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*WELCOME to a new edition of One Earth Outlet's newsletter, an occasional report which brings readers news about all things to do with sustainability, as well as information about our ever-expanding range of products & special deals.*

## **Waterwise tap to be turned off — solar power rebates changing**

Time is running out to take advantage of two government rebate schemes, both expiring on June 30 this year.

The State Government/Water Corp Waterwise rebate scheme will come to an end at the end of this Financial Year.

Water Minister Dr Graham Jacobs announced that Waterwise Program, launched in 2003, would be dropped as it "had achieved all of its original objectives and had resulted in increased water efficient product awareness and yielded real water savings".

The scheme was introduced to encourage the uptake of water efficient appliances (it looks like the government doesn't think we need to be quite so diligent about water efficiency after June 30)!



Anyway, rebates of up to \$600.00 for such things as purchasing & plumbing in to your toilet and/or laundry rainwater tanks will be available for purchases made up until that time, but must be redeemed before September 30.

For more information on the Waterwise rebate program, visit <http://www.water.wa.gov.au> or call 1300 133 646. See page 3 for the government's full announcement.

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One Earth Outlet offers a wide range of rainwater tanks; underground & aboveground, poly & corrugated iron, round & under-eaves, 50 litres to tens of thousands of litres. We also have all the other necessary ancillary equipment such as pumps, filters & water switches to create a rainwater system to suit your house. Our fully qualified & experienced in-house tradesmen can design & install all types of systems & we offer free quotes.

#### **Solar Homes and Communities Plan**

The other rebate scheme set to change is the Federal Government's Solar Homes and Communities Plan, which will become the Solar Credits scheme after June 30, for solar photovoltaic (PV) power system installations.

The new system will open up the rebate again to everyone – so the \$100,000 combined taxable income means test will be removed – however the value of the rebates is likely to drop.

Under the current scheme the government gives eligible customers who install a solar power system \$8 per watt up to a maximum \$8000 (for a 1 kilowatt system). The new Solar Credits program will operate under a different method, providing a rebate of five times the upfront Renewable Energy Certificate (REC) value on the first 1.5 kilowatts.

So for example a 1 kilowatt (kW) PV system produces 21 RECs over its first 15 years, so the government will give you a

solar credit of 5 times that amount (= 105 RECs) upfront. At the moment each REC is worth around \$45.00, meaning a total rebate of around \$4,725 for a 1kW system. Of course REC values will change over time, but they would need to increase significantly to match the \$8000 maximum rebate on a 1kW system currently being offered.

More information on the Federal Government's rebate schemes are available at <http://www.environment.gov.au/settlements/renewable/pv/index.html>

*Contact us if you would like an obligation-free quote to install a rainwater or solar PV system on your house.*

### **New energy & water efficiency assessments— save money on your bills**

One Earth Outlet is developing a new product that we believe will help our customers save power and water – and so save money.

You may know how much power & water you use, but have you ever sat down and worked out where you use it, and then looked at any ways you could possibly decrease the amount you use. By consuming less power & water not only will you be doing your bit for the environment, you will also save money by paying less for your services bills.

Building on our many years of experience in selling & installing solar hot water, solar electricity, rain water & grey water systems we have devised a comprehensive checklist to allow our professionally-trained assessors to visit your home & gauge where you are using power & water. From there we can suggest remedial actions which if undertaken will reduce your power &/or water consumption – all in a written report format.

One Earth Outlet's Home Energy & Water Efficiency Assessment analyses where you are using power & water in your home, and offers practical advice & solutions to help you decrease the amount you consume.

Whether it's a simple behavioural modification, a new efficiency device, or a replacement product - we guarantee we can suggest ways for you to cut your bills.

We would like to make our regular customers and email subscribers aware of our new Home Energy & Water Efficiency Assessment before it is launched, and invite you to pre-register interest in having an Assessment done. We expect the Assessment to cost \$220 when launched in the next few weeks.

Please contact us on 1300 327 841 or [sales@oneearthoutlet.com.au](mailto:sales@oneearthoutlet.com.au) to find out more or request an Assessment.

## **Waterwise Rebate Program comes to a successful end**

Water Minister Dr Graham Jacobs today announced that the Waterwise Rebate Program would not be extended beyond June 30.

The Waterwise Rebate Program was launched in 2003 to encourage the uptake of water efficient appliances and has since been reviewed, modified and extended on an annual basis.

