



## IN THE HOME



### FIRST STEPS

**Switch off unused lights.** Did you know that an average Australian home spends about \$100 on lighting per year, which emits about three quarters of a tonne of greenhouse gases<sup>1</sup>?

**Switch off appliances on standby.** Appliances on standby can easily use up to 10 per cent of your electricity when they are doing little or even nothing<sup>2</sup>. Most appliances use about five watts on standby. If you switch off just one appliance at the wall you could save 45 kilograms of greenhouse gas being released into the atmosphere each year<sup>1</sup>.

### BIG OPPORTUNITIES

#### Reduce your heating and cooling energy use

**Install solar hot water.** Normally fitted to your roof, solar panels can collect heat from the sun's radiation to heat your water. A hot water cylinder stores the water that is heated during the day and supplies it for use later. It can provide almost all of your hot water during the summer months and about 50 per cent year-round. Solar hot water rebates are available from the Victorian Government towards the installation costs. See: [www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/www/html/1364-rebates.asp](http://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/www/html/1364-rebates.asp)

**Keep windows shaded.** Use awnings or blinds.

**Wash your clothes in cold water.** Electric hot water systems can produce up to four tonnes of greenhouse gases and account for half of your electricity bill<sup>3</sup>. Washing

your clothes in cold water can use up to 15 times less energy than a hot wash<sup>4</sup>.

**Take shorter showers.** Showers are the biggest users of hot water in the home. If you shortened the average shower by one minute, you could save half a kilogram of greenhouse gas per shower<sup>1</sup>.

Use a water efficient shower head (shower rose). Typical showerheads use around 22 litres of water per minute. A water efficient showerhead can be up to three times as efficient, using as little as nine litres per minute.

**Draught-proof your home.** By sealing gaps and cracks you can save up to 15 per cent of your heating and cooling energy bill<sup>4</sup>.

**Set your thermostat one degree warmer in summer and one degree cooler in winter.** Heating and air conditioning are big contributors to energy use. You can save up to 10 per cent on your bill by simply making minor adjustments to your thermostat<sup>1</sup>.

#### Switch to GreenPower

Switching to accredited green power schemes will allow you to significantly reduce your greenhouse gas emissions. If you switch to 100 per cent accredited GreenPower you could cut your carbon footprint by 70 per cent<sup>5</sup>. Purchasing GreenPower is good for the environment and helps support Australia's fledgling renewable energy sector. Look out for this logo to assure you chose accredited GreenPower.



1 Department of Climate Change, [www.greenhouse.gov.au](http://www.greenhouse.gov.au)

2 2006 NSW DEUS, *Simple Steps to save water and energy in your home*

3 [www.acfonline.org.au/uploads/res/res\\_greenhome.pdf](http://www.acfonline.org.au/uploads/res/res_greenhome.pdf)

4 [www.sustainableliving.sa.gov.au](http://www.sustainableliving.sa.gov.au)

5 APLCF – household emissions minus transport

A ranking of electricity providers by Green Electricity Watch provides a simple guide to the Green Power products available and which ones make a real difference in reducing global warming. Go to [www.wwf.org.au/greenelectricitywatch](http://www.wwf.org.au/greenelectricitywatch) for more information.

## FURTHER TIPS ON REDUCING YOUR FOOTPRINT IN THE HOME

### Retrofit your home

Rebates are available from Sustainability Victoria for:

- ceiling insulation
- solar hot water
- gas hot water systems
- photovoltaic (solar energy) systems.

See [www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/www/html/1364-rebates.asp](http://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/www/html/1364-rebates.asp)

Some financial institutions offer 'green loans' that provide cheaper interest on purchase that have less environmental impact.

See [www.mecu.com.au](http://www.mecu.com.au), for example, an EPA Sustainability Covenant partner.

**Insulate your home.** Keep heat in during the winter and out during summer by installing insulation in the ceiling and walls. As much as 35 per cent of heat loss is through an uninsulated ceiling alone<sup>6</sup>. Good insulation and design can cut heating and cooling bills by as much as 50 per cent<sup>7</sup>.

**Install a solar hot water system.** For most households, hot water is second only to transport as the largest cause of greenhouse gas emissions. Water heating accounts for about 30 per cent of an average Australian household's total greenhouse gas emissions and about the same proportion of total household energy use<sup>8</sup>. By installing a solar hot water system you can reduce your emissions significantly and cut your energy bill by up to a third<sup>7</sup>. Rebates are available in most states to assist with the purchase cost of solar water heaters.

### Install solar panels to produce your own electricity.

A rebate of up to \$8000 is available to homeowners for installation of photovoltaic systems under the Commonwealth Government's Photovoltaic Rebate Program ([www.environment.gov.au/settlements/renewable/pv](http://www.environment.gov.au/settlements/renewable/pv)). You can even install an interactive grid system where excess power is supplied back to your electricity company.

**Buy the most energy-efficient appliances you can afford.** Most appliances including fridges, air-conditioners, washing machines and dishwashers now have an energy rating; the more stars the more efficient. When buying new appliances you can compare their energy rating at [www.energyrating.gov.au](http://www.energyrating.gov.au).

Ratings are not yet available on home entertainment equipment but they can use a lot of energy. A large-screen TV used for six hours a day can produce more greenhouse

gases than the family fridge. Plasma TVs generate about three times the greenhouse gases of conventional models<sup>6</sup>.

When buying DVD players, TVs, VCRs, computers or stereos, look for Energy Star labelled equipment, which use less energy in standby mode. Go to [www.energystar.gov.au/consumers/stepbystep.html](http://www.energystar.gov.au/consumers/stepbystep.html) for more information.



Look for this sign and remember:

- **Laptops are up to five times more energy-efficient than desktop computers (Department of Climate Change, [www.greenhouse.gov.au](http://www.greenhouse.gov.au))**
- **Screensavers don't save energy. By enabling the Energy Star feature your computer or monitor will go into low energy sleep mode. (Department of Climate Change, [www.greenhouse.gov.au](http://www.greenhouse.gov.au))**
- **If you need a second fridge switch it off when it is not needed.**
- **Use the sun to dry your clothes not a dryer.**
- **Switch off your hot water system when on vacation.**
- **Don't rinse dishes in hot water before putting them in the dishwasher.**
- **Keep doors shut so you only heat or cool where needed.**
- **Fully load washing machines and dishwashers before using them.**
- **Fit the lowest wattage bulbs necessary to achieve adequate lighting.**

<sup>6</sup> Department of Climate Change, previously Australian Greenhouse Office.

<sup>7</sup> South Australian Government.

<sup>8</sup> [www.greenhouse.gov.au/yourhome/technical/fs42.htm](http://www.greenhouse.gov.au/yourhome/technical/fs42.htm)