

YOUR NETWORK YOUR NEWS



ENABLING THE ENERGY FUTURE OF OUR COMMUNITIES

Aurora Energy's community update about the electricity network in Ōtepoti Dunedin, Central Otago/Wānaka and Tāhuna Queenstown.



In this issue:

An update from our Chief Executive

A recap on our five-year work programme

Enabling the energy future of our communities

Electricity network upgrades

Our communities

Public safety

Power prices

Our people

ISSUE: JUNE 2026

Kia ora koutou,

Welcome to our bumper issue of 'Your Network, Your News'. We've had so much happening recently that we decided a larger-than-usual edition was the best way to share our news with you.

Firstly, a big thank you to everyone connected to our electricity network across Otago. Over the last five years, we have completed some substantial upgrades and invested around \$560 million dollars to improve safety and reliability. You can read more about this on the next page. Alongside this, we've been making sure our network is set up to enable the energy choices of our communities.

Network of the future

While our core role is delivering electricity, we're also exploring how new technologies can benefit our communities. We were proud to be the principal sponsor of Electrify Queenstown again this year (held in May), where we shared some of the innovative work we're doing.

We talked about a project we're very excited about, which is a future-focused subdivision in Queenstown. We're looking at the feasibility of integrating home solar and batteries, shared EV charging, and community batteries from the start, which will benefit not

only those in the subdivision but also the wider area. Find out more about the Homestead Bay subdivision on the following pages.

We also announced plans to investigate how a community battery could help support some of the more remote communities on our network during power outages, with a trial in Glenorchy later this year. You can read more about this on page 5.

We're fortunate to work alongside industry partners and businesses who share our interest in using new electricity technologies to support a more resilient, flexible energy future and look forward to keeping you updated on these leading-edge projects.

Solar can also benefit those who don't have it

Last year, we were the first lines company in New Zealand to increase how much energy people who have solar can export into our network. And you may be aware that on 1 April the Electricity Authority (one of our regulators) introduced a new requirement for lines companies like Aurora Energy to pay rebates to customers exporting during peak times. For us, this is between 7am and midday, and 5-10pm from May to September. We'll be giving this rebate to your electricity retailer (who you pay your power bill to) to pass on to you so give them a call to find out more. This is great news for those who have a solar and battery installation and there's

also a positive benefit for those who don't, as smoothing out the peaks due to more people using the electricity they generate themselves will mean less investment may be needed to build new electricity infrastructure. This saves everyone money.

Here at Aurora Energy, we put customers at the centre of our decision making. Whether this is about providing new services like a text reminder ahead of planned outages (see below), making our lines charges as affordable as possible (see page 10) or getting out and about in the community (see pages 8 & 9), we will continue to improve what we can offer you. I hope you enjoy this issue of 'Your Network, Your News'.

Richard Fletcher
Chief Executive



SIGN UP FOR TEXT REMINDERS ABOUT PLANNED POWER OUTAGES

Customers have told us they would like the option to sign up for a text reminder when we need to turn the power off for scheduled maintenance on our electricity network. Providing this service is part of our ongoing commitment to improve our customer experience.

This is the first stage of our text service and next we'll look at text alerts for unplanned power outages so you can get updates if your power goes out unexpectedly.

If you would like to receive a text reminder from Aurora Energy two days before any planned power outages impacting your property, head to our website and you'll find the link on the home page, or use the QR code.

Please note, our text reminders don't replace the official notification about any scheduled power outages that you will receive from your electricity retailer (who you pay your bills to). The retailer notifications are usually sent to you at least ten working days before the outage date and our friendly reminder complements these.



THANK YOU

We recently finished a five-year, \$560 million investment programme that was approved by the Commerce Commission in 2021, following public consultation. The goal was to do essential maintenance and upgrades on our electricity network across Dunedin, Central Otago/Wānaka and Queenstown Lakes so it is safe, resilient, and able to meet expected demand for electricity.

