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RYDE PUBLIC SCHOOL GOES SOLAR

Ryde Public School has become the first school to install a new solar power system as part of the City of Ryde's solar pilot program and partnership with Solar my School.

The City of Ryde partnered with Solar my School in 2019 as part of its efforts to assist more of the community to reduce carbon emissions and also encourage more local organisations to take up renewable energy resources.

Solar my School is a council-run initiative designed to help schools reduce energy bills and shrink their carbon footprint through installing solar power.

Eligible schools who signed up to the program through Council's Ryde Environmental Educators Network (REEN), received a free independent solar feasibility assessment and advice on how to finance the solar power systems.

Schools have some of the largest roof spaces and use electricity during the day when the solar power is being produced, giving them the maximum benefit of using free solar energy from the sun, so it makes perfect sense for them to switch to solar.

City of Ryde Mayor, Cllr Jerome Laxale, said the new solar power system at Ryde Public School would help to avoid 43 tonnes of carbon emissions and slash up to 32 percent off the school's annual energy bill.

"I would like to congratulate Ryde Public School on becoming the first school in the City of Ryde to successfully install solar under the Council program," Cllr Laxale said.

"Not only is the school benefiting from reduced emissions and reduced energy bills, but it is also demonstrating leadership within the community as we make the switch from fossil fuels to renewable energy."

"The partnership between the City of Ryde and Solar my School is another example of our commitment to a cleaner, greener future. It also aligns with Council's other key policy positions such as our adoption of a 100 percent renewable energy target by 2030, divestment of our Council investment portfolio away from fossil-fuel aligned institutions and our journey towards Net Zero by 2050."

Ryde Public School Principal, Thanh Ta, said the use of solar panels at the school will be something we can all take pride in.

"Harnessing solar energy is our way of modelling appropriate action to positively influence the future. The panels are a tangible example of harnessing a renewable energy," Mr Ta said.

"Having solar panels in a prominent position of the school, has generated authentic conversations and curiosity among our students. We celebrate our learning by acknowledging that our school contributes to sustainable energy sources."

The solar power system was funded by external grants from the NSW Community Building Partnerships Grants, the philanthropic Purryburry Trust and a 50 percent contribution from the Department of Education's Solar Co-Contribution Program.

“It’s the initiative of schools like Ryde Public, and 150 other schools participating in Solar my School, that will not only see cost savings reinvested in other valuable learning resources, but help show students and parents alike how clean energy can power our future,” Solar my School Program Manager, Anthony Weinberg, said.

The Solar my School program was founded in 2016 by Waverley, Woollahra and Randwick Councils, and is now licensed to other councils and organisations to support solar in schools across Sydney and beyond.

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