

JULY 2026 | ISSUE 1

SOLARINSIGHTS

The Definitive Voice of Renewable Energy Technology.

GLOBAL REPORT

Solar Trends in NZ & Beyond

REAL POWER, REAL RESULTS

Residential & Commercial Case Studies.

MY HOUSE, MY CASTLE

Future-Proofing the Home



 lightforce solar

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A Message from the CEO

Welcome to the inaugural edition of Solar Insights.

At Lightforce Solar, we aren't just installing solar panels; we are helping households and businesses take control of their energy futures. As we release this very first issue of our magazine, it is a great moment to reflect on where we are going and how we are helping communities build more independent, resilient power supplies.

This is a milestone period for our team. We are incredibly proud to announce our upcoming launch into the Hawke's Bay, Taranaki, and Queenstown regions. Bringing localised solar solutions to these vibrant parts of the country is a significant step forward in our nationwide journey, and we are excited to work closely with these new communities.

When we look at the shifting energy landscape, the rising costs of traditional power, and the pressing need for sustainable alternatives, **THE FUTURE IS OBVIOUS**. Solar energy is no longer just an alternative option; it is the definitive, smart choice for those looking to invest in their properties and the environment.

Whether you are a longtime advocate for renewable energy or just beginning to explore the benefits of solar, this magazine is designed to provide you with valuable industry knowledge, expert advice, and an inside look at the people driving the transition.

Thank you for being part of the Lightforce Solar journey. Together, we are building a brighter, more sustainable future.

Warm regards,



John Harman
Chief Executive Officer,
Lightforce Solar

Solar Trends: Around the World Vs New Zealand

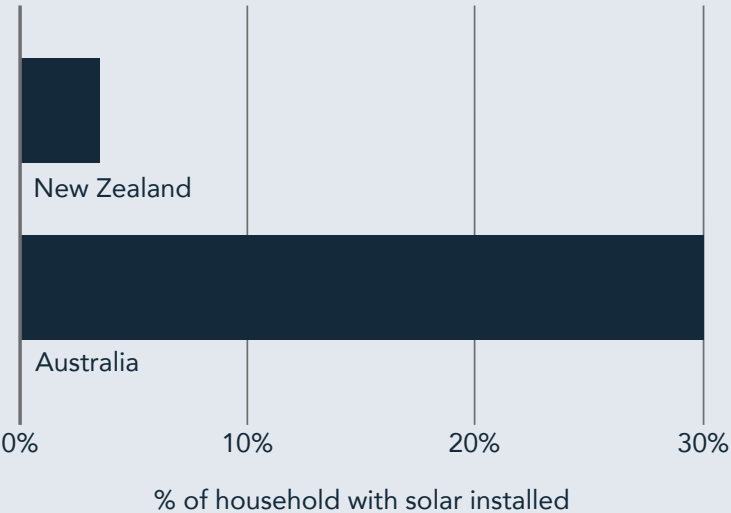
Solar is booming everywhere including New Zealand

Solar power has quietly but surely become the largest source of electricity capacity in the world, bigger than coal, bigger than gas, hydro, and wind! In 2025 alone, the world added more new solar power in a single year than ever before, with countries across Asia, Europe and beyond rushing to install more panels. With China as the distinctive leader, Europe has added a record amount of new solar in 2025, and India’s solar additions grew faster than any other major market – solar keeps getting bigger! And experts predict that solar will keep growing exponentially. A select bunch even expects it to become the single greatest source of electricity on the planet within the next decade.

New Zealand is part of this story, too! Our own solar capacity has been roughly doubling every two years since 2013, with 2025 being a record year. We added more new solar than ever before! As of January 2026, over 81,000 solar systems are installed across the country, with close to 75,000 of those on Kiwi homes. Solar farms are growing too: New Zealand now has 8 large-scale solar farms in operation, with 9 more in development.

Even so, we’re still catching up to our neighbouring countries, only around 3–4% of New Zealand households currently wield solar, compared to 30% of Australian households. That’s a sizeable gap, and a clear sign that there’s a lot of room left for this trend to further accelerate.

