



Australian Government

**Department of the Environment,
Water, Heritage and the Arts**

Energy Efficient Homes Package

Solar Hot Water Rebate

Guidelines and application form

The Australian Government's \$3.9 billion Energy Efficient Homes Package aims to improve the energy rating of Australian homes - cutting their energy waste, making them more comfortable and helping home owners save up to 40 per cent on their electricity bills.

The Solar Hot Water Rebate is a key part of this package. Under the program, the Australian Government is offering a rebate of \$1,600 to install solar or heat pump hot water systems that replace electric hot water systems in existing privately owned homes. Installing a low emissions hot water system can save a family \$300–\$700 in electricity costs each year.

The Solar Hot Water Rebate is offered for systems installed on or after 3 February 2009 until 30 June 2012. Rebates are conditional on meeting all aspects outlined in the guidelines for the Solar Hot Water Rebate. Eligible systems must earn 20 renewable energy certificates (RECs) or more at the time of purchase at the installation address.

The \$1,600 rebate is in addition to renewable energy certificates (RECs) which are assigned to most solar hot water systems sold in Australia. RECs can provide a discount of around \$1,000 on the up front cost of the average solar hot water system.

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Part 1: Solar Hot Water Rebate Overview

Why is the Australian Government giving a rebate?

The Australian Government is investing \$3.9 billion in the Energy Efficient Homes Package to improve the energy rating of Australian homes – cutting their energy waste, making them more comfortable and helping home owners reduce their electricity bills by up to 40 per cent.

Under this package the Australian Government is offering:

- ceiling insulation worth up to \$1,600 to all eligible home owner-occupiers; or a \$1,600 rebate on the costs of installing solar hot water systems; and
- assistance of up to \$1,000 to eligible landlords and tenants to install new ceiling insulation in existing rental properties.

*More information on the Energy Efficient Homes Package is available from:

www.environment.gov.au/energyefficiency

Water heating is the largest single source of greenhouse gas emissions from the average Australian home, with electric storage hot water systems accounting for around 28 per cent of household emissions (excluding the family car). This rebate is specifically targeted at the removal of existing electric storage hot water systems.

The rebate is in addition to renewable energy certificates (RECs) which are an incentive provided by the Australian Government to encourage all households to reduce their emissions by installing a solar or heat pump hot water system. A number of RECs - generally 20 or more - are assigned to most domestic solar hot water systems sold in Australia. These certificates are usually provided as a point of sale discount of around \$1,000 by retailers.

What do you need to do?

Did you install your solar hot water system before 3 February 2009? If so, you could be eligible for a \$1,000 solar hot water rebate. Visit www.environment.gov.au/energyefficiency to find out more.

If you installed your system on or after 3 February 2009, read on for more information.

1. Read the guidelines in this information booklet and carefully assess your eligibility for the rebate.
2. Replace your existing electric storage hot water system with an eligible low emissions hot water system (solar hot water or heat pump).
3. Complete an application form (you will be filling out most areas of the form).
4. On the day of installation ask your installer to complete Sections 3 and 4 of the application form.
5. Submit the completed application form by post ensuring that you:
 - attach a copy of the receipt for the purchase of the new system
 - have the form countersigned by the installer
 - nominate a BSB number and bank account number for the electronic payment of the rebate.

Incomplete application forms will be returned to the applicant without processing. The application form must be submitted within six months of the installation of the new system.

What are renewable energy certificates (RECs)?

Under the Australian Government's Renewable Energy Target – a scheme set up under Commonwealth law to promote the development of renewable energy – new solar and heat pump hot water heaters may be eligible to create renewable energy certificates (RECs). Householders can create and trade these certificates on their own, but it is more common for Registered Agents to create and trade RECs on behalf of householders. The renewable energy certificate benefit for consumers usually comes as a point of sale discount. Most retailers will advise potential buyers how many renewable energy certificates are provided by each solar hot water system model and how much each of those RECs are worth at today's prices (the price of RECs vary according to market forces). The retailers then provide a discount to the buyer meaning the cost of the hot water system to the householder is reduced.

