



Education Minister Selena Uibo.

Schools set to benefit from solar panel push

Jack Price

CENTRALIAN Middle School is one of the first schools in the Territory to benefit from the NT Government's rooftop solar in schools program.

The program will see solar panels installed at selected schools over the next three years, as part of the Government's plan to

transition the NT to 50 per cent renewable energy use by 2030.

CMS principal Paul van Holsteyn said the school would make the most of its forthcoming solar panels.

"Solar and schools is a total perfect fit because our peak usage is at the same time as when the sun is shining" he said. "We don't use much after hours."

Mr van Holsteyn said Year 8 students had recently completed a unit about energy, and the installation of the panels would complement their studies.

One of the students who'd taken that class, Dolly Bohra, said she'd learned about the value of renewable energy.

"Renewable energy will really help the environment because we can reuse it," she

said. "It takes a lot of energy from fossil fuels to actually give enough energy to our cities and town, so using things like solar panels will definitely help."

Education Minister Selena Uibo said schools would save up to 40 per cent of their energy costs with the new solar panels, and could redirect those savings into other educational resources.

Climate on youth agenda

Youssef Saudie
Youth Reporter

THE local contingent of the Australian Youth Climate Coalition is back in action, ready to fight against climate change and engage with environmental issues in Alice Springs.

Young locals aged from 10-30 attended the first meeting of the re-established group last month and put together some innovative plans for 2019.

The AYCC is a nationwide movement of young people leading solutions to solve the climate crisis.

AYCC representative Marie said she wanted to join the group when she moved to Alice Springs but was told it hadn't been active for a number of years.

It was then that she decided to take action.

"I was asked if I wanted to start it up and that's we're doing — we're starting it up again," she said.

As there are no other AYCC groups in the NT currently, Marie believes the group can play an important role in confronting the many current environmental issues the Territory faces, including fracking.

"I think there's a lot of potential in Alice Springs and Central Australia, as well as the NT at large, to be more active in regards to climate change ... and I think it's really important that young mem-

bers of the community make their voice heard," she said.

"A lot of people are concerned about what's happening around fracking especially, but also other issues like how waste is managed in Alice Springs, or buffel grass spreading everywhere.

"There's no central point for youth to be involved in those particular environmental issues right now and that's why we've started up the AYCC again."

The group's first action was holding a strike in the CBD on November 30.

A hundred students from kindergarten, primary and secondary schools came together and protested against environmental issues, writing and dropping off letters to local MP Warren Snowdon's office.

With 12 AYCC attendees at the first meeting, members are passionate about driving change for environmental issues.

Hannah Maljcov, a member of the AYCC, said it was fantastic that the environmental group had been re-established by young people.

"No one's told us to do it, and I think it's good that as youth we've come up with this initiative," she said.

"Don't be afraid to stand up, we're the future, it's time to tap into the power of youth."

If you're interested in joining you can check out the AYCC Facebook page at @AYCCALiceSprings.



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