Household Solar Adoption New Zealand Vs Australia



Source: www.pv-tech.org

A TREND WITH REAL REGIONAL VARIATION

A fascinating pattern within New Zealand data: how much a household can save from solar power noticeably varies depending on which region they reside in whether it’s differences in sunshine hours or local power bills.

Regions like Marlborough, Nelson and Tasman show some of the highest potential solar savings. While places like Southland and Wellington are positioned a bit lower, every region in New Zealand reports over \$1,000 in potential savings.

Solar Savings for Residential Homes

Region of New Zealand	Annual Solar Savings
Auckland	\$1,246
Bay of Plenty	\$1,368
Canterbury	\$1,180
Gisborne	\$1,293
Hawke’s Bay	\$1,405
Manawatu-Whanganui	\$1,279
Marlborough	\$1,467
Nelson	\$1,430
Northland	\$1,220
Otago	\$1,238
Southland	\$1,047
Taranaki	\$1,415
Tasman	\$1,430
Waikato	\$1,199
Wellington	\$1,129
West Coast	\$1,411

Source: eeeca.govt.nz

A GROWING TREND: SOLAR PAIRED WITH BATTERY BACKUP

One of the most apparent trends currently emerging in New Zealand is the shift from solar-only systems to solar joined with battery storage. This push is driven less by saving on costs and more by a growing focus on resilience during power outages. A marvellous example: in October 2025, a windstorm shut down power across parts of Southland, leaving multiple local farmers clambering for back-up generators.

At Fairbank Farms, an 800-cow dairy enterprise, these types of occurrences are significantly unlikely. However, on one unlucky occasion, a storm struck, but their solar and battery system kept their milking shed running at full capacity throughout their area’s outage and single-handedly halved their power bill.



Stories like this are becoming more common as battery prices continue to fall and more households, businesses, and farms look straight-forward saving on bills and toward genuine energy independence.

WHAT'S DRIVING THE TREND FORWARD

A few key forces are pushing solar's adoption faster in New Zealand right now:

- **Falling costs:** solar installation prices have continued to plummet, making systems more accessible to households than in previous years.
- **Simpler rules:** most homes no longer require building consent to install rooftop solar at all, cutting out a significant amount of time and costs.
- **Government support:** funding programmes are helping bring solar to schools and community buildings, including sites impacted by the 2023 Auckland floods and Cyclone Gabrielle.
- **New technology on the horizon:** solar panel efficiency records continue to be broken overseas, meaning future panels could possibly generate more solar power from the same-sized roof.

Solar Myth Busters vs Facts

MYTH: Solar panels don't work on cloudy days

FACT: Panels still generate power on cloudy days just a bit less than in full sun. Even famously overcast countries like Germany get a big share of their electricity from solar.

MYTH: Solar panels stop working well after a few years

FACT: Quality panels are built to last 25+ years, losing only a small amount of power each year. Most are still working at close to full strength after two and a half decades.

MYTH: Solar panels need constant cleaning

FACT: Rain does most of the cleaning for you here in New Zealand. A quick clean now and then is usually all it takes.

MYTH: You have to go completely off-grid to benefit from solar

FACT: Most solar homes stay connected to the power grid using your own solar power when the sun's out, and drawing from the grid when you need to.

MYTH: Solar isn't worth it in a cloudy country like New Zealand

FACT: Panels actually work slightly better in cooler weather and every region in the country can save over \$1,000 a year with solar.

MYTH: Solar is a risky investment

FACT: Real examples, homes, farms and businesses alike show solar consistently paying for itself within a handful of years, then delivering free or cheaper power for decades after.

From Carport to Powerhouse: Why Kiwis Are Reimagining Their Driveways



When looking to expand your home's renewable energy capacity, the traditional route usually involves looking up at your roof. But for existing Lightforce Solar customer Jack Scott, the next step in his clean energy journey wasn't about adding more rooftop panels it was about reimagining his driveway.

Seeking both weather protection for his vehicle and enhanced energy savings for his lifestyle property, Jack opted for a innovative solution that delivers on both fronts: the Lightforce SolarPort™.

DOUBLE THE FUNCTION, DOUBLE THE VALUE

For homeowners with ample land or driveway space, traditional carports often represent a missed opportunity. The SolarPort™ transforms an everyday functional structure into a high-performing clean energy generator, built around a simple philosophy: **Park. Power. Save.**

For Jack, upgrading his property with a freestanding solar carport was a logical next step. It provided a dedicated, shaded shelter for his Ute while expanding his home's solar generation capacity without touching his existing roofline.

