



press clip



Save money: Go green

DARREN CLANCY
REALESTATE.COM.AU

With three levels of government managing the sorts of environmental incentives and green rebates available, it can be difficult to see the wood for the trees.

From energy saving through to encouraging sustainable plumbing and beyond, there are some great schemes that run. With the ever changing politicians, it's a smart idea to check what's available to you so you don't miss out on some potential savings and rewards.

Here are some pointers and resources to help you navigate the options available and help you on your sustainability journey.

Understanding rebates

One of the key ways that governments provide incentives for sustainable practices is through rebates. Generally the purchase of an environmentally friendly piece of equipment such as a solar hot water system or similar can

attract a discount in the form of money back from the government, or ongoing repayments through a scheme.

It's still early days, so it pays to do your research. Government priorities change so the initiatives that attract a rebate are subject to change. Occasionally you'll find a federal and state government rebate scheme for the same thing, but you can only claim one or the other.

The advice: If there is a generous rebate on offer, get in and grab it because it will cease or decrease. When you consider long-term payback schemes relying on rebates over more than a year, always remember that these agreements do not have a lifetime guarantee and may be subject to change.

Think local

It isn't just the state and federal governments that offer incentives. Many local councils now also offer assistance programs. Not every incentive is rebate or payback based. Many include a mix of free

workshops, discounted products from selected outlets, or free waste clean-ups, too.

These vary from region to region depending on local priorities. Keep a keen eye out for rainwater tank rebates, composting and worm farming schemes, e-waste recycling, and assistance with planting native trees, grey water reuse, and even beekeeping!

Here are some great resources that can help you find rebates and other incentives in your area:

Your Energy Savings: A Federal Government site that allows you to select your state and whether you are interested in water, energy, and waste rebates.

It will list information resources, rebates and recycling programs along with how-tos on selecting new products.

My Green Life: Run by The Natural Strategies Group, this website lists all the incentive programs by state and points to each scheme's website so you can obtain more information.

Savewater: Compiled by the Savewater Alliance, this website provides tips for saving water as well as advice on incentives and rebates for various water initiatives including installing grey water systems, using rainwater tanks and buying water efficient amenities.

Save the planet, save your wallet

With a little bit of internet research and a few well placed phone calls, you can green your home efficiently.

Add rebates, buybacks and other incentives together with the money trimmed from your water and electricity bills, and soon it becomes a case of can you afford not to go green!

And if you are stuck for choice or are combining this with renovations, don't forget to call on the assistance of your local enviroplumber.

Each certified enviroplumber is usually up to date with the latest offerings, and have a few other ways to reduce your costs while you transition to sustainable living, too.