

# Media Release

8 April 2009

## ALICE SPRINGS RESIDENTS CAN OFFSET POWER PRICE RISE

Alice Solar City can help reduce and in most cases actually negate the recently announced 18% increase in power prices says Alice Solar City General Manager Brian Elmer.

“I understand that residents will think they will be 18% worse off financially, which is a natural concern in the current economic climate.”

“However Alice Springs residents are in the enviable position of being able to offset the increased costs with the financial incentives that Alice Solar City offers.”

“The vast majority of home and business owners could easily achieve reductions of 18% or more through behavioural and other low cost energy efficient measures.”

“The power price increase will effectively make the Alice Solar City options 18% more attractive, particularly for big ticket items such as solar power and solar hot water systems.”

From 1 July 2009, owners of rooftop photovoltaic (PV) systems will earn more money than they were before, as the PV buyback rate is influenced by power prices.

“The higher the power prices, the more solar PV owners will earn”, says Brian Elmer.

“With the increases in the power tariff, our calculations show a decreased payback period under the Alice Solar City project from around 9.5 years to 8 years and we would encourage those householders who have been considering installing a solar PV system to get in contact.”

Also take for example an average 4 person home, where electric water heating currently costs around \$550-\$600 per year. With the 18% increase, this will go up to around \$650-\$700.

“One way to negate this is to install a solar hot water system and with the Alice Solar City and the other financial incentives available currently totaling

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over \$3100 the net installation cost is only \$2500. Assuming the booster is used correctly, the total water heating bill for the year will be around \$100, meaning the payback period is only 4-5 years.”

“With power price increases planned for the next 3 years at least, this makes solar hot water an attractive option even if your current system is still working.”

Further, if residents decrease their power use by 10-20% in a billing period, they are eligible to receive a 10-20% credit on their next power bill.

“48 residents have already done this through simple behavioural changes in their home energy use and with help from over 20 different financial incentives on offer through Alice Solar City.”

Businesses can also negate the impact of energy price rises through improved energy efficiency.

“We can show them how to do it and give them up to 50% of the cost of energy efficient measures.”

Alice Solar City is part of the Australian Government's Solar City program 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](mailto:laurelle@creativeterritory.com)**

#### **About Alice Solar City**

**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. Funding sources include the Australian Government, the Northern Territory Government, Power and Water Corporation, and Alice Springs Town Council.**

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