Over the last five years we've replaced ageing power poles, lines, cables, crossarms and transformers, built new substations, and carried out regular vegetation inspections and maintenance near power lines. Alongside many other planned projects, this work has helped create a stronger network that's ready for the future.

We've also improved our systems and processes so we're more data-driven, meaning we can make better and more accurate decisions about budget forecasts and future investments.

And most importantly, we've improved our levels of customer service. We launched a new website with better information about power outages, updated our Customer Charter, kept you up to date with the work we're doing through better communications, and continued to make improvements based on customer feedback.

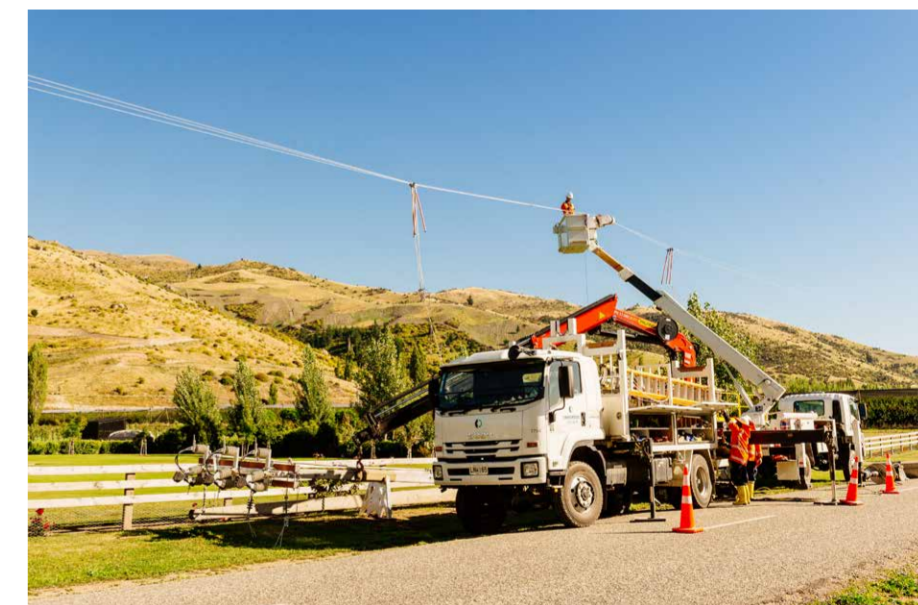
The increased level of work had an impact on connected customers, mainly in the form of planned power outages so our team and our contractors could do the work safely. We don't like turning the power off as we know it's an inconvenience even when you have time to plan for it, and we are grateful for the many messages of support we've received. From snacks given to our hard-working crews, to messages thanking and complimenting our team, we are beyond grateful. From all of us at Aurora Energy, thank you.

Later in the year we'll share a wrap-up of the last five years with you and in the meantime, please know we're not slowing down. We are continuing to work hard and build on what we've achieved, with plenty of improvements still to come. Watch this space!

Some of the highlights:

- Our award-winning harbour crossing project in Dunedin, where we removed six lattice towers and the overhead lines and replaced them with submarine cables (winner of Network Initiative of the Year and Community Initiative of the Year at the 2022 New Zealand Energy Excellence Awards)
- Building or upgrading zone substations in Queenstown, Cromwell, Omakau, Outram, Ettrick, Andersons Bay (Dunedin) Green Island (Dunedin) and Smith St (Dunedin)

- Reinforcing areas of the network to create back-up supply if the power goes out in areas like Clyde, Arrowtown and central Dunedin
- Replacing a large number of power poles, lines and other electrical equipment to increase the reliability of electricity supply
- Building new lines, connecting new customers and subdivisions, and helping businesses electrify their operations



ENABLING THE ENERGY FUTURE OF OUR COMMUNITIES

The way communities use technology is rapidly evolving, with more people owning electric vehicles and more people generating their own electricity through solar panels and battery storage. Aurora Energy plays a crucial role in enabling the energy future of our communities by ensuring our network can support the changing energy needs of customers. This includes working with customers to reach their decarbonisation goals.



