Community Newsletter

August 2025

The Shepherd Centre received an EnergyAustralia grant to create a kitchen garden

Investing in the Illawarra's heart

Community grants are more than just funding – they are an investment in the heart of the Illawarra community.

When The Shepherd Centre – an organisation supporting Illawarra children with hearing loss to learn to listen and speak – applied for a grant to create a kitchen garden, we were thrilled to get behind it.

A fun-filled community planting day saw little hands hard at work as kids pulled on gardening gloves, grabbed their trowels, and planted the first seeds and seedlings in the new kitchen garden. Now, watering and garden check-ins are a highlight of a visit to the Centre with children seeing their plants grow, while parents love seeing their little ones connect with nature, discover where food comes from, and build confidence through hands-on learning.

Each year we provide around $50,000 in small grants to community organisations making a difference across the Illawarra region.

This year we are helping:

- **Wollongong Volunteer Rescue Association – $10,000**
  To upgrade their rescue stretcher system, improving safety and efficiency during volunteer operations.
- **Windang Surf Lifesaving Club – $2,400**
  To purchase four new Nipper surfboards, fostering youth development and water safety skills.
- **Helping Hearts Foundation – $6,000**
  To deliver the Hearts in Schools program to three local primary schools.
- **Austinmer Scouts – $3,780**
  To replace 20 personal flotation devices and purchase large eskies for water-based and camping activities.

As a host community for energy generation, the region is at the frontline of change. For over 70 years, the Illawarra has been a driving force in powering homes, businesses, and industries across New South Wales. Today, we continue to play a leading role in Australia's clean energy transition.

Our investment in local infrastructure, jobs, and community support is part of our long-standing commitment to the Illawarra – and we want to ensure the region continues to thrive as the energy system evolves.

Grant applications open on 1 September.

Find out more

EnergyAustralia
LIGHT THE WAY

Dapto, meet your new neighbour – the community battery

A new community battery has been installed in Dapto – which means more affordable energy with our Community Battery Ease plan for nearby homes.

Here's how it works: the battery stores energy when it's cheapest, typically during the day when solar generation is high. Then, when demand spikes in the evening, that energy is released back into the grid to help power local homes.

By keeping energy local, we reduce our costs and pass those savings onto you. It's a more affordable way to help power our homes and apartments while supporting the energy transition.

Live nearby? You might be eligible to join our award-winning Community Battery Ease energy plan.

Residents in the Dapto area may be able to access rates 20% less than the electricity reference price (lowest possible price of $1,937 (incl. GST) for an average home using 4,900 kWh per year on a time of use tariff without controlled load in the Endeavour Energy area).

This is just one of the many initiatives EnergyAustralia is undertaking to lead and accelerate the clean energy transformation for all.

Artwork: Dapto Guwara Whale Dreaming by Kooraani Dunn

Check if you're eligible today

Scan the QR code or visit
home.energyaustralia.com.au/community-battery-ease

Award winning innovation

We're proud to share that our **Community Battery Ease plan** has won a Canstar Blue Innovation Excellence Award.

Environmental Maintenance in Southern Precinct

Starting in August, EnergyAustralia will carry out routine maintenance in the Southern Precinct, including dam upkeep and annual bushfire risk reduction work on the Mt. Brown side.

A local contractor will maintain the fire break between Wollongong City Council and EnergyAustralia land, reduce fuel loads, and target invasive species such as Lantana and African Olive, along with weeds listed under the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016.

From Powering the Past to Shaping the Future: Tallawarra Land Reimagined

For over 70 years, Tallawarra has powered the Illawarra – first with coal, now with cleaner, high-efficiency gas. Today, its next chapter begins as land once reserved for industry transforms into vibrant residential and commercial precincts.

EnergyAustralia has sold the Tallawarra North and Central precincts to Bridgehill Group, marking a major step in repurposing underused land to support regional growth.

Breathing New Life into Old Ground

The original coal station closed in 1989. Now, Tallawarra A and B generate more electricity with less impact. As energy technology evolved, so did the landscape – opening space for new possibilities.

Protecting What Matters

While some areas welcome development, others are being preserved. Wetlands and sensitive land near the station are protected, with areas of native vegetation offsets ensuring long-term environmental care.

