



SEE-CHANGE

COMMUNITIES CREATING A SUSTAINABLE CANBERRA

Media Release Wednesday 27th January 2010

Showing Faith in a Renewable Future

SEE-Change and a collective of Canberra Faith groups are organising the ACT's first-ever Interfaith Solar Bulk Buy - to be announced at a Public Meeting tonight.

"For many faith groups, reducing Australia's reliance on coal-powered electricity is a moral issue. As stewards of planet earth, we are all responsible for protecting its integrity and diversity. When we work together to install solar energy on our places of worship – and our homes – it sends the message that we care and that collective action can make a difference," says SEE-Change Executive Officer, Vanessa Morris.

The combination of falling solar array prices and a strong feed-in tariff in the ACT, coupled with a growing awareness of the need to reduce our climate change impacts, means there is already strong interest in the SEE-Change Interfaith Solar Bulk Buy.

Members of the wider community keen to install a system on their home roofs are also welcome to join the bulk buy and attend the meeting, where the successful bidder, Pyramid Power, will outline their proposal.

The SEE-Change Interfaith Solar Bulk Buy began three months ago when SEE-Change member Helen Palethorpe heard friends in her church community discussing the possibility of installing solar power on their church roof. She seized the opportunity and promptly formed an organising committee through SEE-Change. The committee then sent out invitations to all major faith communities in Canberra, and mounted a business case to assist the organisations make their final decisions. From there they sought expressions of interest from solar providers across the region and this week selected Pyramid Power, who are responsible for a 900-strong solar bulk buy in Bega.

SEE-Change (Society, Environment, Economy) is a community sustainability organisation based in Canberra run by enthusiastic, active volunteers who, amongst other things, organise talks and workshops, sustainability events, backyard tours and bulk buys. They are all working to help Canberra transition to a sustainable future. SEE-Change members have run two previous solar bulk buys, installing more than 80 electricity and solar hot water systems.

SEE-Change Interfaith Solar Bulk Buy Public Meeting: Wednesday 27 January 7.30pm at the Wesley Music Centre, Wesley Uniting Church, 20 National Circuit, Forrest. (Please note the venue has changed from the initial venue, the Downer Community Centre.)

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Benefits of joining an inter-faith consortium of purchasers of photovoltaic panels for your faith community

- Obtain a discount for the purchase and installation of photovoltaic panels on any of your buildings
- Drastically reduce (or negate) the cost of your electricity bills
- Earn income from your panels for the life of your panels
- Use is as source of renewable energy to heat and cool your religious and functional buildings
- Be informed by SEE-Change of the rebates paid by government
- Work with other faith groups to negotiate a group discount and find you the most respected, reliable and cheapest supplier of photovoltaic panels for your community.
- Generate renewable energy for the grid.
- Collaborate across faith borders.
- Help to engage your group in discussions of the current climate change crisis and their personal and collective response to it.
- Help to energise your community to take action on other environmental issues eg insulation, water tanks, solar hot water.
- Signal to policy makers in Canberra that the faith based organisations are working together on this problem and expect our political leaders to do so also.

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