

Media Release

The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP

Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change
Minister for Suburban Development



Wednesday, 3 October, 2018

MICROGRID FUNDING FOR BIRCHIP BUSINESS

The Andrews Labor Government will fund the development of a new microgrid demonstration project in Birchip, as part of a statewide investment in the technology.

Minister for Energy Lily D'Ambrosio today announced Birchip Cropping Group would receive \$210,000 to develop a microgrid that will include solar PV and battery storage at its local facility.

The project will be led by SwitchDin, providing a working demonstration of microgrid technology to lower energy costs and improve energy reliability for the region's farmers.

SwitchDin will work with project partners Birchip Cropping Group and Walnut Energy Systems to deliver the \$319,000 project which has the potential to be used as a model for other farms and businesses across Victoria.

A microgrid is a small network of electricity users with a local supply of power that can function independently of the electricity grid, delivering energy security, sustainability and cost savings for those in the network.

A microgrid generally operates while connected to the grid, but importantly, it can break off and operate on its own using local energy generation in times of crisis like storms or power outages. Microgrids can also share excess energy produced back into the network for other users.

The Microgrid Demonstration Initiative program is providing \$10 million towards eight microgrid projects worth more than \$37 million across the state.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio

"This project will help demonstrate the benefits of microgrids for farmers and rural businesses."

"These projects are part of our plan to drive down energy prices, reduce emissions and create a pipeline of investment in renewable energy."

Quotes attributable to Member for Northern Victoria Mark Gepp

"We're investing in the technologies that will help more Victorians take control of the energy bills."

"This microgrid project will support a local business to grow and help grow the renewable energy industry."