

Media Release

Totally Renewable Yackandandah – Community category winner in Premier's Sustainability Awards 2020

Totally Renewable Yackandandah has been announced as the winner in the Community category of the Premier's Sustainability Awards 2020 for their Virtual Power Plant project.

The prestigious Premier's Regional Recognition Award, which was personally selected by Premier Daniel Andrews, was also awarded to Totally Renewable Yackandandah.

Totally Renewable Yackandandah's Virtual Power Plant is a network of publicly owned buildings across the locality that generate, store and share electricity to build toward a robust, localised, low-carbon and resilient electricity supply. The goal is for Yackandandah's energy supply to be 100% renewable by 2022.

The Virtual Power Plant project saw the installation of 74kW of solar across Totally Renewable Yackandandah's footprint which has a 14 km effective radius generating an extra 104 MWh of clean energy, reducing carbon emissions by an estimated 88 tonnes CO₂ per year.

Matt Charles-Jones, Project Coordinator, said "By installing solar systems with smart control devices, and in some cases batteries, we are driving down carbon emissions to address worsening climate change, saving voluntary committees money and building a new local economy. Even more exciting is the creation of a secure energy supply on three key community buildings: the CFA fire station, our community hall and a sports stadium. These buildings can now have electricity even when the main grid fails."

"Our project is a win for local community, a win for electricity network renewal and a win for ambitious cross sector action. We are proud of what can be achieved when an energised community, a motivated Government and renewable energy experts unite."

Sustainability Victoria CEO Claire Ferres Miles commended Totally Renewable Yackandandah on taking out the title.

"The calibre, diversity and volume of submissions this year demonstrate that Victorians are actively working individually and collectively to achieve a more sustainable Victoria," Ms Ferres Miles said.

"From an entire town engaging in energy self-sufficiency to the integration of technology into sustainability programs, this year we received inspiring submissions that will deliver enduring climate change action."

"The Awards are a testament to the commitment of Victorians to transition to a climate resilient, circular economy, and an inspiration and blueprint for others to do the same."

Now in their 18th year, the Premier's Sustainability Awards are Victoria's most highly recognised annual sustainability awards program.

Premier Daniel Andrews personally selected the winners of the Premier's Recognition Awards. The Premier's Recognition Award was awarded to Yarra Riverkeeper Association and Cleanwater Group for their efforts in mitigating the negative effects of litter and polystyrene pollution in the Yarra.

To view the ceremony, and the profiles of all finalists and winners, visit sustainabilityawards.vic.gov.au

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