

# MEDIA RELEASE

Sutherland Shire  
COUNCIL



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## Council to install solar panels to cut energy use

As rising electricity prices continue to bite, Sutherland Shire Council has moved to reduce its power consumption and its contribution to greenhouse gas emissions by installing solar panels on the Council Administration building at Eton Street Sutherland.

A new 9.8 kilowatt solar electric system was installed this week at a cost of \$60,000 and will feed electricity generated from the sun back into the grid to reduce council's annual power bills.

Depending on weather conditions, the system is expected to save 16,500 kilograms of greenhouse gases each year – which is the equivalent of removing five average Australian cars from the road.

The new system was funded by the NSW Department of Environment Climate Change and Water through its Waste and Sustainability Improvement Program and supplied by Solarswitch of Caringbah.

“This is a sensible investment for the community – both environmentally and financially,” said Sutherland Shire Mayor Councillor Lorraine Kelly.

“While this is quite a small scale operation, I believe it is a step in the right direction given energy prices will inevitably continue to rise and because it was funded by the State, the returns to ratepayers are immediate,” she said.

The solar panel system is about six times larger than those installed on an average Australian home.

It features Australian-made panels and will have a large display screen attached in the council's main foyer showing how much solar energy is being generated, the total amount of power produced since the system was installed, the weight of carbon dioxide gases being saved and the greenhouse equivalent in driven kilometres.

The power generated by the panels will be converted and fed back into the main power grid through a bidirectional Smart Meter. This means all power generated by the solar panels will be offset against the Council Administration Building's overall power use.

“Increasingly we are seeing more and more investment in green energy sources by the private and public sector. Ultimately I think every one of us will be forced to rethink the way we use power and where we source it from. We see this as an investment in the future,” Cllr Kelly said.

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