

Media Release

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FIRST ALICE SOLAR CITY RESIDENTIAL SOLAR ELECTRICITY SYSTEM INSTALLED ON ALICE SPRINGS ROOFTOP

The first photovoltaic (PV) solar electricity system to be installed as part of the Alice Solar City project has started converting sunshine into clean electricity for an Alice Springs family today.

With the assistance of a significant Alice Solar City financial incentive, Michael and Alison Kain have installed a two kilowatt solar electricity system on the roof of their home.

Not only will the Kain family be producing clean, emission-free electricity, they will be able to sell this electricity back to the local power grid at a premium.

A PV solar electricity system converts sunlight into electricity and it can supply some or all of a household's power, depending on the size of the system and the household's energy usage.

Brian Elmer, Alice Solar City General Manager puts it simply: "Residents who install a solar electricity system in effect turn their roof into a mini-power station."

"They will be able to sell all the solar electricity they generate back to Power and Water Corporation at 45 cents per kilowatt-hour, which is more than double the cost of purchasing electricity from the grid. The buyback rate is currently the highest rate offered in Australia."

"We know that purchasing a solar PV system is a significant investment, but when you take into account the incentives being offered through Alice Solar City, the system could pay for itself in as little as 10 years."

"At the end of that period, the system continues to generate electricity to reduce energy costs for years to come. In addition, Alice Solar City offers low interest green loans to residents to assist with the initial purchase."



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Michael Kain said, "Installing PV allows us to do our bit towards reducing the impact of climate change; we've wanted to do this for a while now and the incentives available under Alice Solar City made it achievable."

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"Our personalised home energy survey revealed that we already have below average energy consumption compared to the typical Alice Springs home. The next logical step for us to reduce our environmental impact was to generate our own electricity".

PO Box 8561,
Alice Springs NT 0871

Smart Living Centre
2/82 Todd Street, Alice Springs NT

Power and Water Corporation is a key partner in the Alice Solar City Project.

Through its involvement, in addition to accessing the elevated buyback tariff, all residents who install a rooftop solar electricity system will automatically be placed on a cost-reflective tariff and be provided with a smart meter.

Cost-reflective tariffs encourage people to use power in off-peak periods through introducing a peak and off-peak tariff system.

"Currently people in Alice Springs pay the same rate for power 24 hours/day, but in reality the costs of generating electricity does vary during the day", says Brian Elmer.

"If this encourages residents to adjust their behaviour, such as using their pool pumps at night time instead of during the day, then we can help reduce the need for expensive upgrades to our town's energy infrastructure"

Steve Sawyer, Networks Support Manager, Power and Water Corporation said, "As a foundation member of the Alice Solar Cities consortium, Power and Water is pleased to be involved with the deployment of renewable energy sources on the Alice Springs grid."

"It is part of learning to live sustainably in an arid environment using the available resources (in this case solar energy), and Power and Water will watch with interest the performance of the renewable systems and the impact it has on residential energy consumption patterns".

The solar electricity system has been installed by BP Solar, which is the dedicated solar electricity system supplier for the Alice Solar City project.

Gavin Street, Project Manager for BP Solar said, "We are proud and excited to be working with SunTech, the local Alice Springs installer of our product."



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“BP Solar is the only commercial manufacturer of solar panels in Australia and our panels are designed to last for at least 25 years - even in the tough Alice Springs climate.”

As part of Alice Solar City, 225 residential solar electricity systems and 26 commercial solar electricity systems will be installed and connected to the local power grid over the next six years.

Smart meters will help residents to better understand their energy use by providing information about energy consumption in the household every 30 minutes. Residents can track their energy use all day, and decide when and how to best use their energy.

Residents don't need to have a solar electricity system installed to take advantage of the cost-reflective tariffs and smart meters as these are available as separate Alice Solar City incentives.

The Alice Solar City project is part of the Australian Government's Solar Cities initiative which is helping change the way we think about and use energy. Trials involving governments, industry, businesses and residents across Australia are helping create a new energy future for Australian communities.

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For media enquiries please contact Laurelle Halford from Creative Territory on 0417 222 211 or (08) 8953 7919 or laurelle@creativeterritory.com

About Alice Solar City

Alice Solar City is part of the Australian Government's \$100 million Solar Cities Programme and will provide information on real-time energy use in the community over the next six years. The Alice Springs Solar City Consortium is led by the Alice Springs Town Council and includes broad community support from the Northern Territory Government, Power and Water Corporation, Tangentyere Council, the Northern Territory Chamber of Commerce, the Desert Knowledge Cooperative Research Centre and the Arid Lands Environment Centre.

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