"I'm really over the moon. It's a superb asset to the property," Jack shares. "I've got a good cover for

my vehicle, and I really am excited for the savings."

SPEED, EFFICIENCY, AND EXPERT EXECUTION

Expanding a home's solar infrastructure can sometimes feel like a daunting construction project. However, having already partnered with Lightforce Solar for his home's energy needs, Jack knew he could rely on their engineering quality and customer care. Still, the speed and precision of the SolarPort™ installation exceeded his expectations.

Designed for seamless assembly and aesthetic integration, the structure was erected and wired with minimal disruption to Jack's daily routine. The sleek, black-framed architectural design effortlessly complements his modern rural home and surrounding orchard landscape.

"Really surprised that so much was done in such a short period of time,"



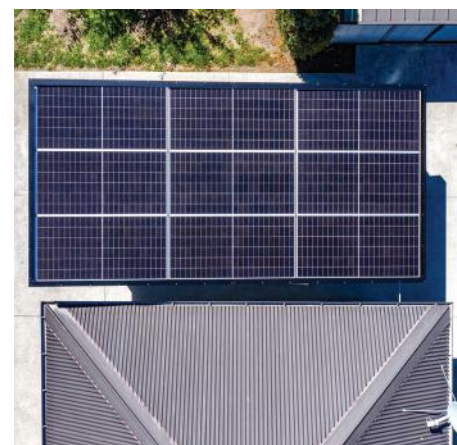
Jack notes, reflecting on the installation process. *"Very efficient. Really, really brilliant."*

A SUPERB LONG-TERM INVESTMENT

As energy needs evolve whether through home electrification, EV charging, or simply combatting rising grid power costs scalable solutions like the SolarPort™ allow homeowners to maximize their property's footprint. Available in Single, Double, and XL configurations, the structure is designed to adapt to properties of all sizes.

For Jack, the project's success ultimately came down to the trust and reliability of the team behind it.

"I really couldn't have chosen a better company to work with," he concludes. "Superb."



Harnessing the Sun: The Shift in Kiwi Homeowners

How Lightforce Solar and My House My Castle Are Changing the Way We Live

A New Era for Home Renovation and Energy Independence



When My House My Castle made its highly anticipated return after 11 seasons and 162 episodes, it brought more than just renovation inspiration back to New Zealand screens. The reimaged 10-episode series captured a profound shift in the national mindset: Kiwi families are urgently seeking practical, sustainable solutions to navigate a complex economic environment.

At a time when households are laser-focused on reducing living costs, the programme highlighted the surging demand for energy independence. The viewership data paints a clear picture of this evolving priority. The linear television broadcast reached over 309,200 homeowners, while generating more than 180,000 streams on ThreeNow. Within this highly engaged audience, 77% were homeowners, and a telling

53% were actively looking for ways to improve their home's energy efficiency. Furthermore, 36% were planning significant renovations within the next 12 months.

LIGHTFORCE SOLAR : THE PERFECT FIT

The opportunity to collaborate emerged from strategic discussions with Warner Bros. International Television Production New Zealand (WBITVP) and Sky Media. Recognizing that modern viewers demand authenticity, they sought out a forward-thinking brand partner capable of contributing genuine value to the programme's narrative rather than simply flashing ads during commercial breaks.

Lightforce Solar was identified as the perfect fit, as the show's core

themes of home improvement, sustainability, and future-focused living aligned perfectly with the company's mission to give Kiwis control over their energy futures. By integrating Lightforce Solar's products, technical expertise, and real customer benefits directly into the homeowners' stories, viewers were given a front-row seat to real-world solar and battery installations. Seeing these tangible examples allowed New Zealanders to visualize exactly how solar technology delivers long-term financial relief and energy self-reliance, transforming the brand from an advertiser into an educational anchor of the show.