EnergyAustralia partnered with the Illawarra Local Aboriginal Land Council and Wollongong Botanic Garden to plant 1,800 native trees, creating a living link between people, place, and Country. ILALC continues to care for the land, preserving its cultural and ecological value.

A Legacy Reimagined

This isn't just a land sale – it's a transformation. With new precincts underway and natural areas restored, Tallawarra is evolving from industrial past to a future of regeneration, resilience, and opportunity.

Powering more homes with less gas:

Tallawarra A gets a smarter, greener upgrade

As a Combined Cycle Gas Turbine station, Tallawarra A already runs efficiently by reusing exhaust heat. The upgrade makes it even more responsive – supporting a stable grid as renewables grow.

So, what does that mean for the community?

Cleaner and Future-Ready

Advanced combustion and redesigned blades cut emissions and improve reliability. These upgrades also prepare the station for future hydrogen use, supporting Australia's clean energy transition.

Less Downtime, Lower Costs

Major maintenance is now needed every eight years instead of five – reducing disruption, costs, and keeping the grid running smoothly.

Whether you're passionate about sustainability or just want reliable power at dinner time, Tallawarra A's upgrade is a win for the Illawarra and a step toward smarter energy.

Why gas?

Gas-fired power is a practical, transitional tool to help Australia bridge the gap to a more sustainable energy mix.

Reliability and grid stability	Gas-fired power provides firm, dispatchable energy – meaning it can be turned on or ramped up quickly when demand spikes or when renewable sources like wind and solar aren't generating (e.g., at night or during calm, cloudy weather). This helps maintain grid reliability during the transition period when renewables and storage are still scaling up.
Complementing renewables	While renewables are growing rapidly, they are variable by nature. Gas is a flexible "partner" to renewables – it can fill gaps in generation and balance solar and wind energy.
Transition away from coal	As ageing coal-fired power stations retire, Australia needs replacement capacity to keep the lights on. Gas can serve as a transitional solution while renewable-enabling technologies like batteries, and pumped hydro mature and scale.
Supporting industry and peak demand	Industrial processes and peak electricity demand (such as hot summer evenings) often require power that is both firm and scalable. Gas-fired plants can meet these needs without long lead times or massive infrastructure upgrades.
Strategic backup during emergencies	Gas provides critical backup during grid emergencies, extreme weather events, or unexpected outages – making it an important insurance policy for a stable, reliable energy system.

EnergyAustralia recognises that the Tallawarra Power Station is on the traditional Country of the Dharawal peoples and respects and acknowledges their continued connection to lands, waters and culture.

Getting the facts

We regularly undertake site tours of the Tallawarra Power Station supporting people to understand our operations and answering questions like these. We are pleased to provide responses to some of the key comments we have heard recently.

Question: What is the Tallawarra Power Station, and how much energy does it supply? 1

Answer: The Tallawarra Power Station is a major electricity generation facility located in New South Wales. It has a combined capacity of 760MW and supplies enough energy to power approximately 730,000 homes and small businesses, assuming each uses around 25kWh per day. The site provides 37 permanent jobs and plays a key role in supporting the local energy grid with reliable, fast-start power.

Question: What are the key features of Tallawarra A and Tallawarra B, and what fuels do they use? 2

Answer: Tallawarra Power Station is made up of two major components:

Tallawarra A is a 480MW Combined Cycle Power Plant that has been operating since 2009. It's known as Australia's most efficient large thermal station, with over 1,500 starts to date.

Tallawarra B is a 320MW Open Cycle Power Plant that opened in 2024 after 2 years of construction, involving 250+ workers and a $300 million investment. It features the largest gas turbine in Australia and can reach full load in just 27 minutes from a cold start. It's also 100% carbon offset.

Both units are powered by natural gas and are hydrogen-capable, supporting Australia's transition to cleaner energy technologies.

EnergyAustralia
LIGHT THE WAY

Engage with us

We are available to answer your questions and receive your feedback.

31 July
Tallawarra Community Liaison Group Meeting

August onwards
Maintenance on Southern Precinct, including dams

1–30 September
Community grants open

We're here to help

If you have a question, please don't hesitate to contact us.

community@EnergyAustralia.com.au

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Tallawarra Power Station

About EnergyAustralia

EnergyAustralia is a leading energy retailer and generator with around 1.6 million customers across eastern Australia. We supply energy to our residential and business customers from a modern energy portfolio, underpinned by coal and gas power plants, as well as renewable energy sources.