

# SAVING ENERGY



Recent electricity price increases and proposed further increases are driving many electricity customers to take steps to reduce consumption and install renewable energy.

Some of the most significant challenges for government, business and the community, are:

- increasing concerns over climate change,
- managing energy supply to meet growing demand levels, and
- reducing the environmental impacts associated with energy use

Government at all levels are taking action to reduce energy consumption and to cut greenhouse gas emissions associated with the use of non renewable energy sources.

Just by taking simple actions around your home or business, you too can save money and help to protect our environment.

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Energy efficiency simply means using less energy to provide the same service or achieve the same result. It's about doing things smarter. From turning off appliances to using cold water in your washing machine, there are many simple things you can do to save energy in the home or office.

The NSW Government provides information and support to households, businesses and community on how to be more energy efficient, cut energy consumption and reduce bills. To find out more; including information on current rebates, grants, schemes or programs; visit NSW Climate and Energy Action website.

Here are some of Council's energy smart tips:

- Wait for a full load in the dishwasher or washing machine
- Shorter showers and replace electric hot water systems with solar hot water
- Replace light bulbs with energy efficient LED lighting
- Only heat or cool areas of your home that you are using
- Set your heating/cooling a couple of degrees warmer in summer and colder in winter
- Reduce drafts by closing vents and draft stoppers under doors
- Install ceiling insulation
- Get rid of that almost empty second fridge
- Find out how much energy your household uses – grab a 'Save Power Kit' from the Macquarie Regional Library

- Understand how to read your household electricity bills and meter.

## RENEWABLE ENERGY

Renewable energy is energy which is generated from natural sources (e.g. sun, wind, water, biomass). These are generally unlimited and are the cleanest sources of energy available. The most practical way for the average household to contribute to the reduction in greenhouse gases created during the production of electricity is to purchase renewable or 'green' energy from your electricity provider. For a few extra dollars per bill, your electricity provider will purchase energy produced from a renewable source on your behalf; for more information visit Green Power. Alternatively you may wish to investigate installing solar energy, such as solar hot water or solar panels, at home or the office, with further information being available at:

- NSW Climate and Energy Action
- Australian Government Clean Energy Regulator - Small Scale Renewable Energy Scheme
- Clean Energy Council- Guides and information on what you should know about buying and installing solar and battery storage systems. Plus tools to find a Clean Energy Council Approved Retailer or Accredited Installer.
- Australian Government's Green Vehicle Guide

## COUNCIL GOALS

On 24 February 2020 Dubbo Regional Council adopted an Energy Strategy and Implementation Plan 2020 – 2025 for its operations with

the vision of becoming a leader in regional New South Wales in the reduction of energy consumption, increased energy efficiency and the continued adaptation to and use of renewable energy. The Strategy and Implementation Plan includes four key strategy areas with the following goals:

1. Energy Efficiency - Council implements energy efficiency practices and improvements across its activities and operations.
2. Renewable Energy - Council obtains 50% of its predicted electricity consumption\* by 2025 from renewables, directly or by purchasing renewable energy.
3. Sustainable Transport - Council plans for, and begins to transition to, a zero emissions fleet by 2025.
4. Supporting Energy Smart Communities - The community is supported in becoming energy smart and ultimately adopts energy efficiency, renewable energy and sustainable transport practices.

Council's requirements for the development of an Energy Strategy and Implementation Plan had arisen from its 2040 Community Strategic Plan (CSP) which states under Strategy 2.1.3.3 *that an energy strategy is to be prepared for Council facilities and buildings by the Division of Planning and Environment*. Additional CSP strategies supporting the development of the Strategy and Implementation Plan include 2.1 *opportunities for use of renewable energy are increased* and 5.9 *environmental sustainability is a priority*.

A copy of the plan can be viewed at Council's webpage; A-Z Plans and Strategies.

## CITIES POWER PARTNERSHIP

Dubbo Regional Council is now a member of the Cities Power Partnership Program, joining forces with councils across the country in an effort to accelerate Australia's transition to a renewable energy future, and ultimately slash greenhouse gas pollution and tackle worsening climate change. The Climate Councils Cities Power Partnership (CPP) program is Australia's largest local government climate alliance with 125 member councils. Over one third of all NSW councils are members; including Albury, Bathurst, Orange, Parkes and Wagga Wagga.

The Cities Power Partnership is an important step in helping the Dubbo Region to transition to a renewable energy future and will assist Council with implementing its recently adopted Energy Strategy & Implementation Plan 2020 – 2025 for its operations. Councils taking part in the Cities Power Partnership program pledge to undertake five key actions to help reduce greenhouse gas pollution and tackle climate change locally. In the Dubbo Region, Council has selected the following five actions, all of which are identified in Council's adopted Energy Strategy & Implementation Plan 2020 - 2025. The actions include:

1. Install renewable energy (solar PV and battery storage) on council buildings.
2. Power Council operations by renewable energy, and set targets to increase the level of renewable power for council operations over time.
3. Create a revolving green energy fund to finance renewable energy projects.
4. Adopt best practice energy efficiency measures across all council

buildings, and support community facilities to adopt these measures.

5. Roll out energy efficient lighting across the municipality.

## COUNCIL ACHIEVEMENTS

Recent achievements relating to implementing Council's adopted Energy Strategy and Implementation Plan have included:

- Upgrade of 88% of Council's street light network to LED technology.
- Upgrade of building and facility lighting to LED technology at the Dubbo Regional Airport, Dubbo Saleyards, Dubbo Aquatic & Leisure Centre, Western Plains Cultural Centre, Dubbo and Wellington Depots.
- Upgrade of boiler and chiller equipment at the Western Plains Cultural Centre.
- Upgrade to more energy and water efficient dishwashers (4 energy star, 6 water star), and revising automatic lighting and air conditioning timer settings at the Dubbo and Wellington Libraries.
- Installation of Building Management Systems (BMS) at the Dubbo Regional Airport, Western Plains Cultural Centre and Dubbo Civic Administration Building. The BMS allows for more detailed energy monitoring and subsequent identification of potential energy saving opportunities.
- Adoption of a Sustainable Buildings Policy and Standards for all new Council builds and renovations including minimum energy efficiency, renewable energy and electric vehicle charging requirements; a transition away from gas to electric heating and

appliances; and the transition away from HVAC systems utilising banned R22 gases.

- Monitoring of Council's energy performance via energy management software.
- Installation of a total of 275 KW of behind the meter (BTM) solar systems across Council buildings and facilities, taking Council's total installed BTM solar to 373 kW.
- Purchase of 100% renewable electricity for Council's small energy using sites, which account for approximately 20% of Council's total electricity use.
- Purchase of an increasing amount of renewable electricity for Council's large energy using sites and street lighting, which account for approximately 80% of Council's total electricity use. From 25 per cent renewable electricity in 2023, to 50 per cent from 2025, 75 per cent from 2027 and 100 per cent from 2029.
- Adoption of a Zero Emissions Fleet Strategy and Implementation Plan for its fleet.
- Purchase of three electric vehicles as part of Council's fleet transition.
- Installation of four (4) public electric vehicle charging stations to support the local community in moving towards a zero emissions future.

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