THE \$10,000 WATCH-TO-WIN MOVEMENT

A cornerstone of this interactive



Ep 10: Mike Casey, Electrification Advocate, Rewiring Aotearoa



Ep 10: Beauden Barrett, Lightforce Solar Customer



Ep 10: Marc Nakhle, SolarPort™ Consultant, Lightforce Solar



Ep 10: Jack Scott, Lightforce Solar Customer

educational push was the nationwide \$10,000 Watch-to-Win competition. Designed to bridge the gap between watching sustainable changes on screen and implementing them in real life, the promotion invited viewers to actively engage with the series for a chance to win a substantial Lightforce Solar prize package. The initiative was sustained across the entire season with dedicated television placements during every episode, heavily reinforced by digital activity across ThreeNow and highly targeted social media campaigns.

The response was nothing short of a cultural pulse-check, capturing a staggering 8,114 entries from everyday Kiwis. These participation numbers are far more than just a metric of broadcast engagement; they are a powerful indicator that a significant, highly motivated wave of homeowners is actively thinking about making the switch to renewable energy.

For many of the 8,114 entrants, the promotion acted as their very first direct step toward discovering the benefits of solar power, culminating in a life-changing win for **Bijili Alex** from the Wellington Region, who walked away with the ultimate solar prize package to power their home.

THE FUTURE IS OBVIOUS: EDUCATING AND EMPOWERING HOMEOWNERS

Ultimately, the partnership proved that the desire to harness the unlimited power of the sun has moved from a future aspiration to an immediate, logical choice for New Zealanders. By moving past traditional, passive advertising, the campaign succeeded in spreading awareness and educating the public about the undeniable benefits of solar panels and battery storage.

Lyle Hastings, Head of Marketing at Lightforce Solar,

observed this shifting consumer landscape:

"What made this partnership so powerful was the natural alignment between the show's audience and our customers. The people watching My House My Castle are homeowners who are actively thinking about improving their homes, reducing costs and creating a more sustainable future. That's exactly what Lightforce Solar helps people achieve every day."

WBTV echoed the importance of providing practical information at a time when households need it most:

"Homeowners across New Zealand are increasingly interested in energy efficiency, sustainability and long-term savings. Having Lightforce Solar involved allowed us to bring practical, real-world solutions to viewers at exactly the right time."

As New Zealanders continue to look for ways to future-proof their properties against rising costs, the transition to clean energy is accelerating. By continuing to spread awareness and empower communities with the boundless potential of solar energy, Lightforce Solar is ensuring Kiwi homes are ready for the days ahead. Because **the future is obvious.**

Smarter, Cleaner, Future-Proofed

Rugby icon Beauden Barrett's seamless transition to "no power bill" with Lightforce Solar.

From Mangawhai to Auckland, rugby icon Beauden Barrett shares how transitioning to solar has transformed his family's daily life, wiped out power bills, and future-proofed their growing home.

For rugby star Beauden Barrett, choosing solar was an obvious step toward building a sustainable, resilient future for his family. After living with a Lightforce Solar system on their Mangawhai roof for over a year, the benefits have been clear: zero power bills and a steady surplus of clean energy fed back into the grid.

"We've been living with our Lightforce Solar system for over a year now... we have reaped the benefits of it and are absolutely loving what it gives us."

SEAMLESS TECHNOLOGY & SWIFT INSTALLATION

Following the success of their first system in Mangawhai, bringing Lightforce Solar to their Auckland home was a "no-brainer". However, like many homeowners, they initially wondered how disruptive the transition would be. The reality turned out to be a pleasant surprise.

The installation proved to be incredibly non-intrusive. Utilising interlocking panels that click together with minimal to no roof damage, the team completed the entire setup, positioning the panels on the roof and the backup battery in the garage in just two days.

FUTURE-PROOFED FOR A GROWING FAMILY

With the recent arrival of their third daughter, planning for the long term has become the family's top priority.

To ensure total energy independence, they intentionally designed their system with a generous surplus of panels. This extra capacity means they are fully prepared for the future, whether that means welcoming another child, installing a heated pool, or utilising their pre-configured garage setup to plug in a brand-new electric vehicle (EV).

