

Underground Power Program: Round Four Major Residential Projects

What can local government and the community expect from an Underground Power Project in their area?

- An improvement to reliability of power supply.
- Fewer outages caused by storms, trees, vehicle accidents, vandalism, air-borne debris, wildlife or pole-top fires affecting overhead poles and wires.
- Increased safety by removing power poles on road verges and overhead connections to houses.
- Reduced costs of tree pruning.
- Improved streetscapes and front gardens by removing distribution wires and allowing trees to grow to their natural size and shape.

What can the Underground Power Program NOT deliver?

- 100% power reliability. Faults can still occur in underground power systems and when they do they may take longer to fix, but faults are less frequent because of the removal of most weather and interference risks.
- Removal of high voltage transmission lines. This is an extremely expensive exercise and not within the scope of the Program. Streets with transmission lines will have the distribution lines undergrounded, but will retain some overhead poles and wires remain. Western Power can advise whether a particular street has a transmission line.

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What does local government need to do to participate in the Underground Power Program?

1. Read and understand the Round Four Underground Power Program Guidelines.
2. In consultation with the community, determine an area of mainly residential properties that it believes would meet the criteria as outlined in the Guidelines. Western Power is able to assist with relevant power system technical advice.
3. Submit an Expression of Interest proposal by the due date, consistent with the instructions in the Guidelines and using the template and checklist provided.
4. If the proposal is shortlisted, work with the Underground Power Program Group to develop a Detailed Proposal consistent with the Guidelines. Local governments must NOT at this stage independently commence any physical work. The project cannot be given final approval until the Detailed Proposal Stage is completed and a funding agreement is finalised.
5. Sign a Funding Agreement with the Government of Western Australia and Western Power for the work to be done. Local governments must not commence their projects until the relevant Funding Agreements are finalised.
6. Ensure funds are available to meet the scheduled cash calls.
7. Maintain communication with property owners/residents and business operators within the project area.
8. Work with the Office of Energy and Western Power to expedite the work according to the Program schedule.

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