

# Energy Choices

## Energy production

Victoria has large supplies of fossil fuels that have provided secure, low cost energy. These resources have provided economic benefits for the whole of Victoria as well as opportunities for regions where fossil fuel sources are located. While oil and gas reserves are declining in significance, Victoria's brown coal resources continue to provide the majority of Victoria's energy needs.

## Energy consumption

Forecasts of energy use indicate growing demand at the rate of 1-2% per year. Much domestic energy use is for heating and cooling.

## Renewable energy

Options for renewable energy include: solar; hydro; wind; geothermal; and biomass. While such sources currently supply only a small amount of power to the electricity grid, growing commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions is likely to drive an increasing uptake of renewable energy technologies.

## Future opportunities

Renewable energy development has the potential to provide regional Victoria with competitive advantages: central highlands and coastal areas for wind power; much of the state especially the north west for solar; and alpine regions for hydro.

## An integrated picture of Energy Choices

## Changing behaviours

Education and financial incentives are being used to encourage behaviour change in energy use. Rebates for installing renewable and energy efficient appliances are examples of encouraging more rapid uptake of solar and gas appliances.

## Greenhouse gas emissions

Concern about global climate change is leading to greater focus on reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Efforts are being made to ensure that Victoria's future energy needs can continue to be met in a carbon constrained environment. Options include more efficient domestic and industrial energy use and adopting clean coal technologies and renewable energy.