



20 October 2010

Review of Underground Power Program Welcomed

Dr Mike Nahan, the Member for Riverton said the Office of Energy's review of the Underground Power Program (UPP) would clarify concerns about the costs and ways of improving the equity and affordability of the program.

"Many community members have raised concerns with me about the underground power process and the cost. The Office of Energy has recognised that affordability is an issue and it is undertaking a much-needed review of the process," said Dr Nahan.

"In addition, at the request of the Treasurer, the Economic Regulation Authority is already conducting an inquiry into the overall costs and benefits of the State Underground Power Program to establish what the appropriate share of funding should be between the State Government, individual households and Western Power."

Dr Nahan said that as several streets in the Parkwood West area that is currently under consideration for UPP already have underground power, there have been community concerns over the applicable funding.

"While there is no guarantee at this stage that Parkwood West will get the final tick of approval for underground power, the Office of Energy's Steering Committee has advised me that if it does get approval in November, they will re-examine the funding component in detail at that time," said Dr Nahan.

"Several constituents have also asked me why the high voltage transmission lines in Vellgrove Avenue in Parkwood would not be undergrounded if the project goes ahead but it is standard operating procedure not to underground these types of power lines because of the high cost to do so, which is around \$2 million per kilometer."

"These high voltage transmission lines are far more robust than standard power poles and as a result, they are not usually damaged in storms."

"The State Government understands the many benefits of having full access to underground power and that is why it has established this important review. I encourage all members of the community who have concerns about the underground power program to make a public submission to that review."

For more information about the review and its terms of reference, visit www.energy.wa.gov.au or contact Jonathan Utting on 9420 5752.

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