



MEDIA RELEASE

Senator the Hon Penny Wong

Minister for Climate Change and Water

The Hon Peter Garrett MP

Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts

14 August 2009

\$724,000 GREEN PRECINCTS FUNDING FOR BENDIGO REGIONAL INSTITUTE OF TAFE

A high-profile Bendigo project demonstrating innovative water and energy saving initiatives will receive \$724,000 in Rudd Government funding.

Minister for Climate Change and Water, Senator Penny Wong, and Environment Minister Peter Garrett announced the Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE would receive the funding for its *Charleston Road Campus Redevelopment* project.

“As we work to tackle the impact of climate change and drought, projects like this will be increasingly important to showcase innovative ways of saving water and energy,” Senator Wong said.

“The funding will assist the Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE to install a geothermal heating and cooling system, which is ideally suited to Bendigo’s climate and the first of its kind in the area.

“The TAFE will install 300,000-litre storage tanks to collect rainwater for irrigation and connect to the existing Coliban recycled water stream to supply water for toilets and other non-potable purposes – saving 1.7 megalitres of water a year.”

Minister Garrett said several energy-saving technologies including photovoltaic panels, sophisticated solar lighting, light controls and solar hot water would also be installed.

“The *Charleston Road Campus Redevelopment* project will allow the TAFE to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 524 tonnes a year, which is equivalent to taking 150 cars off the road each year,” Minister Garrett said.

“It will also educate students about water and energy efficiency technologies and allow them to use this knowledge and experience in future projects.”

The project will reach more than 200,000 people by engaging the regional city of Bendigo as well as other campuses and tertiary institutions. The TAFE will coordinate educational forums, industry engagement events and open days to involve local businesses and the community.

The project is supported by the Rudd Government’s *Green Precincts Fund*, an initiative to prepare Australia for a future with less water and to encourage local communities to better manage their water and energy use.