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WATER SECTOR SIGNS INNOVATIVE ENERGY DEAL

Central Highlands Water will join 12 other leading Victorian water corporations in a new energy partnership that will help to minimise greenhouse gas emissions and maintain affordable water bills for customers.

From October this year, the water corporations will purchase solar power together from Kiamal Solar Farm in north-west Victoria under a new umbrella organisation called Zero Emissions Water (ZEW).

Purchasing energy as one large organisation compared to separately, means the water corporations will procure energy at a cheaper rate which will translate to maintaining affordable prices for customers.

Paul O'Donohue, Managing Director, Central Highlands Water and Chair of ZEW, said that the Victorian water industry is committed to advancing projects that benefit the environment and create more return on investment for customers.

"Central Highlands Water (CHW) has committed to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions by a minimum of 20% by 2025," Mr O'Donohue said.

"In the most recent financial year (2017-18), CHW produced 15,076 net tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions, which demonstrates that we are on the pathway to meeting our target," he said.

The deal will allow CHW to purchase up to 8,500 megawatt-hour (MWH), which is 40% of its annual energy needs.

"This new partnership is supported by our commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, optimise our vehicle fleet, improve operating efficiencies, and establish local behind the meter solar installations," Mr O'Donohue said.

The 13 water corporations that are part of Zero Emissions Water include:

- Barwon Water
- Central Highlands Water
- City West Water
- Coliban Water
- East Gippsland Water
- Gippsland and Southern Rural Water
- Lower Murray Water
- South East Water
- South Gippsland Water
- Wannon Water
- Westernport Water
- Western Water
- Yarra Valley Water

Victorian water corporations are leading the way for other water corporations and industries. This deal is the first of its kind in Australia and is a major step forward towards the sector achieving net-zero emissions by 2050.

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