Published: 15 April 2013

Solar panels spread to more than one million homes

Figures from the Clean Energy Regulator show the number of Australian homes with solar power systems passed the one million mark in March. According to the Clean Energy Council (CEC), this means more Australians are getting cheaper power and saving some half a billion dollars a year on their electricity bills.

Credit: Lighthousebay/istockphoto

Clean Energy Council Chief Executive David Green said that approximately 2.5 million Australians now lived in a home with a set of solar panels on the roof – more than the entire population of Western Australia.

'It is remarkable when you think that just five years ago in 2008 there were only about 20,000 systems installed across the entire country,' Mr Green said.

'For some years solar has been most enthusiastically embraced by those in mortgage-belt suburbs, retirement areas and regional parts of the country. People from all walks of life have been installing solar as a way of protecting themselves from power price pain over the long term.'

Mr Green said the solar industry had gone from the domain of backyard enthusiasts to a major business opportunity within a decade.

'The solar industry currently employs over 8000 Australians, and has led to billions of dollars in investment behind Australia's 20 per cent Renewable Energy Target. Solar is the Hills Hoist of the 21st century.

'As consumers take back control of their power bills through cleaner, smarter energy technology, solar power is clearly something that has been at the forefront of their minds.

'Solar power also has a variety of other added benefits, including helping the entire electricity network cope with

periods of high demand on very hot days.'

Source: CEC

From **ECOS** online http://www.ecosmagazine.com/?paper=EC13088