



# Solar Hot Water Heaters

*Building  
sustainable  
quality of  
life...*

Solar hot water heaters can be an attractive solution for the energy conscious home owner and for those looking to save on their energy bills. The hot water heater is one of the largest energy users in your home behind your refrigerator and dryer.

- The average hot water system for a new home can add about \$10,000 to your total bill. However, the system can save you 50-80% on your heating bills almost immediately.
- Solar hot water heaters can provide a better return than a solar PV system for the average family of four. Given the large up front costs of a PV system, large power users would be better off getting a solar water heater for their home dollar. Smaller households could benefit from a PV system, however. You should evaluate your power usages and decide for yourself.
- These systems can be combined with a chimney water heater to heat your water all year round. These systems, however, should be installed only by a professional.
- Systems can be either passive or active in nature. Passive systems require no pumps to move the water and require less maintenance, but are less efficient overall. Active systems have pumps to transfer the water throughout the home.
- Active systems can come in two varieties. Direct circulation systems feed heated water from the collector to your home. Indirect systems heat a non-freezing, heat-transfer fluid to your water heater and heat the water inside the home.
- Long term maintenance costs are relatively low. Heater elements need to be kept clean and in good working order to stay efficient. Average costs per year are about \$200 and can be lower if you do the work yourself.



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Solar hot water heaters are a cheap, cost-effective way to reduce your energy bills and save the environment.