



## Don Harwin

Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council  
Minister for Resources  
Minister for Energy and Utilities  
Minister for the Arts

### MEDIA RELEASE

Friday, 12 May 2017

## RESEARCH TURNING YOUR FOOD WASTE INTO ENERGY

Households and businesses across Greater Sydney and the Illawarra are set to benefit from innovative research turning food waste into renewable energy.

Minister for Energy and Utilities Don Harwin said the project, being conducted at Sydney Water's Shellharbour Wastewater Treatment Plant with the University of Wollongong, is adding food waste to sewage through a co-digestion process.

"The first stage of research is using waste from beverage production and turning it into additional energy. The project is basically turning beer, wine and soft drink waste into power for NSW homes and businesses", Mr Harwin said.

"A typical Sydney Water customer is now saving nearly \$100 a year on their water bill and projects like this could make even more savings possible in the future."

Parliamentary Secretary for the Illawarra and South Coast Gareth Ward said adding food waste to the wastewater treatment process provides many benefits.

"Through this project at Shellharbour food waste is being diverted away from landfill, which helps to reduce greenhouse emissions," Mr Ward said.

"Producing green energy at the plant keeps its operation costs lower, which will continue to put downward pressure on water bills for customers."

Sydney Water's Principal Scientist, Dr Heri Bustamante, said Sydney Water is producing additional energy onsite, across all its wastewater treatment facilities.

"Sydney Water now produces enough energy to power over 11,000 homes each year while reducing greenhouse gas emissions by over 70,000 tonnes, which is the equivalent of keeping 17,500 cars off the road for a year," Dr Bustamante said.

University of Wollongong Professor Long Nghiem said the ability to recover energy from waste water will see treatment plants become bio-generators of the future.

Sydney Water currently generates more than 20 per cent of total energy needs across its network from wastewater treatment, along with hydro and solar power. Through these sources Sydney Water exports eight gigawatt hours of electricity to the grid a year, enough energy to power about 1000 average NSW homes.

For more information on the waste to energy project visit [www.sydneywater.com.au](http://www.sydneywater.com.au).

**MEDIA: Mitch Compton 0466 514 010**