of 1 kilowatt solar electricity system. Regular price \$16,179 (inc. GST), Blacktown Solar City price \$4,998+ (inc. GST).
2. Supply and installation of 1 kilowatt solar electricity system and a solar hot water system. Regular price \$22,860 (inc. GST), Blacktown Solar City price \$7,808+ (inc. GST).
3. Supply and installation of 1.5 kilowatt solar electricity system. Regular price \$23,870 (inc. GST), Blacktown Solar City price \$8,166+ (inc. GST).
4. Customers in Landcom’s newest suburb “The Ponds” can sign up for a discounted BP Solar electricity system with the option of a discounted ANZ mortgage to help fund it. Regular price \$15,629 (inc. GST), Blacktown Solar City price at “The Ponds” \$3,691+ (inc. GST).

Business offers

5. Solar offer: Special financing deals from ANZ will be made available to businesses in the area to allow the installation of commercial-size solar systems at heavily discounted prices.
6. Business energy efficiency program. Medium to large business have the opportunity to take up a discounted energy efficiency audit of their operations. The audit will investigate cost-effective ways to cut energy use and then help the business to implement them.

Energy Saver Trials

As a part of Blacktown Solar City, Integral Energy is running four voluntary 24-month Energy Saver Trials starting from October 2007. The trials will take place in nine suburbs: Blacktown, Glenwood, Kings Langley, Kings Park, Lalor Park, Parklea, Prospect, Seven Hills and Toongabbie.

7. Air Conditioner Saver: Participants will have their air conditioner remotely cycled on for 40 minutes and off for 20 minutes each hour during 'peak energy periods'. A previous study has shown that household temperatures rise by an average of only 1-2°C during this time, whilst reducing energy consumption by up to 30%.
8. Pool Pump Saver: Participants will have their pool pump turned off automatically on 12 hot days over summer, during 'peak energy periods', saving on electricity costs.
9. Dynamic Peak Pricing: Participants will be charged a premium electricity tariff during a limited number of 'peak energy periods'. For the remainder of the year they will pay a lower electricity tariff than currently charged. Changing the times non-essential energy is used can allow substantial savings.
10. Seasonal Saver: Participants will be charged higher electricity tariffs on weekdays during the warmer months and a lower electricity tariff at other times. Changing the times non-essential energy is used can allow substantial savings.

Other products to help homes save energy

11. Free Home Energy Consultations. Residents will have the opportunity to have energy experts visit their home and provide advice on simple changes that can reduce their energy consumption.
12. Discounted roof insulation package including installation.
13. Free energy efficiency pack: Residents have the opportunity to collect a free pack for their home including six energy efficient light globes.
14. Discount Vouchers for Energy Efficiency: Blacktown Solar City has found the best deals in the Blacktown City area for energy efficient products and services and put them together in one booklet which will be distributed to all residents of Blacktown City.
15. Standby Power study: Residents have the opportunity to participate in a study that will identify homes with high standby consumption and offer advice on how to reduce it.

Blacktown Solar City

- Blacktown Solar City consists of a consortium led by BP Solar and includes Integral Energy, ANZ, Blacktown City Council, Big Switch Projects and Landcom.
- Covering 47 suburbs, Blacktown City is the biggest Local Government Area in NSW and the third largest in Australia, behind Brisbane City and the Gold Coast.
- Blacktown City is in western Sydney, 35km west of the Sydney CBD.
- The Blacktown Solar City project will run from 2007 to 2013.

For further information on the Blacktown Solar City project, visit www.blacktownsolarcity.com.au or call 1800 619 322

Solar Cities Project – Australian Government initiative

- Solar Cities is a \$75 million initiative announced by the Prime Minister in the Energy White Paper, Securing Australia's Energy Future, in June 2004.
- Solar Cities is an innovative programme which is designed to demonstrate how solar power, smart meters, energy efficiency and new approaches to electricity pricing can combine to provide a sustainable energy future in urban locations throughout Australia.

To learn more, visit www.greenhouse.gov.au/solarcities