

BACKGROUND & FAQ –

Buying Green Power & Dandenong Ranges Energy Hub

Nearly all public buildings in Emerald have solar panels and many of our commercial buildings do too (we are working on persuading even more). The Solar Sign outside the Community House now needs updating as more than 40kw has been installed in about a year and that's just on community and commercial buildings in the town.

But, this is not enough. In this decade we need to do everything we can to avert serious climate change. With fires and floods it feels serious enough already! Our climate scientists are deeply, deeply concerned.

SO, what can we do? Lots. With the Community Energy Hub DRREA is aiming for:

- most residents and businesses to be buying Green Power ASAP;
- or if not, then offsetting their power use; and
- for at least one area in The Dandenong Ranges Hub to have a more resilient electricity system with backup batteries in less than 5 years.

When customers choose GreenPower Indigo Power buys power (via Renewable Energy Certificates¹ from renewable energy generators. By purchasing GreenPower you're driving additional demand for renewable energy in the grid.)

- 10% GreenPower for 0.4 c/kWh (inc. GST).
- 50% GreenPower for 2 c/kWh (inc GST).²
- 100% GreenPower for 3.9 c/kWh (inc GST).

What is a Community Energy Hub?

A Hub is where residents in an area (Dandenong Ranges for us) come together to combine their electricity purchasing, eg via Indigo Power, to ensure Green Power purchasing and, if necessary, offsetting of their electricity use in a credible monitored way².

An added advantage is that the more people who join the Community Hub the greater the buying power. In Healesville, members of their Hub³ are getting a major discount on purchase and installation of the most energy efficient hot water heaters.

Are these Hubs already happening?

DRREA is piggybacking on our friends in Yackandandah and their hard work with TRY.

To reach their goal of being totally renewable TRY set up a company – Indigo Power - that buys electricity on the wholesale market, sells it to Community Hub members, and buys offsets of that

¹ <https://www.greenpower.gov.au>

² <https://indigopower.com.au/plans/>

³ <https://www.healesvillecore.org.au/>

electricity use. The Hub is a way of combining the purchasing power of the residents.

Who is Indigo Power?

- Indigo Power is a community owned energy retail company based at Beechworth in regional Victoria. They buy energy for all their customers from Energy Locals⁴ who, in turn, guarantee that all that energy use is offset.
- Indigo Power is also a certified social enterprise⁵ and returns 50% of their profits to clean energy and community projects in the Community Hubs.

How do I know my electricity is really ‘offset’? Who is Energy Local?

Indigo Power guarantees all power bought from them is ‘offset’; they do this by, in turn, buying their power from Energy Local who are the ones who actually ensure the offsetting via a wide variety of carbon offsetting techniques.

You will be familiar with Greenfleet that can offset your car emissions. Organisations like Bush Heritage Australia, Landcare, various private properties are paid to do carbon sequestration via native revegetation, natural regeneration, plantations. They are funded to do this by Local Energy who in turn get their funds from you agreeing to buy your power from Indigo Power.

Technical terms: the total amount of energy Indigo Power’s customers use each year is offset via Certified Emission Reductions (CERs), recognised under the National Carbon Offset Standard (NCOS). By collating all the energy used by their customers Indigo Power make it easy for Energy Locals to purchase CERs.

I pay for ‘Green Power’ on my bill? Can I do this from Indigo Power?

- Yes. Note that this payment goes to *GreenPower* - a government program where your power company buys renewable energy on your behalf.
- But to be sure you are carbon neutral with your electricity use it either needs to come from your own solar panels/battery 100% of the time, or you need to offset your use.

Will Indigo Power honour my feed-in tariff?

- Yes! They’ll pay the same as you getting now even the highest feed-in tariff.

⁴ <https://energylocals.com.au/our-purpose/> AND <https://energylocals.com.au/carbon-neutral-power/>

⁵ <https://www.socialtraders.com.au/social-enterprise/>