

BAENZIGER COLES SOLAR WINS WITH RETURN ON INVESTMENT



Baenziger Coles, an architecture and interior design company, joined CitySwitch in 2012. To complement a recent office upgrade and various capital investments to improve energy efficiency, the directors were keen to further demonstrate a commitment to sustainable design, renewable energy and to lower operational costs.

Following an installation of a solar panel system for a residential client, Baenziger Coles were inspired to carry out a similar, larger-scale

system at their commercial office at City Road in South Melbourne.

Solar energy generation

Given the orientation and positioning of the office roof, solar panels were the obvious energy generation solution. To choose the most suitable system, Baenziger Coles engaged a solar supplier and installer who had both good credentials and a solid knowledge of the technical options available and government incentives and rebates on offer.

GOALS

- Further optimise office energy efficiency
- Invest in renewable energy



Signatory status

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Date joined CitySwitch | March 2012 |
| Tenancy size | 521 sqm (10 staff) |
| NABERS commitment rating | ★ ★ ★ ★ |
| Website | www.baenzigercoles.com.au |

Key outcomes

| | |
|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Annual financial saving | \$1,823 |
| Annual energy and CO ₂ saving | 6,127 kWh/ 7 tonnes CO ₂ equivalent |
| Technology | 5 kW Solar System |
| Awards | CitySwitch National New Signatory of Year Finalist 2012 Melbourne Design Award 2012 |

“ We see environmentally sustainable design as integral to our design philosophy and embrace sustainability as a given. Importantly, we develop viable, realistic and affordable initiatives that not only deliver real value, but empower our clients to embrace a similar philosophy. We are proud to be part of the CitySwitch Green Office program. ”



Sue Coles, Director
Baenziger Coles



Deciding on a solar system

Baenziger Coles installed a 5 kilowatt Solar Charge Grid Connected System at a total cost of \$23,800. Key influencing factors for choosing this type of system included the meeting of tenancy power needs (to minimise exported power), the option to access a government rebate (systems must be less than 100 kilowatts in size), the amount of space available on the roof, along with equipment and installation costs.

The chosen SunnyBoy solar system produces around 6200kWh per year, which covers approximately 25 per cent of Baenziger Coles' annual electricity usage.

Feed-in tariffs

Having the opportunity to apply for the Victorian Solar Feed-In Tariff scheme helped Baenziger Coles determine a reasonable return on investment period for this project. Feed-in tariffs provide people producing their own renewable energy with a financial return for the excess power they feed into the grid. As a "Net" metered business, the following applied:

- Excess electricity generated by their solar PV system is exported directly to the electricity grid
- Exported electricity is calculated at the rate specified under the Victorian Solar Feed-In Tariff Scheme (\$0.60 per kWh, and valid till 2024).

Other sustainability activities

Following on from the solar panel installation, Baenziger Coles continues to look at opportunities for improved energy efficiency, including rainwater harvesting and replacement of heating systems with more cost and energy effective systems. As a final step, the company is researching Green Power options.

Get involved

Baenziger Coles is part of a national network of businesses that, with the help of CitySwitch, are playing an important part in reducing the carbon emissions of our cities and demonstrating a high level of environmental leadership and action.

A breakdown of solar savings and measurement

| Measurement of Solar Savings | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Solar energy produced and used by Baenziger Coles | 5,161 kWh |
| Solar Buy Back | 966 kWh |
| Total solar energy production (from installation to end of May 2012) | 6,127 kWh |
| 5,160.90 kWh x \$0.2411 (Energy Australia rates) | \$1,244.29 |
| 966 kWh x \$0.60 solar credit rates (ex GST) | \$579.60 |
| Total Savings (Solar Buy Back savings plus solar energy consumed) | \$1,823.89 |

* The calculation is based on data collected from solar panel meter readouts, electricity meter readouts and information sourced from the Energy Australia Electricity Account.



Australian Government
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CitySwitch Green Office is Australia's flagship tenant energy efficiency program. Run in partnership between local and state governments, CitySwitch is a growing network of business leaders committed to addressing their environmental impact. cityswitch.net.au