ELECTRIFY QUEENSTOWN

Last month, we were proud to once again be the principal sponsor of the 'Electrify Queenstown' event. The three-day event (now in its third year) featured a number of high profile sustainability leaders and changemakers, including local figures who spoke about driving the transition to a clean energy future in Aotearoa. Attendees were also treated to a 'Political Leaders Debate', where leaders from the National, Act, Labour, New Zealand First, Green, and Opportunity parties debated New Zealand's energy future. Aurora Energy's Chief Executive Dr Richard Fletcher was the keynote speaker on one of the days, and shared what's next for Otago's electricity network. We enjoyed speaking with everyone who attended across the three days, and the opportunity to share our vision for Queenstown's electrified future.

POWERING UPPER CLUTHA 2050

The Upper Clutha/Wānaka area is growing quickly, and so is the demand for electricity. More people, more homes and businesses, and more electric technologies mean we need to plan ahead to make sure everyone continues to have a reliable, resilient and cost-effective power supply.

While current upgrades we have planned will meet demand in the short term, we also need to invest in new electricity infrastructure to support the region well into the future. This will help ensure power remains reliable as the community grows and more people choose options like electric vehicles, heat pumps, rooftop solar and batteries.

After carefully looking at a range of options, we've identified a preferred solution. This involves Transpower building a new grid exit point* near Tarras, and Aurora Energy using a mix of existing and new power lines to bring electricity from the national grid into our local network. This will also reinforce our wider distribution network.

We're planning the project in stages so we can respond to how quickly the area grows and how many customers take up solar, batteries and other smart technologies that might help push back some of the later stages of this project. Staging the work also helps manage costs by spreading investment over time, rather than building everything at once. This means we can share costs across a growing number of customers, keeping things as affordable as possible.

There's more information about this project on our website, including a timeline showing each stage.

*A grid exit point (GXP) is where we take electricity from Transpower's national grid and feed it into our local electricity network



SPEIGHT'S GOES ELECTRIC

Earlier this year, we joined Speight's Brewery and LION NZ to celebrate a major electrification milestone at the historic Dunedin site. To support the brewery's new 3MW electric boiler, Aurora Energy upgraded and undergrounded around 480 metres of 6.6 kV cable along Rattray Street. This work has also strengthened the electricity supply in central Dunedin and ensures the network can support future growth and electrification. Delivered as part of a wider collaboration with LION and the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA), the project will significantly reduce Speight's carbon emissions and demonstrates how targeted network investment can deliver long term benefits for both businesses and the wider community.

GLENORCHY NETWORK COMMUNITY BATTERY

We are planning a network community battery for Glenorchy to help improve the security and resilience of their local power supply. Glenorchy is supplied by a single line from Queenstown with no back up supply, and can be affected by weather events, slips, and outages. The community battery would store electricity and work alongside existing local generation to help keep power on for longer if the area becomes isolated. The battery would support fewer and shorter power outages, faster restoration of power, and greater energy security for the community during emergencies. The project is part of our commitment to supporting the smaller and more remote communities on our network and making them more resilient. We're one of the first lines companies in NZ to trial using community batteries and look forward to sharing more with you as this progresses.



HOMESTEAD BAY A SUBDIVISION OF THE FUTURE

We are very excited to design a 'subdivision of the future' at Homestead Bay in Queenstown. The development will include nearly 2,800 homes and is being designed from the ground up to make the most of new energy technologies.

The proposal being assessed would include shared community batteries that store excess solar power generated by residents' homes. This stored energy could be used when demand is high, helping to reduce pressure on the electricity network. The plan also includes smart EV charging, with technology that allows electric vehicles to help power homes and, at times, support the wider grid. The batteries have the additional benefit of delaying future network investments and helping to lower costs to consumers.

