



Hon. Geoff Wilson MP
Member for Ferny Grove



Minister for Mines and Energy

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Nelly Bay leads solar panel rollout

The first solar panels of the *Townsville: Queensland Solar City* project have been installed at the Nelly Bay Ferry Terminal.

The nine kilowatt system is the first of about 500 solar photovoltaic (PV) systems Ergon Energy plans to roll out in its transformation of Magnetic Island into a Solar Suburb.

The *Townsville: Queensland Solar City* project is part of the Australian Government's Solar Cities initiative. Ergon Energy leads the Townsville consortium which includes the State Government, Townsville City Council, Delfin Townsville, HIG Riverway and Cafalo.

The Queensland Government has contributed \$5 million to the project and part of this has helped fund the Nelly Bay Ferry Terminal solar PV system.

Minister for Mines and Energy Geoff Wilson said Townsville's Solar City project was an iconic project demonstrating the way Australian communities can harness solar energy and be more energy efficient in their daily lives.

"It is a smart initiative for the Smart State," Mr Wilson said.

"The Solar City project will significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions and make Townsville an even more attractive place to live and work.

"It's estimated that over the seven year period of the Solar City Project, greenhouse gas emissions will be reduced by 50,000 tonnes – the same effect as taking 1,700 cars off the road," he said.

Member for Townsville Mike Reynolds said installing a solar PV system on a well-used public building would maximise the opportunity for Magnetic Island residents and visitors to learn about solar energy.

"The *Townsville: Queensland Solar City* project is about working together to help reduce wasteful energy use and increase solar energy use," Mr Reynolds said.

"Magnetic Islanders will be helping to create a blueprint for future sustainable energy use in Queensland communities and beyond.

"The Nelly Bay Ferry Terminal will become an iconic part of this project as the first building on Magnetic Island to receive a solar PV system.

“The PV system is capable of producing 40 kilowatt hours a day, which will save 14.6 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions - the equivalent of planting about 60 trees,” he said.

Ergon Energy’s Solar City Community Engagement Manager Julie Heath said Magnetic Island residents and business owners now have the chance to join the Solar Suburb transformation by completing the survey they will soon receive in the mail and returning this by November 16, 2007.

“Once Magnetic Islanders have completed and returned their surveys Ergon Energy will contact them to arrange a free energy assessment of their home or business and discuss with them the suitability of their property to host a solar PV system,” Ms Heath said.

“The *Townsville: Queensland Solar City* project will run for seven years and will showcase a number of initiatives across Townsville, including Ergon Energy’s ‘Solar Suburb’ on Magnetic Island, Townsville City Council’s Citisolar program and sustainable property initiatives led by Delfin Townsville, HIG Riverway and Cafalo Pty Ltd.

“Ergon Energy will focus on Magnetic Island, which will become the ‘Solar Suburb’ within the Solar City. About 500 PV systems and 1700 smart meters will be installed and 1700 energy audits conducted on homes and businesses on Magnetic Island,” she said.

Media inquiries: Brooke Johnson (07) 3224 7332
 Julie Heath (07) 4080 4913 / 0408 862 520