Dr Jacobs said the program had achieved all of its original objectives and had resulted in increased water efficient product awareness and yielded real water savings.

"More than 351,000 households across the State have participated and \$44.7million paid in rebates. This has resulted in an estimated saving of more than 85 billion litres of water over the life of the products rebated through the program," he said.

"The program has also stimulated market innovation in water saving technology with more than 170,000 water efficient washing machines, not previously available on the market, now in use in Western Australia."

The Minister said while the rebate program had been successful at driving the community to become more water efficient, now was the right time to focus on more targeted water efficiency programs.

"An example of this is the \$800,000 Margaret River project we announced last month. This is the most comprehensive water efficiency program yet undertaken in WA and could serve as a model for other communities," Dr Jacobs said.

"This project includes a behavioural change program involving individual assessments of water use and water efficiency retrofits for households. It also takes in a targeted marketing campaign for residential, business customers and tourists."

The Minister said recent research showed that up to 45 per cent of the Perth population thought they could not do any more to save water.

"At the same time, most households significantly underestimate their current water use," he said.

"To address this gap, the Water Corporation is planning to introduce more strategic water efficiency programs to meet its target of reducing per person water use by a further 25 per cent over the next 50 years."

Waterwise Rebates would be available for purchases made on or before June 30 but must be redeemed before September 30.

For more information on the rebate program, visit <http://www.water.wa.gov.au> or call 1300 133 646.

*Source: WA State Government*

## **Coordinated national action to drive energy efficiency and renewable energy uptake**

30 April 2009

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) today took a major step forward towards Australia's low pollution future.

COAG today endorsed the design of the expanded Renewable Energy Target and agreed to the introduction of new 6 star standards for houses and strengthened energy efficiency standards for commercial buildings.

As a result of today's decisions, work will immediately commence on five key measures to drive growth in the number of highly energy efficient homes and commercial buildings across Australia:

- Increasing the stringency of energy efficiency requirements for all classes of commercial buildings in the Building Code of Australia from 2010;
- Phasing in the mandatory disclosure of the energy efficiency of commercial buildings and tenancies from 2010;
- Increasing energy efficiency requirements for new residential buildings to six stars, or equivalent, nationally in the 2010 update of the Building Code of Australia, as well as introducing new efficiency requirements for hot-water systems and lighting;
- Phasing in mandatory disclosure of residential building energy, greenhouse and water performance at the time of sale or lease, commencing with energy efficiency, from May 2011; and
- Reforming current building energy efficiency standard and assessment processes to achieve consistency across the nation.

These represent the first measures under the National Strategy on Energy Efficiency that will be finalised by COAG in mid-2009.

By ensuring a coherent and unified approach to energy efficiency policy, the Strategy will provide a clear complement to the Commonwealth Government's Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme – helping households and businesses reduce energy costs, improving productivity of our economy and reducing the cost of greenhouse gas abatement.

It will build on the Commonwealth Government's existing commitments to energy efficiency such as the Energy Efficient Homes package: a \$3.9 billion package to install ceiling insulation in 2.7 million Australian households.

COAG also endorsed the final design of the expanded national Renewable Energy Target which will see 20 per cent of Australia's electricity being generated from renewable sources by 2020.

This endorsement will provide certainty for investors, driving substantial investment and employment in the renewable energy sector.

It will help transform the electricity sector and drive the low-pollution electricity generation that we need to tackle climate change.

The RET scheme will increase the renewable energy target by over four times, to reach 45,000 gigawatt-hours (GWh) in 2020. To provide renewable energy investors with even greater legislative certainty, the 45,000 GWh target will be maintained until 2030.

The expanded national RET scheme includes 'Solar Credits' to assist with the upfront costs of installing small-scale renewable energy systems, including household solar photovoltaic (PV) systems.

COAG also agreed to provide partial exemptions to emissions-intensive, trade-exposed industries. COAG recognised the impact of the RET on trade-exposed industries in the context of the CPRS and the additional pressures these firms are experiencing as a result of the global financial crisis.

Emissions-intensive, trade-exposed industries will continue to support renewable energy, as exemptions will only apply above the existing Mandatory Renewable Energy Target of 9,500 GWh.

Legislation to implement the expanded target design will be introduced by mid-2009, with new targets due to commence in 2010.

Details of the draft National Strategy on Energy Efficiency and the RET are now available on the COAG website (<http://www.coag.gov.au>).

*Source: Federal Government*