The community batteries wouldn't just benefit people living at Homestead Bay. They'd also help support electricity supply across Queenstown during busy periods, such as peak tourism seasons, and during outages.

By working with developer RCL to build this technology into the subdivision from day one, residents would enjoy the benefits of stored energy without having to install or pay for their own batteries. It's a practical way to support Queenstown's growth while helping reduce carbon emissions and make the electricity system more flexible and resilient.

This project is positioned as being one of the first of its kind at this scale in New Zealand and aims to show how planning ahead can deliver long-term benefits for customers, communities and the electricity network.



ELECTRICITY NETWORK UPGRADES

We have now completed our large, five-year work programme, which saw Aurora Energy invest \$560 million to strengthen and upgrade our electricity network. While this major programme has wrapped up, we continue to invest in and improve the network to support growth and enable the energy future of our communities. Below is a snapshot of key projects that have recently been completed or are currently underway across Otago.

OTAGO PENINSULA COORDINATED WORK PACK

We completed a major programme of network upgrades across the Otago Peninsula, focused mainly around Highcliff Road, Broad Bay, and Sandymount, over a six-month period between October and March. The work involved replacing 33 power poles, 67 crossarms and seven kilometres of power lines to help strengthen the local electricity network. Along the way, we hosted two community drop-in sessions, giving locals a chance to stop by, ask questions, and learn more about the work. It was great to meet so many community members – thanks to everyone who popped in.



CROMWELL AND PISA MOORINGS COORDINATED WORK PACK

It's been a busy year for electricity upgrades across the wider Cromwell area. By bundling several projects together, we've been able to reduce disruption for the community while replacing pillar boxes and transformers in Cromwell, Pisa Moorings, and Lowburn. We've also completed a cable upgrade along Jolly Road and Waenga Drive, installing 1.2 kilometres of new cable through ducting to improve the security of supply for more than 5,300 customers connected to the Cromwell substation. In addition, work along State Highway 6 between Highlands Motorsport Park and the entrance to the Kawarau Gorge saw 4 kilometres of high voltage lines upgraded, 21 power poles replaced, four new crossarms installed, and a new pole mounted switch added. Together, these improvements will support growth and deliver an electricity supply for local communities and businesses that supports future energy choices.



ALEXANDRA ZONE SUBSTATION

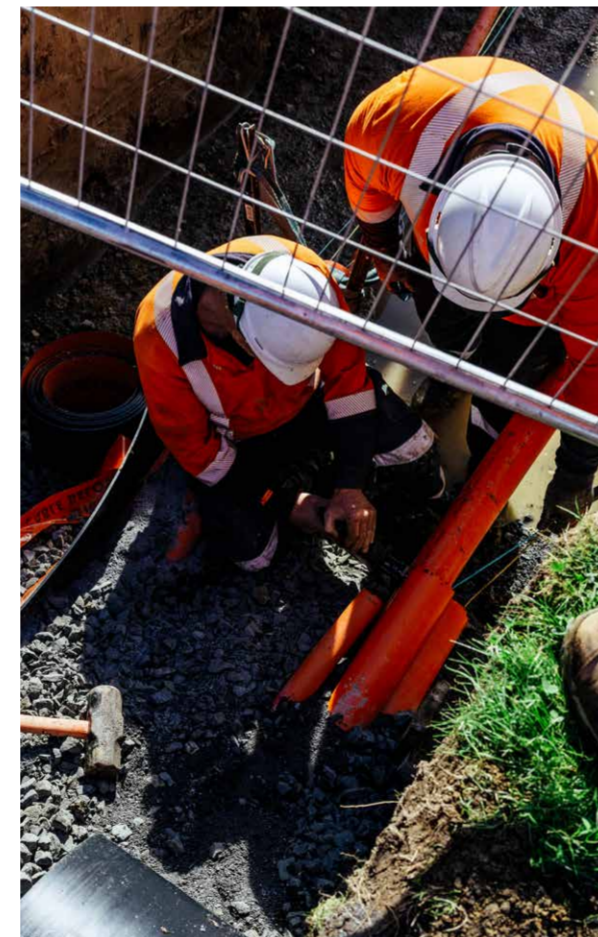
We're pleased to let you know that the new Alexandra zone substation was commissioned earlier this year, following the successful completion of construction and electrical works in the second half of 2025. The project involved building a new facility and replacing end-of-life outdoor 33 kV and 11 kV switchgear with modern indoor equipment.

