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JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

GC 18/12

9 February, 2012

FUNDING CALLS FOR SMART ENERGY USE

The Gillard Government today opened a package of energy efficiency programs designed to drive smarter energy use in business, local government, households and communities for a clean energy future.

The programs will enable all Australians regardless of where they live or how much they earn to harness the opportunities of a low carbon future. They will be delivered in partnership with business, councils and community groups.

The investment in demonstrating smarter ways to use energy in Australian households communities and businesses will create new job opportunities and stronger local economies.

The programs opened today include:

- The Community Energy Efficiency Program – \$200 million to assist local government, not-for-profit and community organisations to undertake energy efficiency upgrades to community infrastructure.
- The Low Income Energy Efficiency Program – \$100 million to support groups of service providers to demonstrate smarter energy use in low income households across Australia.
- The Energy Efficiency Information Grants program – \$40 million to support small and medium sized businesses and community groups by providing information and advice to make smarter energy choices.

For regional communities and smaller councils, these programs will make it easier to access assistance and support in the transition to a low carbon future.

Local government has often been a leader in the move towards a low carbon future. Wagga Wagga City Council, for example, has partnered with Low Carbon Australia to reduce its energy costs by nearly \$60,000 each year. The agreement is a first for local government and a first for regional Australia.

The community accepts the need for action on climate change and the programs announced today are another step in the transition to a cleaner economy.

The Gillard Government is committed to promoting better energy efficiency – it's not about changing the way we live our lives, it's about being smarter in our energy use.

We are taking action now to ensure a clean energy future, so we can hand the next generation an Australia that is ready to face the challenges of the future.

The guidelines for each of these programs are available and applications open on February 13.

To find out more about the package of energy efficiency programs visit:

www.climatechange.gov.au

To find out more about the Government's plan for a clean energy future visit:

www.cleanenergyfuture.gov.au

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