

# Power scheme 'a cracker', says Minister

The Household Efficient Light Project being piloted in South Canterbury is a cracker scheme and one the Government would be interested in looking closely at, Energy Minister Pete Hodgson said yesterday.

Christchurch-based Energy Mad Ltd and LineTrust South Canterbury are behind the scheme which is expected to save households that change

had their lights tested for electricity use.

Mr Hodgson said he was delighted with the scheme and congratulated Energy Mad directors Chris Mardon and Tom Mackenzie for their initiative.

"You can only congratulate them for the scheme. They have done some lateral thinking and come up with a cracker of an idea.

"Everyone in the community, across every socio-economic

amount of money for energy efficiency since they had been in office, and they were "that close" to looking at light bulbs.

"When these bulbs first came out they cost something like \$30 and now they are well under \$10.

"The fact that the LineTrust has subsidised these bulbs even further, they can only be commended for getting behind the scheme."

Mr Hodgson said the Government tended to go for the cheapest options first when it came to energy efficiency and that had, in the past, been in the commercial and industrial areas.

The Electricity Commission had been funded to look at energy efficiency and the bulbs would most probably be one of those things they looked at next.

Mr Mackenzie said the scheme, when rolled out nationally, would save about 270MW peak load of electricity — about half of what Meridian Energy's Project Aqua power scheme would have generated.

Mr Mardon added that was all achieved for a few dollars and without the need of a resource consent.

Long-time South Canterbury electricity campaigner Lawrie Blakemore also supports the project.

He said the Government had taken half a billion dollars a year off power consumers over and above the cost of producing and delivering electricity.

"They should be paying for the scheme and they should have started years ago," he said.

■ By Helen Pickering  
Staff Reporter



**A BRIGHT IDEA:** The inventors of the new ecobulb, Tom Mackenzie (left) and Chris Mardon, paid a visit to Timaru yesterday to show off their aesthetically pleasing light bulbs — and the \$500 consumers will save if they install five of the bulbs.

five bulbs around \$100 to \$150 per year or more than \$500 over the lifetime of the bulbs.

Every residential Alpine Energy customer will get a voucher sent to them this month, which will allow them to buy five of the subsidised light bulbs for \$2 each.

The pilot scheme is expected to start on October 30 and the trial results will be collated in December. Already 50 South Canterbury households have

group gets the chance to participate so everyone is being treated the same. It's a great idea.

"If it works in South Canterbury, once we know the uptake with the bulbs at that price and the savings, then the Government will be taking a close look."

When asked why the Government had not used some lateral thinking to help ward off the pending electricity crisis, he said they had tripled the