The upgraded substation supplies electricity to more than 4,400 customers across Alexandra and the wider area. Customers in the Omakau area will also benefit, as their main supply is fed from this substation. This investment helps ensure a more secure, future-ready power supply for the community.



WAIPORI LINES PROJECT

Over 10,000 customers across Mosgiel, East Taieri, Outram, and Berwick will benefit from upgrades to a section of the Waipori Line, a key electricity supply route between Berwick and Halfway Bush. The Waipori Line is made up of three adjacent power lines – A, B, and C – and this work involves replacing ageing poles and conductors with modern infrastructure. As part of the upgrade, the number of poles in the area will be halved, improving safety for motorists and enhancing the visual appearance of the line. The first stage was completed between Berwick and Outram in 2021. The second stage, between the Outram zone substation and State Highway 87, has recently been completed. Thank you to the community for your support and cooperation, to landowners for access to their paddocks, and to neighbouring landowners for their assistance with stock management.



KAIKORAI VALLEY TO HALFWAY BUSH CABLE PROJECT

We are in the final stages of a project to replace two existing 33 kV electricity cables that run from the Kaikorai Valley zone substation in Kenmure to the Transpower Grid Exit Point yard in Halfway Bush. The 3.15km long cables will be installed through ducting and will improve the security of electricity supply for over 3,300 properties.



ALBERT TOWN COORDINATED WORK PACK

Customers in Albert Town may have noticed increased activity over the past month as we completed a significant upgrade of the local electricity network. This work included replacing six power poles, three crossarms, and 3.7 kilometres of power lines across the area. This was a large and carefully planned programme of work, and our contractors did a fantastic job coordinating activities to minimise impact for customers wherever possible. While 12 full day planned outages were required overall, careful scheduling meant that any one customer group was impacted no more than five times. We'd like to thank the community for their understanding, as we worked to get this completed ahead of the colder months.

OUR COMMUNITIES

We're in our community every day - connecting power to new homes and businesses and working on the poles, wires and substations that carry electricity to customers. Our community relations programme helps us connect with and understand customers' needs now and in the future. We value feedback and are dedicated to making a positive difference in the communities we serve.

STREET ART PROGRAMME

Our Street Art Programme is about celebrating creativity and bringing more colour to the places we live and work. By working with local artists and community groups, we're helping transform everyday electricity infrastructure into vibrant pieces of art that reflect local stories and add character to our streets.

Over the past year, we've been proud to support a number of street art projects across our network. You can see some great examples in the photos on this page, by (clockwise) Chrissy Wickes (Wānaka), Kasia Hebda (Queenstown), Lisa Duncan (Arrowtown), and Lara Hattingh (Mosgiel). These artworks help brighten public spaces, create a sense of pride, and make our neighbourhoods more welcoming.

If you're interested in learning more or have an idea you'd like to share, you can get in touch with us via our website:

www.auroraenergy.co.nz/get-in-touch



GIRLBOSS NZ

Earlier this year, we were proud to support the GirlBoss New Zealand Edge Sustainability Programme, a nationwide initiative empowering young women aged 15-21 who are passionate about sustainability, innovation, and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and maths) to enter a career in the energy sector. The response was great, with a record breaking number of participants (over 500 young women across Aotearoa!).

As part of the programme, Aurora Energy sponsored a real world challenge that invited participants to develop practical ideas to help make electricity more sustainable, affordable, and accessible for the Otago community. Participants also benefited from leadership coaching, insights from sustainability leaders, and one-to-one mentoring from professionals across New Zealand's electricity sector, including three of our very talented team members - Belindah, Sonya and Lianne (pictured right).

