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# Curry's power win

CONSTRUCTION of Cloncurry's \$6.76 million solar farm will only generate "a few weeks work" for the town, deputy mayor Greg Campbell says.

Work should begin in July 2012 after Ingenero Pty Ltd was named as preferred tender to design, build and operate the 2.128 megawatt facility, and be completed by October 2012.

Councillor Campbell said it was a good win for Cloncurry although the bulk of the \$7 million project lay in the solar panels and hardware which would be imported.

"The civil earthworks will be using local labour and equipment which is good for Cloncurry," Cr Campbell said.

"Every new project of work is good for Cloncurry but in comparison with mining it is only a few weeks work for us, rather than a few years."

Speaking from Cloncurry on Friday, Energy Minister Stephen Robertson said Ingenero was selected from 19 expressions of interest for the farm which would produce enough electricity to power about 500 households.

The solar farm will be built on land close to the Cloncurry North electricity substation along Sir Hudson Fysh Drive and will comprise 7600 polycrystalline silicon pho-

tovoltaic panels which are expected to generate about 3700 megawatt hours of electricity per year.

Member for Mount Isa Betty Kiernan said the power generated in Cloncurry would go into the grid.

Mrs Kiernan said the Queensland Government was keen to encourage householders to take advantage of the Solar Bonus Scheme of 44cents a kilowatt hour for any surplus electricity generated by rooftop solar panels that was fed back into the electricity grid.

About 400 residents have installed solar PV panels under the scheme.

"We have a uniform charge of 22c per kilowatt across Queensland so householders could definitely benefit financially if they install solar panels," Mrs Kiernan said.

So far only 150 households across the North West have signed up to the solar hot water rebate scheme.

Mrs Kiernan said the government was investing \$5.7 million towards the total project cost of \$6.76 million.

"We promised the people of Cloncurry a solar farm and we're delivering on that commitment," she said.

**Editorial: P6**