



\$4.5m plan to put high-voltage powerlines underground to protect Cairns suburbs from cyclones and storms

Cait Bester | September 27th, 2011

The \$4.5 million project is a part of Ergon Energy's Cyclone Area Reliability Enhancement program which will see a section of the network going underground at Brinsmead, Whitfield, Manoora and Edge Hill.

The 22,000 volt "backbone" supply for the underground work will come from the Cairns North substation in Anderson St, providing power to a number of community facilities, including Carpentaria Aged Care Centre, Whitfield State School and Brinsmead Plaza shopping centre.

"These works will deliver valuable long-term benefits to customers in the immediate area and potentially to the broader community in the wake of major cyclonic events," Cairns MP Desley Boyle said.

"While providing a more secure supply to facilities, it will also allow for faster restoration of power supply after major impacts on the electricity network – such as those experienced after cyclone Yasi this year."

Ergon Energy's manager of regional services Geoff Bowes said while putting power networks underground did not make power supply invulnerable, it would offer substantial benefits in the future.

"Our new Cairns North substation has also effectively doubled the value out of this project because we will use this CARE project's connection to relieve capacity off substations further north in the city," Mr Bowes said.

"This in turn will provide a more reliable supply for customers in the area and allows us to defer building more substations so that we can concentrate our investment on further improvements to the Cairns network."

Ergon Energy's CARE projects aim to increase resilience to cyclone and storm impacts across cyclone-prone regions.

Watch video footage of Ergon Energy's CARE powerline project at www.cairns.com.au



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