

## NEWS

August 26, 2013

For Immediate Release  
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### **Energy Trust of Oregon helps homeowners use the power of the sun to trim water heating costs**

*Cash incentives for solar water heating and pool heating available to utility customers statewide*

PORTLAND, Ore. — August 26, 2013 — Homeowners may be surprised to learn how much energy they really use to heat water for their daily showers and for chores such as laundry and dishes. In fact, water heating is the second largest energy expense in most homes, following heating and cooling. Fortunately, there's a way to trim those costs up to 70 percent, using free power from the sun. Energy Trust of Oregon, a nonprofit serving many area utility customers, is making it easy to do.

While the number of Oregonians powering their homes with solar electric systems has boomed over the last few years, there's another kind of solar — solar water heating — that is steadily gaining steam, too.

"This is a great time for homeowners to go solar for water heating at home," said Lizzie Rubado, senior solar project manager, Energy Trust. "Not only can they reduce their energy costs and carbon footprint using the sun's supply of free energy, but they can save up to 65 percent off the cost of a new system with current Energy Trust incentives, plus federal and state tax credits."

#### **Solar Water Heating Technology**

Solar water heating saves energy by preheating water before it goes into an existing gas or electric water heater. The sun's heat is absorbed in rooftop solar panels during the day and solar-preheated water is stored in a tank for future household use. By offsetting a portion of a home's water heating use, a solar water heater can help save an average home up to \$250 each year, and even more for larger households.

Because the panels are so efficient, solar water heating does not require much roof space and even works on cloudy days, providing a great solar option for homes that may not have enough room or have too much shading for a solar electric system. For those homeowners hoping to maximize their savings from the sun, solar water heating also works well alongside a solar electric system.

#### **Solar Pool Heating**

For homes with pools, a second type of solar water heating — a solar pool heating system — can also offer homeowners savings. Water is pumped from the pool then heated through sun-absorbing panels on the roof to help homeowners substantially reduce their energy use and heating bill for their pool. Current Energy Trust cash incentives, along with a state tax credit, can help homeowners save up to 50 percent off the cost of installation.

For more information about Energy Trust cash incentives for solar water heating, solar pool heating and connections to qualified solar trade ally contractors, visit [www.energytrust.org](http://www.energytrust.org) or call 1-866-368-7878. Energy Trust cash incentives are available statewide to customers heating their water with fuel from Portland General Electric, Pacific Power, NW Natural and Cascade Natural Gas.

Energy Trust of Oregon is an independent nonprofit organization dedicated to helping utility customers benefit from saving energy and tapping renewable resources. Our services, cash incentives and energy solutions have helped participating customers of Portland General Electric, Pacific Power, NW Natural and Cascade Natural Gas save more than \$1.3 billion on energy bills. Our work helps keep energy costs as low as possible, creates jobs and builds a sustainable energy future. Learn more at [www.energytrust.org](http://www.energytrust.org) or call 1-866-368-7878.

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