The Solar Hot Water Rebate is given to systems that earn 20 RECs or more at the time of purchase at the installation address. A list of eligible systems is available in the Register of Solar Water Heaters on the Office of the Renewable Energy Regulator website: www.orer.gov.au/swh/register.html.

Hot water system retailers can also advise you on the number of RECs assigned to a system.

More information about RECs is available on the Office of the Renewable Energy Regulator website:

- Renewable energy certificates - www.orer.gov.au/recs
- Solar hot water heaters – www.orer.gov.au/swh

Part 2: Solar Hot Water Rebate Guidelines

The Solar Hot Water Rebate component of the Australian Government's Energy Efficient Homes Package provides a rebate of \$1,600 to eligible applicants who have installed an eligible solar or heat pump hot water system that replaced an electric storage hot water system at an existing principal place of residence.

The rebate is offered from 3 February 2009 until 30 June 2012, subject to the availability of funds. No applications will be accepted after 30 June 2012.

The Australian Government reserves the right to change the rebate amount or any other aspect of the guidelines.

Eligibility requirements

The information contained in the Solar Hot Water Rebate guidelines (on pages 4 - 6 of this booklet) in its entirety forms the eligibility criteria for the rebate. In order to qualify for a rebate, applicants must fully comply with all the eligibility requirements in these guidelines.

Final decisions regarding rebate eligibility will be made by the Australian Government.

Applicant requirements

To be eligible to obtain a rebate the applicant must:

- not have previously applied for the Homeowner Insulation Program at this address; and
- be an Australian citizen or permanent resident aged 18 years or over; and
- submit an application, attaching a copy of proof of system purchase, within six months (184 days) of system installation; and
- be the owner or tenant of the dwelling where the system was installed at the time the system was installed (Please note: a tenant should not install a system without approval from the owner of the dwelling); and
- be the purchaser of the system or have written permission from the purchaser to apply for the rebate; and
- correctly complete and submit an application form and agree to the terms and conditions listed on the application form.

Only one rebate will be granted per eligible system. In the case of multiple applications for a single system, the rebate will be paid to the first eligible applicant.

System requirements

To be eligible to obtain a rebate, the hot water system must:

- be installed in Australia at a principal place of residence; and
- be installed by a suitably qualified person (for example an electrician and/or plumber); and
- be installed on or after 3 February 2009, as certified by the licensed installer; and
- be a new and complete hot water system that replaces an existing electric storage hot water system previously operational at the dwelling, as certified by the licensed installer; and
- be a hot water system that is eligible for at least 20 renewable energy certificates under the Renewable Energy Target at the time and place of installation, as certified by the licensed installer; and

- be installed to the relevant building standards and government requirements, as certified by the licensed installer; and
- be fully functional, as certified by the licensed installer.

Rebates will **not** be eligible where:

- the applicant is not the owner or tenant of the dwelling where the system was installed at the time the system was installed; or
- the dwelling where the system is installed is not a principal place of residence (for example where the dwelling is a holiday home or a semi-permanent building); or
- the dwelling where the system is installed is state or territory public housing or is owned by a state or territory government; or
- the applicant is not an individual (for example where the applicant is a business or other organisation); or
- the system replaces or is additional to an existing solar or heat pump hot water system; or
- the system replaces a hot water system which was not originally designed as an electric storage hot water system; or
- the system will be used for non-domestic purposes or primarily for heating a swimming pool, spa or similar.

Final decisions regarding rebate eligibility will be made by the Australian Government.

Rebate application process

To claim a rebate the applicant must fully complete, sign and submit an application form (available at the back of this booklet, from www.environment.gov.au/solarhotwater or by calling 1800 808 571) with the requested supporting documentation.

Incomplete applications will be returned to applicants without processing.

The applicant should allow 8 weeks for the application to be processed.

Applying for the rebate requires the applicant to submit a copy of proof of system purchase.

Applying for the rebate requires the applicant to agree that he/she will provide evidence to support claims made on the application form if requested.

Applying for the rebate requires the applicant to agree to allow an authorised inspector access to the system for audit purposes if requested.

