



**Don Harwin**  
Minister for Resources  
Minister for Energy and Utilities  
Minister for the Arts

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS GET SMART**

Public schools and hospitals will be able to save tens of thousands of dollars on their power bills through a combination of solar and a \$20 million smart battery program announced today by Energy and Utilities Minister Don Harwin.

The funding will purchase up to 900 smart battery systems with a capacity of up to 13 MW to maximise the use of solar power systems installed in key government buildings.

Minister Harwin said round one of funding would target the two Government departments with the highest energy use – Education and NSW Health – which together account for 45% of the public sector’s electricity demand in peak periods.

“By pairing smart battery systems and rooftop solar, participating schools and hospitals can lower their electricity costs by up to \$40,000 a year and at the same time strengthen the security of the grid in peak events and during energy emergencies,” Mr Harwin said.

“Electricity bill savings will be achieved from avoiding peak electricity charges and making energy from the batteries available to the grid, particularly in times of high demand.

“The combined electricity use of state-owned sites accounts for 2.7% of NSW’s daily energy consumption so the Government has a major opportunity to lead by example and demonstrate how capitalising on the latest advances in smart batteries can save electricity and money.

“This program combined with solar has the potential to cut power bills by thousands of dollars, money which could be used for more beds and books in our hospitals and schools.”

Minister Harwin said a considerable number of public schools and hospitals have installed solar systems across regional and metropolitan NSW, making them well placed to alleviate grid events wherever they occur.

“The combined electricity use of government buildings, especially public schools and hospitals, significantly adds to the daily load of the electricity network in NSW,” Mr Harwin said.

The NSW Government is also accelerating the roll-out of solar panels and has set a target for government buildings, such as schools and hospitals, to reach 25,000 megawatt hours of solar energy a year by 2021 and 55,000 megawatt hours a year by 2024.

The Minister said after the initial round of funding, the program may be extended to other government agencies depending on available funding and uptake rates.

For more information about the smart battery program, visit <https://energy.nsw.gov.au/renewables/emerging-energy/clean-energy-initiatives>

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