



TAP INTO HOT WATER SAVINGS

FAST FACTS FOR HOUSEHOLDS

Fast and efficient hot water systems are essential for our busy and active homes. But did you know that in NSW electric hot water systems use more electricity than any other major appliance in the home?

In fact, an electric hot water system can account for one third of a home's annual power bill. Yet most of us are paying for, and using, more hot water than we actually need. Switching to an energy efficient hot water system and using less hot water can have a big effect on our [electricity bills](#) as well as reduce our [impact on the environment](#) – without compromising on comfort!

BIG SAVINGS

There are some easy ways we can use less hot water at home, such as reducing shower times, fitting showers with a [water efficient showerhead](#) and washing clothes in cold water. These simple actions can save us hundreds of dollars a year.

Here are some other quick and easy ways to make savings:

- Fix leaking taps – a hot tap, dripping 45 times per minute, wastes around 2000 litres of hot water each month. That's around 220 buckets of water.
- Check hot water tanks for leaks and wear and tear. A leaking pressure relief valve (found on the side of your hot water tank) can waste hundreds of litres of hot water without you even knowing. Check with the installer or a plumber whether your hot water tank should be insulated.
- Use cold water around the home for odd jobs. It can often clean just as well.

DID YOU KNOW? Installing a water efficient showerhead saves power as well as water. Look for a 3 star WELS rated showerhead when buying a new showerhead. The more stars on the WELS rating label the better. See www.waterrating.gov.au for more information.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT HOT WATER SYSTEM FOR YOUR HOME

When upgrading or buying a new hot water system, look into the installation and running costs. The cheapest model to buy may not be the most economical in the long run. Choose a power source, system type and size of unit (check usage costs) to suit your home, the local climate and your budget for at least the next 10 years. Here are some things to consider:

- **Household size** – How many people live in your home? When do you use the most hot water and where? The size of your system will depend on the size of your household and factors like when you shower or run the dishwasher, washing machine and bath.
- **Power source** – Does your home have piped gas? Do you have good access to sunshine? Do you live in a cold climate? The type of hot water system you choose (gas, solar or heat pump) is dependent on these considerations.
- **Space available** – Do you live in a house, a townhouse or an apartment? If you've only got a small amount of space available, you'll need to choose a system that's compact. If you live in a bigger property, you may have more choice.
- **Purchase and operating costs** – Consider the purchase and operating costs of your new hot water system. The power used by your water heater will impact on your electricity bill for years to come.
- **Installation** – Ensure that installation costs are included in the quote and bear in mind that installation can take a couple of days and may require access to both the inside and outside of your home. Make sure that your installer is adequately qualified.

For more detailed information about choosing and installing the right energy efficient hot water system for your home visit: www.climatechange.gov.au/what-you-need-to-know/appliances-and-equipment.aspx



There are simple things we can all do that will lower power bills and reduce our impact on the environment.

our environment *it's a living thing*

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR SYSTEM

Making a few easy changes will allow you to get the most out of your hot water system and keep your power bill under control. Start saving today with these tips:

- Install a water restrictor or flow control nozzle to reduce the amount of water flowing from your taps.
- Install a hot water circulator with your instantaneous gas hot water heater. The water circulator recirculates water that has not reached the desired temperature, so that water and power are not wasted.
- The thermostat on your water heater should be set to supply the lowest temperature for household use – it must be 50°C at the source (tap, showerhead). This will keep running costs down and reduce wear and tear on your tank.
- Install a timer on peak rate electric hot water units.
- Locate your hot water system close to where you will use it to minimise heat loss (through pipes).
- Insulate exposed hot water pipes, especially the first two metres leading from the hot water system. Closed cell rubber insulation is your best option.
- Keep your hot water system sheltered and protect any pilot lights from draughts.
- If you're going on a holiday or away for an extended period of time, turn your hot water system off and save on your power bill.

PEAK ELECTRICITY

Peak electric hot water systems run when our electricity grid is in peak demand and therefore electricity costs more. Peak tariff units are 3.5 times more expensive to run than off-peak electric or natural gas systems.

- Electric continuous flow units and storage water heaters with a capacity of less than 160 litres as well as heat pump type storage systems use electricity at the peak time of the day.
- With the exception of heat pumps, these systems can be very expensive to run so they should be avoided.

DID YOU KNOW? Replacing an electric hot water system with solar hot water, taking shorter showers and using a 3 star WELS rated showerhead can save an average three person household up to \$265* on their annual power bill!

OFF-PEAK ELECTRIC OPTIONS

If switching from electric hot water to solar, gas or heat pump is not an option, ensure that you are using off-peak electricity to heat your water. Using off-peak electricity by heating water overnight and storing it for use during the day is cheaper. Around 50 per cent of NSW households use off-peak electric hot water but not all systems are compatible for off-peak use.

Here are some off-peak facts:

- Continuous flow electric systems aren't designed to take advantage of off-peak electricity.
- Off-peak systems must have a 160-litre storage capacity or greater.
- Twin element units operate a 24-hour off-peak booster (if hot water runs out, water is reheated automatically on the off-peak tariff).
- To check your off-peak rates go to your last electricity bill or contact your electricity supplier.

REBATES TO HELP YOU TO MAKE THE SWITCH

The Australian Government is offering a rebate for replacing an electric hot water system with a solar or heat pump hot water system. Visit www.climatechange.gov.au/government/programs-and-rebates/solar-hot-water.aspx to find out if you are eligible.

Join the NSW homes that have pledged to save power by using the Power Pledge tool at savepower.nsw.gov.au

Choose from a list of energy efficient actions you can do to save power, money and our environment. Use the Power Pledge tool to track your progress and see how much you can save.

savepower.nsw.gov.au

* Savings based on household electricity price July 2011.