



# MEDIA RELEASE

**The Hon Peter Garrett MP**

*Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts*

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## **1000 PLUS SCHOOLS ALREADY SIGNED UP FOR SOLAR**

Almost 1400 schools across the nation have already signed up for the Rudd Government's \$480 million National Solar Schools Program, Environment Minister Peter Garrett said today.

Visiting Everton Park State Primary School in Brisbane, Mr Garrett said the popularity of the program - less than two months after it was launched in July- showed the eagerness of Australian schools to improve their energy efficiency, save money and help the environment.

"I am really excited by the number of registrations we've seen for this program already, with almost 200 schools in Queensland alone already on board and registrations growing by the day across the country.

"It shows that schools around the nation see the benefits of this program and its potential to help them improve their energy and water efficiency and reduce their costs, as well as to demonstrate to students, in a really hands-on way, the simple steps everyone can take to reduce carbon pollution and tackle climate change.

"At schools, in homes and in businesses, getting smarter about the way we use things like water and electricity and taking steps as simple as changing light bulbs, installing insulation or choosing more efficient appliances can make a real difference both to our impact on the environment through carbon pollution and our hip-pockets.

"One of the really exciting things about the Solar Schools program is it presents schools with an opportunity during the holidays or weekends, to become mini renewable power stations of their own by selling unused electricity generated by their solar systems back into the power network."

Member for Petrie, Yvette D'Ath said Everton Park had registered to install both a solar power system as well as a solar hot water system.

"The great thing about this program is the flexibility it provides schools with an opportunity to conduct a sustainability assessment, look at their own circumstances and identify a range of measures that will best suit them and then apply for grants of up to \$50,000 to put them in place."

"I congratulate my local school on getting involved in this great program."

Mr Garrett said the Rudd Labor Government was committed to assisting all Australian households to take practical action on climate change in the transition to the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme.

"I have commenced a series of roundtables with key stakeholders, including one earlier today here today in Brisbane, to identify practical action households can take to save on energy bills and reduce their environmental impact.

"These discussions with representatives of the community, NGOs, business groups and industries will inform the development of household assistance measures to complement the Government's Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme."

For information on the Solar Schools program, or to register, visit [www.environment.gov.au/nationalsolarschools](http://www.environment.gov.au/nationalsolarschools) or phone the National Solar Schools hotline on 1800 703 831