



States recognise power of energy efficiency and social housing investment to drive economic recovery

A coalition of Australia's leading property and sustainability bodies have applauded the Victorian and NSW Governments' significant investments in harnessing the power of energy efficiency and social housing to create jobs and drive the economic recovery from COVID-19.

The Australian Sustainable Built Environment Council, Energy Efficiency Council, Green Building Council Australia and Property Council of Australia welcomed what were cumulatively multi-billion commitments to a more sustainable future.

The organisations commended the Victorian Government's outstanding leadership with an unprecedented \$5.3bn spend to increase and upgrade the state's stock of social and affordable housing, while creating some 10,000 new jobs annually.

The benefits of this record investment are being further enhanced through a commitment to higher energy efficiency standards for new builds

The Victorian Government is also setting a record for the single largest state-based investment in housing energy efficiency measures with a \$797m package that includes:

- \$335m for heating system upgrades for low income households
- \$112m to upgrade the energy efficiency of 35,000 social housing properties (window and door sealing, upgrading heating/cooling and hot water systems)
- Introducing minimum energy efficiency standards for rental properties
- Supporting the transition to 7 star NATHERS for new buildings and supporting skills and training
- \$14m expansion of the Victorian Energy Upgrades program to enable all households to access rebates for more smart appliances
- \$191m expansion of the Solar Homes program
- Offering 17,500 household battery rebates over 3 years
- Direct bill relief with a one-off \$250 payment to eligible concession card holders and other recipients of government income support

The NSW Government is adding almost \$900 million to its social and affordable housing investment, creating up to 3,000 jobs and taking the state's total investment in social and affordable housing to \$4.4 billion over four years. A \$157.8 million LED light replacement program in schools across NSW will also enhance energy efficiency.

These announcements build on the recent South Australian Government commitment of \$60 million to improve the energy efficiency of government buildings.

A collective COVID-19 economic recovery plan launched by the groups earlier this year, [*Building Efficiency for Jobs and Growth*](#), presented a series of recommendations for governments to achieve job creation and emissions savings by leveraging the potential of high quality buildings and infrastructure. Several states have now recognised the benefits highlighted in the report, with many of the recommendations now adopted.

“It’s so exciting to see the Victorian, NSW and South Australian Governments take up the opportunity to deliver the great outcomes for climate, energy bills, health and the economy that our buildings can provide!” said **Suzanne Toumbourou, Executive Director of the Australian Sustainable Built Environment Council.**

“We know that energy efficiency upgrades of buildings have the biggest jobs multiplier of any form of clean energy stimulus. Victoria is harnessing that jobs multiplier to supercharge their post-COVID recovery, create thousands of good, local jobs and cut carbon along the way.” said **Luke Menzel, CEO of the Energy Efficiency Council.**

“With our members we have built the evidence base for how good energy and environment policy, can also be great public, social and economic policy. It is tremendous to see state governments stepping up and turning the challenge posed by the pandemic into an opportunity to deliver transformative change that will create a positive legacy of greater resilience for decades to come.” said **Davina Rooney, CEO of Green Building Council of Australia.**

“We congratulate the Andrews Government on today’s announcement that delivers wins for the economy, the environment and the wellbeing of our communities. Energy efficiency is jobs intensive and will unlock significant economic stimulus while reducing carbon emissions.” said **Matthew Kandelaars, Interim Victorian Executive Director of the Property Council.**

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