



Green states and brown

Posted by [Big Gav](#) on May 17, 2008 - 9:00pm in [The Oil Drum: Australia/New Zealand](#)

Topic: [Alternative energy](#)

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This is a guest post from [kiashu](#).

I thought it might be interesting to see if the households of different states were more or less "green". We can look at carbon dioxide emissions, but those don't always give a clear picture if we're talking about households; someone from Kiama in New South Wales can't really help it if Newcastle is the biggest coal exporting port in the world. So let's look at what households can control directly.

Since [50% of all greenhouse gas emissions](#) in Australia can be attributed to electricity generation, and since water stress is so significant to us ([every state is building desalination plants](#)), two good measures of how "green" we are in our households is how many of us choose "green" sources of electricity, and how much water we use each day.

The GreenPower program in Australia is a federal accreditation system where companies buy electricity generated from solar, wind, and so on. This must be "new" generation, that is, from sources built after 1997. That's so they can't just buy it from some hydroelectric plant built in 1950, and to encourage the building of new generation.

[Recent reports](#) about GreenPower are encouraging. In the first quarter of 2007 there were 500,021 GreenPower customers, but by fourth quarter 2007 there were 724,506, a 45% increase. These were 695,885 residential, and 28,621 commercial. For some reason, the Northern Territory and Tasmania are not part of the scheme.

We can also look at [how much water we use](#).

All figures are by household, and Australia has 2.6 people per household. The water is in litres per day.

State GreenPower Households Green% Water

NSW	189,740	2,649,654	7.2%	600
Vic	265,505	2,002,000	13.3%	570
Qld	153,279	1,608,500	9.5%	880
SA	70,094	609,423	11.5%	670
WA	7,077	814,808	0.9%	1,280
ACT	10,189	130,500	7.8%	820
Total	695,884	7,814,885	8.9%	73

Looking at this, we see that my home state of Victoria is the "greenest" overall, using the least water and having the largest share of GreenPower customers. Western Australia is definitely the

GreenPower costs about one-third more per unit of electricity, however the average Australian household uses 5,000kWh annually, or about 14kWh/day, which with a few simple conservation methods (as for example in the guidelines to the [one tonne CO₂ lifestyle](#)) can be reduced to 2,500kWh/yr or 7kWh/da, so that GreenPower plus conservation is cheaper than conventional power alone.

And with water, conservation is [not difficult](#). Victoria has a long way to go - we need the other 86.7% to join us, and 570lt a day per household is at least three times as much as needed. But we leave the other states in our dust... or rather, we leave them in *their* dust, the dust from global warming and lack of water.

Cross posted from [GWAG](#).



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