Applying for the rebate requires a licensed installer to certify the following on the application form:

- system installation date; and
- that the system replaced an existing electric storage hot water system; and
- that the system is eligible for at least 20 renewable energy certificates; and
- that the system was installed to the relevant building standards and government requirements.

Definitions

The following definitions are applied for the purpose of this rebate:

Principal place of residence – a privately owned dwelling that is the primary residence of the owner or a tenant.

System – a new domestic solar or heat pump hot water system that is a complete model as listed in the Register of Solar Water Heaters administered by the Office of the Renewable Energy Regulator (available from www.orer.gov.au/swh/register.html). Eligible systems must have a unique tank serial number defined by the manufacturer.

Important notices

Applicants should not assume that they will receive a rebate on submitting an application. The Australian Government will decide whether an applicant satisfies the eligibility requirements as set out in these guidelines and reserves the right to request further information to make this decision.

The Australian Government may require the applicant to present reasonable evidence to support his/her application for the rebate. Requests from the Australian Government for evidence may be made after the payment of the rebate but must be made within twenty four (24) months of the application.

The Australian Government accepts no liability for any loss, damage or cost incurred as a result of, or arising from, the installation of a system which has been the subject of a rebate application, or the application process.

Personal information collected will only be used for the purpose of assessing applications and related purposes. This process may include the exchange of information with other government departments or agencies for compliance purposes, and/or reporting publicly on the performance of the rebate. Reports will be based on aggregate data and personal information will not be identifiable in such reports. Information will be used for the payment of the rebate to successful applicants.

The Australian Government takes no responsibility for any private arrangement between tenants and landlords with regard to the rebate. The tenant or landlord has no entitlement against the Australian Government in these circumstances.

Further information

Further information can be obtained from www.environment.gov.au/solarhotwater or by calling **1800 808 571**.

Part 3: How to Apply

How do I apply?

To claim a rebate, you need to submit a fully completed application form. You will be filling out most areas of the form, but on the day of installation your installer will need to complete Section 3 and sign Section 4. This should take no longer than a few minutes and your installer is aware of the process and will have the required information.

Application forms are available at the back of this booklet or can be downloaded from www.environment.gov.au/solarhotwater

Applicants must apply by mail to:

Solar Hot Water Rebate
Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts
GPO Box 787
Canberra ACT 2601

- An applicant has up to six months (184 days) after an eligible system is installed to submit an application form.
- The applicant should allow eight weeks for the application to be processed.
- Incomplete application forms will be returned to the applicant without processing.

For more information please contact our national information line on **1800 808 571**.

Supporting documentation

Applicants must submit a copy of their purchase receipt with their application. No other supporting documentation is required. However, requests from the Australian Government for evidence may be made after the payment of the rebate and would be made within 24 months of the application.

Part 4: Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Solar Hot Water Rebate?

The Solar Hot Water Rebate component of the Australian Government's Energy Efficient Homes Package provides rebates of \$1,600 to eligible applicants to install solar or heat pump hot water systems in existing homes. The new hot water system must replace an electric storage hot water system which are the most greenhouse intensive of household hot water systems and generate the largest amount of greenhouse gas emissions.

The rebate encourages switching to alternative hot water technologies by addressing the up-front cost barriers to climate friendly systems, which also deliver low operating costs for the household.

The rebate is to help households replace existing electric storage hot water systems. Rebates are not available for replacing older solar or gas hot water systems.

Am I eligible for more than one component of the package?

No, under the Energy Efficient Homes Package you can claim **either** \$1,600 insulation **or** the \$1,600 rebate for solar hot water, depending on your needs. **You can only claim one rebate per address.**

However if you have already claimed the Australian Government's previous means-tested rebate of \$1,000 for a solar hot water system installed before 3 February 2009, you may still be eligible for insulation.

* More information on the Energy Efficient Homes Package is available from:
www.environment.gov.au/energyefficiency

When can I apply for a rebate?

The rebate is offered from 3 February 2009 until 30 June 2012, subject to the availability of funds, for solar hot water systems installed from 3 February 2009. No applications will be accepted after 30 June 2012. Applicants must apply for the rebate within six months of their new solar or heat pump hot water system being installed.

What is the deadline for applications?

