

Media Statement

5 May 2008

Genesis Energy brings solar power to Hamilton schools

Schoolgen, a programme that has been designed to bring the concepts of solar energy, sustainability and climate change to life for children, has arrived in Hamilton and is being launched at Vardon Primary School on Wednesday 7 May.

Through Schoolgen, seven schools in the Hamilton City region are each having a 2 kilowatt (kW) photovoltaic system (solar panels) installed on the roof of one of their buildings, funded by Genesis Energy and the Ministry for the Environment's Sustainable Management Fund. Genesis Energy has committed \$2.5 million to Schoolgen up to 2010.

The solar panels will generate a portion of the electricity used by the school and provide a working example of how solar energy works.

Schoolgen has seen solar panels installed in nine schools in Auckland in the last year and has been received positively by school communities, particularly since the introduction of a full-time Environmental Educator who provides support and advice to schools interested in the programme and to those already taking part.

All students and teachers across New Zealand are able to tap into the wealth of resources available on the Schoolgen website www.schoolgen.co.nz, where teaching resources and classroom activities about electricity generation, climate change and renewable energy are freely available to be downloaded and used in classrooms. The teaching resources have been designed to link closely with the new National Curriculum.

Data on the website shows in real-time the amount of electricity being generated by all the Schoolgen schools. Students can see information about their own school online and become part of the Schoolgen community.

"Schoolgen is a core aspect of Genesis Energy's strategy to invest in communities and our aim is to actively empower people to consciously make environmentally sound decisions and develop an awareness of sustainable practices," says Murray Jackson, Chief Executive Genesis Energy.

"We're teaching children about the importance of renewable electricity generation sources such as solar energy by actively bringing it to life for them," says Mr Jackson. "By influencing the behaviour of our young generation – the future leaders and decision makers – we are building the foundations for a more sustainable future."

Genesis Energy aims to have solar panels installed on the roof of 56 schools in New Zealand by 2010. Future areas for Schoolgen are soon to be announced, and expressions of interest will be invited.

ENDS

For more information contact:

Richard Gordon

Public Affairs Manager

Genesis Energy

P: 09 580 4782

M: 021 681 305