

Kalgoorlie Miner

Solar Oasis

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Minister for the Environment Bill Marmion officially opened the Goldfields Oasis Recreation Centre's **renewable energy** project this week by switching on solar heating panels for the centre's swimming pools. The 1500sqm of matting is one of the largest solar heating projects in Australia. Mr Marmion praised the State Government's Low Emissions Energy Development fund which he said made the project possible.

"To complete the overall project, ground source heat pumps and photovoltaic components will be installed later this year, with overall projected savings of 8000 gigajoules of natural gas each year," he said. Mr Marmion said the the new system would continue to build the Oasis' reputation. "Kalgoorlie led the State in having one of the first 50m swimming pools constructed and now it is one of the few 10-lane pools in Australia," he said.

"This new solar heating system will reinstate Kalgoorlie as having one of the premier pools in Western Australia." Goldfields Oasis operations manager Adam Westberg said the new heating system would help reduce the centre's running costs. "We've had a 50 per cent increase in the price of gas, so the new system will reduce our running costs with gas consumption this year," Mr Westberg said.

Supreme Heating's Craig Doncon said the new system would reduce the centre's reliance on nonrenewable energy. "Solar power is free and the centre now has the ability to heat the water for the pool with the sun's natural energy," Mr Doncon said. The official opening continues the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder's commitment to become more environmentally friendly.

Sustainability officer Rebecca Coonan said the project was part of the city's goal to be a leader in environmentalism. "The City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder is striving to be a sustainable regional city of the future," Ms Coonan said. Mr Marmion said KalgoorlieBoulder had a good model for how **renewable energy** could be used within the community.

"This project is an excellent example of the groundbreaking work being done in the State to find and use alternative sustainable energy resources," he said. MIKE EXELL Harnessing the sun: Minister for the Environment Bill Marmion and Supreme Heating's Craig Doncon turn on the new solar hot water system. Photo: PAUL BRAVEN

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