Applicants must apply for the rebate within six months (184 days) of installing an eligible system.

Who can apply for the rebate?

Applicants for the rebate must be the owner or tenant of the dwelling where the system was installed. The application process is simple and straightforward and is completed at the time the new hot water system is being installed. Suppliers and installers of solar hot water systems cannot apply for the Australian Government Solar Hot Water Rebate on behalf of their customers.

Government agencies or occupants of public housing are not eligible for this rebate.

Can I apply for the rebate if I am renting?

Yes. The system for which a rebate is being claimed must be installed at a principal place of residence. An applicant can be the owner or the tenant of the dwelling.

A tenant should not install a system without approval from the owner of the dwelling. The sharing of any costs is a matter for the landlord and the tenant to negotiate.

Regardless of whether you are an owner or a tenant, all other eligibility requirements must be met.

If my system was installed before 3 February 2009, can I get the new rebate?

No. If your system was installed prior to 3 February 2009, you are only entitled to the rebate that was available at the time (ie means tested \$1,000 rebate). However, you may be eligible for the \$1,600 insulation component of the Energy Efficient Homes Package.

I installed my system before 3 February 2009, can I still apply for the \$1000 rebate?

Yes, provided you meet the eligibility requirements (which include a household means test). Applications for the previous \$1,000 rebate will be accepted until 2 August 2009.

Are rebates available for new homes or those which are rebuilt?

In order to maximise environmental outcomes, solar hot water systems installed on new houses are not eligible for the rebate. In comparison to existing housing stock, new homes are generally more energy efficient. Some state governments also regulate the energy efficiency of hot water systems installed in new homes. Furthermore, it is more expensive to install energy efficient hot water systems onto existing homes than onto new homes.

Houses that are rebuilt are classed as new houses and therefore are not eligible for the rebate.

The Australian Government provides an incentive to all households to install climate friendly hot water systems in the form of renewable energy certificates (RECs). RECs are assigned by the Office of the Renewable Energy Regulator as part of the Renewable Energy Target scheme and reflect the deemed value of equivalent renewable energy generation over a ten year period. These certificates are tradable and commonly provide a discount of around \$1,000 from the up front cost of the average solar hot water system.

Can I still apply for other State or Territory rebates?

Yes. An application for the Australian Government's Solar Hot Water Rebate component will not be affected by any rebates that other governments may offer. For details on other rebates, you will need to follow up with your relevant state or territory authority.

Can I get the rebate for a system I install on my investment property?

Yes. The system for which a rebate is being claimed must be installed at a principal place of residence. This can be an investment property which must be the tenant's principal place of residence. It cannot be a holiday home. An owner may apply for a rebate on more than one property. A separate application must be submitted for each property.

The sharing of any costs is a matter for the landlord and the tenant to negotiate.

Regardless of whether you are an owner or a tenant, all other eligibility requirements must be met.

Are rebates available for holiday homes?

Rebates are not available for holiday homes. To ensure the largest environmental benefit will be achieved, the rebate has been designed to replace electric storage hot water systems in principal places of residence.

Is the rebate means tested?

No.

How will the payment be made?

Payment is made by electronic funds transfer into the bank account of successful applicants. Applicants must be the owner or tenant of the dwelling where the solar or heat pump hot water system was installed. The applicant provides a BSB and bank account number and the funds are directly deposited. Bank details will only be used to make the payment. Storage and disposal of bank account and other personal details will be managed in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988.

What is my BSB and bank account number?

A BSB number is a unique 6-digit code that identifies the bank/financial institution and branch where your bank account is held. It can generally be found on your bank statement.

Your bank account number can also be found on your bank statement. Bank account numbers are always nine digits or less. They are not the 16 digit number that appears on your credit/debit card.

It is important that you enter the correct BSB and account numbers, otherwise payment cannot be processed.

If you are still unsure, your bank or financial institution will be able provide you with your bank account and BSB number.

When will my payment be credited to my account?

For successful applicants payment will be credited directly to their Australian bank account within 8 weeks of receiving a completed and eligible application form.

What is a solar retrofit and why isn't it eligible for the rebate?

