



## Update 17 – March 2021

Welcome to our newsletter combining news and information on renewable energy and climate change adaptation in our region and beyond.

The Victorian Government is committed to [being climate ready and resilient by 2050](#) and is helping our regional communities and organisations work together to adapt to the impacts of climate change by investing \$9.3 million in the [Supporting our Regions to Adapt program](#).



Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) Hume region is working with our communities to develop a Regional Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (RAS) identifying our regional priorities, the necessary skills and knowledge required by communities, and to fund local adaptation and mitigation projects.

## Climate Ready Hume project update

During February, and continuing into March, we have worked towards finalising consultation with our partners in preparation for launch of the draft RAS for public consultation. We plan to be sharing the draft with you very soon.

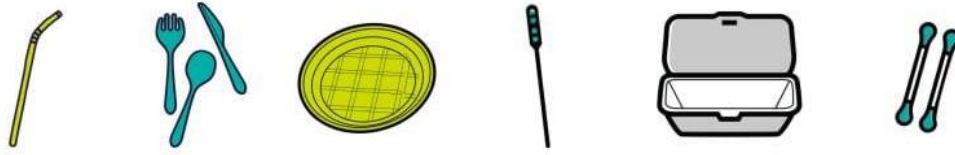
## Across the Arts: 'Elemental' Arts and Sustainability Forum

In an exciting partnership, Climate Ready Hume is pleased to support the 'Across the Arts Forum' 2021, a [Goulburn and North East Arts Alliance](#) event being held 29 April – 2 May 2021. DELWP will be sponsoring a number of youth and climate change-based activities merging science and art practice. A full program and online booking will be available soon at this [link](#). More information will be included in our April newsletter.



The Climate Ready Hume team would like to thank you for the continued recommendations for content and links to resources. Thank you!

## Single-use plastics to be banned in Victoria



The Victorian Government has announced [a single-use plastics ban](#) coming into effect across Victoria by February 2023. Single-use straws, cutlery, plates, drink-stirrers, polystyrene food and drink containers, and cotton bud sticks will be banned from sale or supply.

Why the ban on single use plastics?

- They make up a third of the litter we see on our streets and in our waterways – single-use plastics are costly to clean up and difficult to recycle.
- Often used for only a few minutes but remain in the environment for a long time.
- Single-use plastics harm the environment – they break into microplastics which harm wildlife and contaminate our food and water.

## \$3 million Neighborhood Battery initiative

The Victorian Government has launched the \$3 million Neighbourhood Battery Initiative (NBI), inviting applications for neighbourhood-scale battery projects from local investors, businesses, community groups and other interested parties. These batteries can provide a range of benefits to electricity users, networks, and Victorian communities by playing a valuable role in soaking up excess solar output from residential solar systems during the day which can then be dispatched during times of peak demand such as in the evening.

Funding is available for projects that:

- build capacity through developing feasibility studies and business cases for neighbourhood scale battery trial implementation; and/or
- commission technical, regulatory, legal and/or contractual advice or services to support the planning and implementation of a neighbourhood scale battery.
- implement the trial of a neighbourhood scale battery; and
- demonstrate the ability to access multiple value streams.

To find out more, access the Application Guidelines and Application portal link at [www.energy.vic.gov.au/new-energy-technologies](http://www.energy.vic.gov.au/new-energy-technologies). **Applications close 11 April 2021.**

### Tell us what you think

Have your say about the opportunities and challenges associated with neighbourhood scale batteries and the role they can play in Victoria's energy transition by preparing a submission or doing the community survey at the following link:

<https://engage.vic.gov.au/victorian-neighbourhood-battery-initiative-consultation>

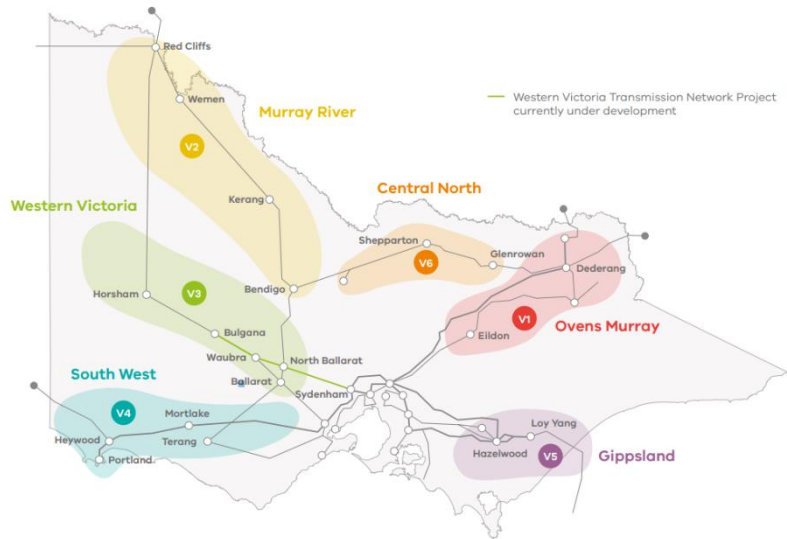


image courtesy of [https://www.researchgate.net/figure/25-kW-community-energy-storage-system\\_fig5\\_224237666](https://www.researchgate.net/figure/25-kW-community-energy-storage-system_fig5_224237666)

## Development of Renewable Energy Zones across Victoria

The Victorian Government is committed to the development of six [Renewable Energy Zones](#) (REZs) across the state (see map). REZs are typically areas of abundant renewable energy resources such as solar and wind and located near transmission infrastructure.