Supporting GirlBoss NZ is one of the ways we're investing in our communities, and helping inspire the next generation of leaders in energy. We're also proud to share the three winners of Aurora Energy's GirlBoss Edge Sustainability Challenge - Isabel O'Brien, Amber Grossmith, and Esther O'Donnell. These three students each impressed the judging panel, with their ideas standing out for their creativity, practicality, and strong community focus. A big thanks to everyone who took part for the inspiring ideas they shared.



WANAKA A&P SHOW

We enjoyed spending time with the community at this year's Wānaka A&P Show, where our team had great conversations with people who visited our stand. We had some in-depth discussions with people about their solar and batteries, and how they can support our electricity network by feeding back into the grid at peak times as well as save money through using the electricity they generate themselves. The show was also a great opportunity to talk about our Powering Upper Clutha project and how we're planning ahead to support growth and reliability in the region. Thanks to everyone who came by to say hello - we value these opportunities to connect with the community.

RELAY FOR LIFE

Aurora Energy staff put a team together for the Dunedin Relay for Life this year, joining other workplaces and community groups to support the Cancer Society. Relay for Life brings people together to acknowledge those affected by cancer and raise funds for cancer support services. It was our first time supporting the event and we loved taking part.

We have a 'walking and running' group at Aurora Energy and it was great to see so many people who go on lunchtime walks, take part in weekend Park Runs, and organise social hikes for anyone who wants to join, also joining the Aurora Energy team for the Relay for Life.



NEW SAFETY CAMPAIGN - 'SAFE IS A 4 METRE WORD'

We launched a new safety campaign earlier this year for tradies and contractors, to keep them safe while working near our electricity network. In 2025, there were at least 20 reported incidents of tradies or contractors hitting underground cables, overhead lines or power poles on the Aurora Energy network.

'Safe is a 4 metre word' is a simple reminder that you don't need to touch overhead lines, pole-mounted equipment, or underground cables to risk a serious or fatal electric shock.

There are some simple things contractors and tradies can do on the worksite to reduce the risk of harm:

- Before raising any equipment or machinery like a ladder, crane or digger, always double check for overhead power lines because they could be closer than you think.
- If a project requires digging, use the free online BeforeUDig service to get maps of underground cables and utilities. On-site cable location services are also available.
- A close approach consent is needed to work closer than four metres from the Aurora Energy network. This can be done by applying through our website at least five working days in advance. When issued, the consent will include the minimum safe working distances and any safety measures to follow.

There are resources on our website that businesses can download to help keep everyone safe.



POWER PRICES

NEW LINE CHARGE PRICES FROM 1 APRIL

We understand price increases are challenging, and transparency about what's driving these changes is essential.

Our line charges are set by the Commerce Commission and reflect the cost of running and maintaining our electricity network to meet rising electricity demand from the transition to clean energy and businesses moving away from fossil fuels. Line charges also include costs we pass through from others, such as Transpower's transmission charges, local council rates, and regulatory levies.

This year, our prices include a one-off adjustment as we move from our customised price path to the standard price path used for most other lines companies. When setting this change, the Commerce Commission aimed to balance keeping electricity affordable with the need to continue investing in the network to support growth and new technologies that help customers manage their energy use.

Aurora Energy's line charges, together with Transpower's transmission line

charges, make up between 35-40% of the total electricity bill.

On average, prices on our network increased by 21%, which includes 3.8% from higher national transmission charges. Your individual increase may differ depending on which part of our network you're connected to, the Government's phase out of low user plans, and how much electricity you use and when you use it. The Commerce Commission has also applied revenue smoothing rules, which will help keep our price increases more moderate over the next three years.

We know the work we do has an impact on electricity bills and want to support you by sharing ways to save. There's plenty of information on our website in the 'Pricing' section and you can also call our friendly customer experience team on 0800 22 00 05.