Solar water heater retrofit kits are used to add solar panels to existing electric off-peak boosted tanks. Conventional tanks are not designed to be connected to solar collectors so retrofit kits are not as effective as a water heater designed specifically for solar, however, significant savings can still be made.

The Solar Hot Water Rebate provides rebates for solar and heat pump hot water systems that replace an existing electric storage hot water system. In order to be eligible for the rebate the solar or heat pump system must be a new and complete hot water system that is eligible for at least 20 renewable energy certificates (RECs).

RECs are assigned by the Office of the Renewable Energy Regulator as part of the Renewable Energy Target (RET) scheme and reflect the deemed value of equivalent renewable energy generation over a ten year period.

The RET scheme does not allow individual parts of hot water systems to be tested separately because the efficiency of the total system can vary greatly with the effects of different ancillary parts and their installed arrangement (as a result solar water heaters currently eligible for RECs are complete systems). For this reason, a 'retrofit' system that is based around a previously installed component is not eligible for RECs and therefore not eligible for the Solar Hot Water Rebate.

Why does a licensed installer need to sign my application form?

As part of the application process we require proof that you are replacing an existing electric storage hot water system and have installed a hot water system that is eligible for 20 renewable energy certificates or more. The installer can certify this and can also provide the tank serial number which is not always easy for the applicant to obtain.

Part 5: Further Information

Further information can be obtained from:

Phone: **1800 808 571**

Website: **www.environment.gov.au/solarhotwater**

Solar Hot Water Rebate
Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts
GPO Box 787
CANBERRA ACT 2601



Solar Hot Water Rebate Application Form

Application number (Office use only)

This application form should be read in conjunction with the Solar Hot Water Rebate Guidelines and submitted within six (6) months of installation.

The application form must be completed in full by the applicant (who should be the owner or tenant of the property where the new solar or heat pump hot water system has been installed) and by the licensed installer of your system. Copies of the receipt(s) for the purchase of the new solar hot water system must be included with this application.

This application form is applicable for systems installed on or after 3 February 2009.

Sections 1, 2, 5 & 6 – Completed by applicant. Sections 3 & 4 - Completed by licensed installer.

1. APPLICANT INFORMATION (PLEASE COMPLETE IN BLOCK LETTERS)

Surname First name

Address where the system has been installed Postcode

Postal address (if different from installation address) Postcode

Phone number ()

Mobile number

Email address

2. APPLICANT AND DWELLING (WHERE SYSTEM HAS BEEN INSTALLED) ELIGIBILITY

Please read the Guidelines and complete all parts below. Each question must be answered for this application to be processed.

Have you previously applied for the Homeowner Insulation Program? Yes No >If Yes, then you are not eligible for the rebate

Are you an Australian citizen or permanent resident aged 18 years or over? Yes No >If No, then you are not eligible for the rebate

Is the dwelling where the system is installed located in Australia? Yes No >If No, then you are not eligible for the rebate

Is the dwelling a principal place of residence? A principal place of residence is a home where an owner or a tenant primarily resides. For further information please see definition in guidelines. Yes No >If No, then you are not eligible for the rebate

Is the dwelling privately owned? For example it is not state or territory public housing or owned by a state or territory government. Yes No >If No, then you are not eligible for the rebate

Are you the owner or the tenant of the dwelling? You must be the owner or tenant of the dwelling where the system was installed at the time the system was installed. A tenant should not install a system without approval from the owner of the dwelling. Owner Tenant

Are you the purchaser of the system?

Yes

No

If you ticked No, have you obtained written permission from the purchaser to apply for the rebate?

Yes

No

If you are not the purchaser of the system, you must obtain written permission from the purchaser to apply for the rebate. This written permission should be kept on file for 24 months in case it is required for auditing purposes. Please see guidelines for further information on auditing requirements.

3. SYSTEM ELIGIBILITY (TO BE COMPLETED IN BLOCK LETTERS BY LICENSED INSTALLER)

Date new system was installed / / **This date must be on or after 3 February 2009**

The installation date is the date the system was first fully operational and is written on the renewable energy certificate (REC) Assignment Form. Applications must be submitted within six (6) months of installation.

