



Melinda Pavey
Minister for Water, Property and Housing

MEDIA RELEASE

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RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECT POWERS HUNTER WATER TOWARD 2030 CARBON-NEUTRAL GOAL

The NSW Government will invest more than \$15 million over the next four years to install renewable energy systems at Hunter Water's water treatment plants and pump stations as part of the water utility's push towards becoming carbon neutral.

The first installation of a solar panel array has been finished and is being commissioned at the Branxton Wastewater Treatment Works.

Minister for Water, Property and Housing Melinda Pavey said this is the first installation on an operational site for Hunter Water with the overall project expected to reduce Hunter Water's carbon footprint by 7,200 tonnes of emissions per year - the equivalent of taking 1,500 cars off the road.

"This investment is all about innovation and supporting jobs in the Hunter while also reducing Hunter Water's electricity bill," Mrs Pavey said.

"The 100 kilowatt system at Branxton Wastewater Treatment Works is the first in Hunter Water's push for many solar projects, with savings generated helping to maintain affordable bills."

Hunter Water Managing Director, Darren Cleary, said the 252-panel solar array installed at Branxton includes both roof and ground-mounted panels, with scope for future expansion.

"We're really excited by the Renewable Energy Project and what lies ahead of us," Mr Cleary said.

"Electricity is one of our major expenses, accounting for about 10 per cent of our operating costs and solar is one of a number of opportunities available that can help to reduce these costs, and reduce carbon emissions.

"Once the program has been rolled out, we estimate an annual saving of \$1.15 million on our electricity costs, which equates to a 7.37% reduction.

"We are working with a shortlist of more than 20 priority sites as the initial focus of our solar rollout, including at Morpeth, Kurri Kurri, Raymond Terrace, and Boulder Bay

Wastewater Treatment Works.

“We see this project as an ongoing opportunity to add sites and new technologies as they emerge, including battery storage and floating solar, to help us achieve our goal of carbon neutrality.

“Our focus is on resource recovery with recycled water from the Wastewater Treatment Works piped to The Vintage Golf Club in Pokolbin and used on the adjacent Branxton public golf course to water greens and fairways.

“Furthermore biosolids generated at the treatment plant are used to rehabilitate mine sites in the Hunter Valley with the fertiliser product helping to establish vegetation.”

For more on Sustainability at Hunter Water, visit: www.hunterwater.com.au/our-water/sustainability