ARE YOU GETTING THE BEST DEAL ON YOUR POWER BILL?

A new power bill comparison website was launched recently, which helps you check you're getting the best deal for how much you pay for electricity.

It's free to use and also has helpful information such as a guide to help you understand your power bill, your rights as a consumer, how to use save money by lowering your energy use, and plenty more. It's run by the Electricity Authority and you can check it out at www.billy.govt.nz

Power bills often spike over the next few months as we use more electricity to heat our homes and dry our clothes. Here are some tips to help you (there are plenty more on our website):

- Clean your heat pump filter because clogged filters make it work harder
- Change to LED lightbulbs; they use 85% less power and last 15 times longer than incandescent bulbs
- Stop drafts by using door snakes under doors or on drafty window ledges
- Draw your curtains 30 minutes before sunset to conserve heat
- Close the doors to any rooms you're not using and don't need to heat
- Ventilate your laundry to avoid pumping damp air into your house

OUR PEOPLE

We're a friendly team of over 160 people, bringing together talent and experience from more than 20 countries, and working in diverse roles including engineering, planning, project management, finance, digital transformation, communications and more. Get to know the people behind the scenes and find out why we love working in the electricity industry and at Aurora Energy.



Project Manager Tony, on the right, with two of his colleagues

MEET TONY

What does a typical day in your role involve?

As a Project Manager in the Works Programming and Delivery team, I'm responsible for coordinating projects from planning through to delivery, making sure work is safely scheduled, well communicated, and delivered on time. A big part of my role is working closely with internal teams, contractors, and stakeholders to balance priorities and keep projects moving smoothly. No two days are ever the same. My role involves regularly shifting priorities, responding to emerging issues, and parking planned work when something more urgent arises. I enjoy problem solving and collaborating with others to work through challenges, whether they're related to construction, design, or planning.

Why did you choose to work at Aurora Energy / what do you love about working at Aurora Energy?

I joined Aurora Energy to continue developing my career and to transition my field experience into other areas of the business. I've enjoyed expanding my skill set, learning new aspects of the organisation, and applying my practical knowledge in a different way. The opportunity to grow and take on new challenges is what I like the most about working here.

What are some of the highlights from your time in the role?

One of the key highlights has been leading the delivery of several complex projects, in particular the Smith Street zone substation rebuild. This was a highly challenging project

delivered under tight timeframes and significant network resilience pressures. Successfully completing it was only possible through strong collaboration and the support of a dedicated group of Aurora Energy staff, and it was rewarding to see the collective effort translate into a positive outcome for the network. My proudest moment at work though, was seeing the entire Aurora Energy organisation come together in support of the Cancer Society's Longest Day Golf Challenge. The level of participation and enthusiasm across the business was genuinely special and a true reflection of our 'One Team' culture. It was inspiring to be part of an organisation where people are so willing to support a cause bigger than themselves.



JOIN THE TEAM

Aurora Energy is a great place to work! Head to our website to view our current vacancies: www.auroraenergy.co.nz/careers

PLAN AHEAD FOR POWER OUTAGES

Be prepared for power outages, whether they are caused by weather events, emergency situations or necessary maintenance. If you do experience an outage, we'll be working as quickly and safely as possible to restore power.

Have a plan

Treat all electrical equipment as live

Go to our website for

It's important to have a plan, especially if you are medically dependent or your business depends on power. As your local lines company, we have up-to-date outage information on our website and advice to help you before, during and after power outages.

auroraenergy.co.nz

0800 22 00 05

BE SWITCHED ON TO SAFETY

ANY QUESTIONS? GET IN TOUCH



Scan to sign up for our digital edition



0800 22 00 05



auroraenergy.co.nz



info@auroraenergy.nz



[@auroraenergynz](https://www.facebook.com/auroraenergynz)



[@auroraenergynz](https://www.instagram.com/auroraenergynz)



[auroraenergynz](https://www.linkedin.com/company/auroraenergynz)