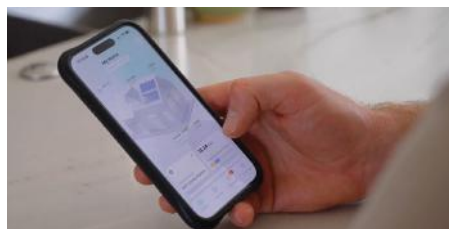


REAL-TIME CONTROL AND SMART LIVING

Living with a modern solar ecosystem brings immense daily satisfaction. Through a smartphone app, the family monitors production and consumption in real time.

"In the mornings, I see a clear spike on the app whenever we make coffees, the toaster is running, and a load of washing goes on," Beauden notes.

This instant feedback allows them to use appliances more intelligently during peak solar hours.



RESILIENCE AGAINST THE ELEMENTS

Beyond financial savings and carbon reduction, the solar investment has brought invaluable peace of mind. During recent severe weather events and localised power cuts, the home's backup battery buffer kicked in automatically. While the surrounding grid went dark, the Barrett household successfully navigated through every single outage without losing power, shielded by their own stored energy reserves.

Given New Zealand's abundant sunshine and available residential roof space, the clean energy transition represents a massive collective opportunity. For the Barrett family, looking back at their decision to switch to Lightforce Solar, the verdict remains perfectly clear: it is a sustainable, highly versatile, long-term asset and an absolute no-brainer.

THE LIGHTFORCE SOLAR PROCESS

The Lightforce team conducted the initial layout entirely remotely, analyzing a historical power bill and utilising satellite technology to map out exactly how many panels would optimize the roof space.

Before setting foot on the property, the team already had a precise blueprint of the energy needs and structural layout.

Two days of professional on-site engineering to fully connect the panels and garage battery storage.

Solar: Hottest Issue of the 2026 Election

With electricity prices soaring more than 40% over the last decade, it's no surprise that energy has become a central battleground for the upcoming November 7 general election. But this year, politicians aren't just talking about dams or wind farms, they are targeting your roof.

For the first time, almost every major political party has brought a dedicated household solar policy to the table. From cash grants to council-backed loans, the promises are flying. Here is a no-spin breakdown of who is promising what, and more importantly, what it means for your power bill.

THE MAJOR PARTY PITCHES

Both Labour and National have rolled out flagship energy packages over the past few weeks, but they are taking very different approaches to getting panels on Kiwi roofs.

Labour's "SolarSaver"

Announced in early July 2026, Labour is leading with a \$160 million package designed to lower the barrier to entry. The headline feature is a kickstart subsidy of up to \$3,000 targeted at low- and middle-income households. However, this is largely designed to fully cover a smaller ~\$1,500 two-panel "plug-in" kit rather than a full-scale rooftop system. They are also proposing rule changes to make it easier for renters to use plug-in solar, alongside Crown-backed low-interest loans and a \$30 million community battery fund.

National's "Home Energy Fund"

National's approach, announced in late June, completely avoids cash handouts. Instead, their Home Energy Fund focuses on long-term, low-interest loans secured against your property and repaid through your local council rates over about 10 years. You would need roughly 20% home equity to qualify, and local councils would need to voluntarily opt-in to the scheme.



Crucially, National is also promising to slash the red tape by removing council consent requirements for solar installations.

WHERE THE REST OF THE HOUSE STANDS

The minor parties are offering vastly different visions for the future of New Zealand's grid:

Green Party: Pushing heavily for community energy ownership and electricity market reform. They want cheaper solar loans and fewer consenting barriers, pointing out that currently, just 3% of New Zealand homes have solar.

ACT Party: Staunchly opposed to subsidies. Their energy spokesperson summed up their position bluntly: "If solar stacks up, Kiwis will invest without handouts." ACT prefers to focus entirely on fixing regulatory barriers through the Resource Management Act (RMA).

NZ First: No specific household solar policy announced yet, focusing their campaign instead on breaking up the big electricity generator-retailers.

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The Reality Check: Should You Wait?

If you're currently pricing up a solar system for your home, the influx of political promises might make you want to pause your installation and wait for a government handout. However, reading the fine print tells a different story.

Here is the quiet consensus of the 2026 campaign: neither major party is proposing cash handouts for full rooftop systems.

Labour's \$3,000 grant is means-tested and sized for minor plug-in kits, while National's policy is strictly a loan scheme. Furthermore, if either scheme passes, they wouldn't realistically be up and running until late 2027 or 2028.