Did the system replace an electric storage hot water system? Yes No > If No, then you are not eligible for the rebate

New tank serial number

Make/Model

Type of system installed? Heat Pump Solar System

Is the new hot water system worth 20 RECS or more? Yes No >If No, then you are not eligible for the rebate

4. LICENSED INSTALLER'S DECLARATION (TO BE COMPLETED IN BLOCK LETTERS BY LICENSED INSTALLER)

Installer's name

Company name

Installer's licence number Installer's phone number

State of registration

- I certify as the installer that I have done the installation work required to connect the solar hot water system in accordance with the relevant building standards and government requirements.
- I certify that this system is for domestic purposes only (excluding swimming pools, spas or similar).
- I certify that the information provided by me is truthful and correct.

Installer's signature

Date / /

5. REBATE PAYMENT DETAILS

The rebate payment for successful applicants will be made by direct deposit. Applicants should allow 8 weeks for the application to be processed. **The payment will only be made into the bank account of the applicant.** The rebate is not available as a point of sale discount nor can a retailer, installer or commercial business apply for the rebate on behalf of their customers.

Name of account holder

BSB number (6 digits)

Account number

Please note: A BSB number is a unique 6-digit code that identifies the bank/financial institution and branch where your bank account is held. It can generally be found on your bank statement. If you are unsure of your BSB number, please contact your bank or financial institution. Your bank account number can also be found on your bank statement. It is not the 16 digit number that appears on your credit/debit card. It is important that you enter the correct BSB and account numbers, otherwise payment cannot be processed. The rebate can only be paid to an Australian bank account.

The Australian Government will only use your bank details for the purpose of paying the rebate.

6. DECLARATIONS, YOUR RESPONSIBILITY AND YOUR RIGHT TO PRIVACY (please read carefully)

As a Commonwealth agency, the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts is bound by the *Privacy Act 1988*. Personal information collected will only be used for the purpose of assessing applications and related purposes. This process may include the exchange of information with other government departments or agencies for compliance purposes, and/or reporting publicly on the performance of the rebate. Reports will be based on aggregate data and personal information will not be identifiable in such reports. Information may also be disclosed to Commonwealth contractors for the purposes of verifying details of applications or assisting the Commonwealth in the delivery of the Homeowner's Insulation program. Information will be used by the Commonwealth and Commonwealth contractors for the payment of the rebate to successful applicants.

The Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts reserves the right to refuse any application if the information provided is incomplete or does not meet the required criteria.

- I certify as the applicant that I am the owner or tenant of the residential property where the new Solar Hot Water System is installed, and it is a principal place of residence.
- I certify as the applicant that I have read and understood the Solar Hot Water Rebate Guidelines.
- I certify that, to the best of my knowledge, all of the above details are correct at the time of completing this form. Providing false or misleading information is a serious offence and carries penalties under the *Criminal Code Act 1995*.
- I agree as the applicant that I have and will provide the Australian Government with sufficient and reasonable evidence of my eligibility for the rebate if requested any time up to 24 months after installation. This may include allowing an authorised inspector access to my property to inspect the installation of my new solar hot water system as requested by the Australian Government.
- I acknowledge as the applicant that the Australian Government accepts no liability for any loss, damage or cost incurred as a result of, or arising from, the installation of a system which has been the subject of a rebate application, or the application for the rebate.

Your signature

Date

How did you find out about the rebate?

Retailer

Installer

Website > Specify

Newspaper/magazine > Name

Other > Provide details

FORWARD COMPLETED APPLICATION FORM AND COPIES OF PURCHASE RECEIPTS TO:

Solar Hot Water Rebate
Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts
GPO Box 787
Canberra ACT 2601

Checklist (to assist with speedy processing of your application)

Incomplete applications will be returned to applicants without processing.

Please ensure you have completed all parts of the application form.

- Have you completed every field except sections 3 and 4?
- Has your installer completed and signed sections 3 and 4?
- Have you provided a BSB (6 digit number), bank account number and name of account holder?
- Have you signed the form?
- Have you attached copies of your purchase receipts?

If you have any questions, please call 1800 808 571.