The Victorian Government will develop a Renewable Energy Zone Development Plan to ensure investments in transmission and grid stability are coordinated, timely and deliver positive outcomes for Victoria and local communities.



The first step in the REZ Development Plan is the release of the [Victorian Renewable Energy Zones Development Plan Directions Paper \(PDF, 7.5 MB\)](#). The Government is interested in hearing from a wide range of stakeholders including energy market participants, local governments and consumer, environmental and local community.

Written submissions to the REZ Development Plan Directions Paper are welcome before midnight **Wednesday, 31 March 2021** via email to [REZDevelopment@delwp.vic.gov.au](mailto:REZDevelopment@delwp.vic.gov.au).

## Canberra community solar farm now powering 250 homes

After eight years in the making the [1MW Majura community-owned solar farm](#) is now operational. Around 550 people from the local community gave \$2.4 million into the project, with investments ranging from \$500 to \$100,000. This was the first project for the renewable energy investment fund [SolarShare](#). For more details on the model implemented by SolarShare check out their [website](#). The ACT government also got on board with a 20-year commitment to a feed-in-tariff.

(Photo credit Harry Frost, ABC News)



Follow the progress of the [community owned solar farm in Goulburn](#) for which the local community has already pledged \$1.8 million.

Learn about the [1MW Haystacks Solar garden](#) in Grong Grong NSW. This is a joint project between the [Community Power Agency](#), community energy group [Pingala](#) and [Komo Energy](#).

## Need help to improve the energy efficiency of your business?

Visit Sustainability Victoria for [case studies](#) on how a range of businesses are improving their energy efficiency and lowering costs.

Get started by accessing the [energy upgrades tool](#) to find the right upgrade and relevant funding options for your business. This tool is for:

- Small-to-medium business owners, managers, or sustainability officers.
- Local government facility managers.
- Energy audit consultants acting on behalf of a business.



The energy upgrades tool can help your business to:

- find common energy upgrade opportunities related to your business or building type
- uncover potential savings and return on investment
- view grants, incentives, and finance to help fund the upgrade
- build a business case to support future upgrade projects, or to obtain an audit in future.

[Read about local business Tatura Fresh](#) and how an energy upgrade saved them \$100,000 in gas at their hydroponic tomato farm. (image from Tatura Fresh facebook)



## GREEN Thumb Wangaratta workshop 12 April 2021



This great school holiday event has been developed by the Rural City of Wangaratta Youth Council and funded by Climate Ready Hume.

The Green Thumb Wangaratta Vegetable Garden and Bee hotel workshop is for people aged 12-24 years. Bookings are essential and places are limited so [register now!](#)

**Time:** 11.15am-2pm  
(Lunch is provided)

**Location:** [Park Lane Nursery, 95 Park Lane Wangaratta.](#)



## Keep your stuff out of landfill by repairing it

Feeling really bad about throwing things away but don't know how to fix it? Get in touch with your local Repair café.

Wang Repair Café is on the third Saturday of every month and the next event is **Saturday 20 March** at Apex Park, Wangaratta. To find out more and to get in touch visit: <https://wangrepaircafe.org/>.

Keep up to date with the activities of the Repair café in Albury Wodonga through their [facebook page](#). Don't have a local Repair café? This [link](#) has tips on how to start up a Repair café for your community.

## Apply now for underground powerline funding

Property owners with bushfire-affected properties in Alpine, Towong and East Gippsland shires are eligible for Victorian Government funding to put bare-wire powerlines underground.

[Apply now](#) to the **Private Overhead Electric Lines Scheme (POELs)**. Applications close **30 April 2021**.

Contact the POEL Scheme Project Team on 03 9918 7315.

## Funding your local environmental projects

- \* [Aboriginal Caring for Country \(closes 22 April 2021\)](#)
- \* [Community Volunteer Action grants - Stream 1 - Strengthening Environmental volunteering \(closes 1 April 2021\)](#)
- \* [Community Volunteer Action grants - Stream 2- Biodiversity on-ground action and stewardship \(closes 1 April\)](#)
- \* [Victorian Junior Landcare and Biodiversity grants \(opens March 2021 and close 31 July 2021\)](#)



## Webinars and online events

### How to harness the renewable energy boom - webinar 7pm 31 March 2021



Farmers for Climate Action want to make sure farmers and regional communities benefit from the mass investment and development of solar and wind energy.

[Click here](#) to find out more about this free webinar 7pm 31 March 2021, and register your interest.

### 2021 Urban Agriculture Forum Thursday 22 April - Saturday 24 April

#### *Care Farming and Gardening in the Climate Emergency*

Explore the growing urban agriculture initiatives in Australia and overseas and the positive impacts it has on community health and wellbeing. For more information for this three day online event visit [Program | Urban Agriculture Forum \(uaf.org.au\)](#)



### How are Victoria's regions transitioning to renewable energy?

[Visit the link](#) to access all the Victorian regional renewable energy roadmaps.

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Forest, Fire and Regions | Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