The truth is, solar in New Zealand already stacks up without government intervention. With the cost of hardware falling and power prices continually climbing, a typical full-sized system installed today pays for itself in 5 to 8 years, followed by decades of effectively free energy.

Furthermore, the low-interest finance both parties are promising essentially already exists in the private sector, with major banks like Westpac currently offering 0% interest for 5 years on solar finance.

Ultimately, whoever wins the election, the sun will still come up on November 8th. The only question is whether your roof will be ready to catch it.



The next Logical Step for Businesses

How AlSCO Uniforms is Leading the Charge in Industrial Renewable Energy

The Top of the South has always been celebrated for its abundance of sunshine. Now, for AlSCO Uniforms Richmond, that sunshine has become the driving force behind a cleaner, more sustainable future.

In a landmark move for New Zealand's industrial sector, AlSCO Uniforms has officially launched its first Kiwi-based large-scale solar project at its Richmond plant. The installation marks a significant milestone in the company's wider Asia-Pacific sustainability journey, setting a bold new benchmark for energy independence and emissions reduction in local manufacturing.

A LEGACY OF SUSTAINABILITY

For AlSCO Uniforms, environmental responsibility isn't a recent trend, it is a long-term corporate strategy. "For AlSCO Uniforms Richmond, it's been about timing," says Richard Mahood, Branch Manager at AlSCO Uniforms.

"We've been very fortunate that in 2012 we removed coal from the business and moved to biomass, which we're still on today."

Following a major investment from the company's directors, a brand-new plant was built in Richmond in 2020. Since then, the team has continuously integrated advanced machinery designed to drastically reduce water usage. According to Mahood, introducing solar energy was simply *"the next logical step."*

When evaluating potential locations across the country, the Richmond site quickly became the standout choice.

"Richmond really stood out as one of the sunniest parts of the country. Combine that with the fact that the plant uses the majority of its power during sunlight hours, and it makes perfect sense to offset our energy using the power of the sun."

POWERING UP: THE TECHNICAL BREAKDOWN

To bring the ambitious project to life, AlSCO partnered with the engineering team at Lightforce Solar. The resulting commercial array is an absolute powerhouse, custom-designed to maximise the region's high solar yield.

Ben Young, Business Development Manager at Lightforce Solar, breaks down the numbers behind the massive installation:

- Total System Size: 152-kilowatt system
- Solar Panels: 244 x 625W Trina N-type panels (Tier 1)
- Inverter Technology: High-efficiency Sungrow Inverters
- Projected Annual Output: ~200,000 kWh per annum
- Expected Grid Offset: 40% reduction based on historical site load



MORE THAN AN INSTALLER: A TRUE PARTNERSHIP

For a commercial project of this scale, Alcoa needed far more than a standard solar contractor; they required deep technical expertise and end-to-end execution. "Partner capability inclusive of technical expertise, engineering expertise, and a track record of delivery was the most important thing to Alcoa," explains Haris Murtaza, Energy & Utilities Manager at Alcoa Uniforms. "We needed someone that had experience in delivering this project while making it easier for us throughout the whole process."

Lightforce Solar stepped up to the plate, guiding Alcoa through the

critical early stages of the project long before the first panel touched the roof.

"What they've done is come in as a partner in this project and helped us prepare that business case so that we could put it up to our board and get approval," Murtaza highlights. "They provided all the data and provided all the knowledge, expertise, and capability that we needed to get this across the line."

A REGIONAL FIRST WITH GLOBAL MOMENTUM

While this marks a historic "first" for Alcoa on New Zealand soil, it aligns with a massive sustainability push across the broader Asia-Pacific region.

Alcoa Uniforms Asia Pacific has been aggressively implementing a robust sustainability action plan, having already deployed over 2.5 megawatts of solar installations across Australia and the wider Asia Pacific region.

As the company shifts its focus toward total energy independence and deep emissions reductions through electrification and renewable energy, the Richmond plant stands as a proud beacon of what is locally achievable.

"Alcoa Uniforms Richmond becomes the first plant in New Zealand for a large-scale solar project, and we're extremely proud of that," Murtaza concludes. "We're looking forward to our next large-scale project."





SolarPort

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Designed, Engineered, and Certified for New Zealand conditions.



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