

# Solar Hot Water



Hot water heating takes up about 25% of your household energy use. By installing solar hot water you can reduce both your energy costs and your carbon footprint.

## Why get solar hot water?

Hot water accounts for 25 % of household energy use and around 6 tonnes of greenhouse emissions. Replacing an old or inefficient hot water system is a really important action households can take to reduce their carbon footprint.

Electric-boosted solar hot water produces about half the greenhouse gases (3.3 tonnes) compared to an electric storage system (5.8 tonnes) and a gas-boosted solar hot water system produces only 0.5 tonnes of greenhouse emissions per year for a medium sized household. 5 star gas hot water systems are also relatively efficient, producing 1.4 tonnes of emissions per year.

## How does solar hot water work?

Solar hot water systems work by harnessing the energy of the sun to heat water as it passes through 'solar collectors' which are flat dark coloured plates designed to warm up in even minimal sunlight. The water is then stored in an insulated tank either on the roof next to the solar collection panels (called a close coupled system) or the tank sits in or beside the home (called a split system). The water can be boosted by either electricity or gas if needed to reach the required temperature or if additional water is required – this means you never need to run out of hot water.

Solar collection panels can be retrofitted onto some kinds of hot water systems, and this costs less than replacing the whole system.

The important thing to know is that the solar collectors need to be installed on the roof where there is good access to sun which is not shaded by surrounding trees. Most rooftops are suitable for the installation of solar, and brackets can be installed on flat roof to ensure the solar collecting panels are the best angle to the sun to optimise the amount of energy captured.

If you live in a heritage precinct it is best to seek advice from Council on planning requirements.

While it depends on the context, some sensitivity regarding the location of the solar collection panels should be all that is needed as the installation of solar is much like the addition of air-conditioning or tv aerials which are common in heritage suburbs.

## How can you get it?

The investment in solar hot water can reduce energy bills by \$300-\$500 per year.

Both State and Federal Governments are offering rebates for solar hot water. For more information on the **current rebates** see MEFL's rebates fact sheet

> [http://www.mefl.com.au/documents/MEFL\\_FACT\\_SHEET-rebates.pdf](http://www.mefl.com.au/documents/MEFL_FACT_SHEET-rebates.pdf)

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## For further information on solar hot water rebates and RECs

To find out more about rebates and which you are eligible for, have a look at the following website;

> [www.resourcesmart.vic.gov.au/for\\_households/rebates.html](http://www.resourcesmart.vic.gov.au/for_households/rebates.html)

For information about MEFL's stance on RECs have a look at:

> [http://www.mefl.com.au/documents/MEFL\\_FACT\\_SHEET\\_RECs.pdf](http://www.mefl.com.au/documents/MEFL_FACT_SHEET_RECs.pdf)

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