Solar water heating. Good for the environment, good for your home, good for you.

Congratulations on taking your first step towards installing a solar water heating system in your home and reducing your carbon footprint. We’ve prepared this ebook to give you all the facts you need to understand the technology and its benefits and then find and work with a contractor who’ll fit your style and your budget.
The affordability bonus.
Between our $4,336 rebate and the 30% Federal tax credit, installation is now about 75% easier on the pocket*. Customers who qualify as low-income may be eligible for a higher rebate amount. Your contractor will determine the rebate amount based on your estimated annual savings and handle the rebate application process.

Who's eligible?
PG&E’s CSI-Thermal Program offers cash rebates to single-family homeowners who currently heat their water with natural gas**.

How well does it work?

For a good case history, we’d like to introduce you to the Satchwells, who moved into an El Cerrito home to start a family. With a new baby on the way, Andy and Bridget decided it was time to “do more than just talk and think about” helping the environment. The result: they decided to install a solar water heating system and new insulation while taking other energy efficiency steps. As Andy puts it “what could be cooler than heating your water with the sun?” Now they not only heat tap and shower water with solar, but use a radiant heating system that spreads the water through the floors to keep the entire house warm. In Bridget’s words: “We’ve just been delighted by the outcome, we love the water heater, we loved the process.” Meet them at pge.com/solarwaterheating. You might find you have a lot in common.

Hot Water 24/7

A solar water heating system works side-by-side with your conventional water heater to provide hot water for your home anytime it’s needed. The sun does most of the work, so your conventional water heater uses less energy.

Why heat water with the sun?

- Capture free, clean energy from the sun and reduce your family’s carbon footprint.
- Use less gas for heating water and save on your monthly utility bill.
- Make your home more sustainable with this low-maintenance technology lasting up to 25 years.

How does it work?

1. A pump circulates a heat transfer liquid from the tank to the roof.
2. Solar collectors absorb the sun’s thermal energy and heat the transfer liquid.
3. The transfer liquid enters a heat exchanger, warming the water in the storage tank.
4. Hot water flows to your existing water heater, which provides backup heating when needed.

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* Contact your tax professional to see if you qualify for 30% federal tax credit.
** Restrictions, requirements and qualifications apply.
Next steps.

• Take advantage of our free contractor selection tool by visiting pge.com/findsolarcontractor.
• Use the convenient bid selection form on the following pages to make comparing contractor proposals much easier.
• For more information about solar visit pge.com/solarwaterheating.
• And, while you’re thinking about water, visit pge.com/drought for resources and tips on how to save water before you install your new solar water heating system.

Find a contractor

Contractors are your key to getting the best information about Solar Water Heating technology and the system size that is right for your home or business. There is no obligation when getting a bid and it should provide estimated savings and expected costs. Follow these three easy steps to get started.

• Visit pge.com/findsolarcontractor for a map of qualified contractors in your area.
• Verify your chosen contractors have an active A, B, C-4, C-36 or C-46 contractor’s license by visiting the Contractor State License Board website a cslb.ca.gov. You can also find information and tips about working with contractors on the CSLB website.
• During the contractor’s initial visit, ask to see photo identification to verify their identity. If they are a contractor, you can also ask to see a copy of their CSLB pocket license, and sales representatives should carry their Home Improvement Salesperson registration card.

Choosing a bid

By utilizing this bid comparison form, you should be able to compare the total projected energy savings of the system along with the net cost of the system. Take caution against automatically selecting the lowest bid and make sure to check the references for the contractor before making your final selection.

Signing a contract

A few key items to remember as you enter into the agreement:

• Read the entire document carefully—make sure you understand everything (costs, warranties, maintenance agreements).
• Ensure all project details are in writing—do not accept any verbal promises or quotes.
• You should never pay more than $1000 or 10 percent of the contract price (whichever is less) for a down payment under California State Law.
Use this form when soliciting installation bids for your new Solar Water Heating system.

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<th>Item number</th>
<th>Bid #1</th>
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<td>2. License Number</td>
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<td>3. Solar Fraction</td>
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<td>4. System Size in Collector Area Square Feet and Storage Volume (storage requirement)</td>
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<td>5. Base System Cost</td>
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<td>12. Expected Annual Energy Savings</td>
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<td>13. Contractor Financing Options (if applicable)</td>
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<td>14. Warranty Timeframe</td>
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1. **Company Name:** Name of the solar contractor who gives you the bid for the purchase and installation of the solar system.

2. **License Number:** Issued by the Contractor State License Board (CSLB). Confirm the information about the contractor or sales representative at cslb.ca.gov or 1-800-321-2752.

3. **Solar Fraction:** The solar fraction is the percentage of annual hot water provided by the solar water heating system.

4. **System Size in Collector Area Square Feet and Storage Volume (Storage Requirement):** Solar water heating systems come in different sizes. Contractors should determine the appropriate collector area and storage to meet 90%-100% of your summer domestic hot water usage. The collector area is the panel area of the solar water heating system that is exposed to the sun and the storage volume is the amount of gallons your solar storage tank can hold.

5. **Base System Cost:** Some companies have a base system cost and then will add charges. Others will simply list total cost. Make sure you are clear on how the costs are listed and what those costs include.

6. **All “Adders”:** Adders are extra charges for items such as roof costs and piping. Be clear on whether these have already been included in your bid, if applicable.

7. **Monitoring Cost (if applicable):** Monitoring provides the ability to view the system’s production online (at an extra cost.) This may or may not be included in your bid.

8. **Estimated Permit Fees:** Permit fees should not vary between contractors. Each city or county jurisdiction sets their own permit charges.

9. **Total Cost:** This refers to the total price of the project, including materials, labor, taxes and any additional charges you have agreed to in the contract.

10. **Financial Rebates, Incentives or Tax Credits:** This should reflect deduction of any relevant financial rebates or incentives (local or state) and tax credits (state or federal), if applicable.

11. **Final Cost (After Rebates, Tax Credits):** This refers to your out-of-pocket costs, after all applicable rebates and credits have been deducted. Make sure the contractor is passing down these savings to you.

12. **Expected Annual Energy Savings:** The system will displace a certain amount of annual Therms or kWh’s. Contractors should provide residential customers the energy savings from a system certified by the Solar Rating and Certification Corporation or the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials.

13. **Contractor Financing Options (if applicable):** Some contractors may offer financing methods, such as system leasing. If this is of interest to you, inquire with the contractor before soliciting a bid.

14. **Warranty Timeframe:** In order to qualify for the California Solar Initiative (CSI)-Thermal Program rebate, the system must come with:
   - A minimum ten-year warranty on the solar collectors.
   - 1-year warranty on installation labor and workmanship not otherwise covered by the manufacturer’s performance warranty.
   - 10-year performance warranty to protect the purchaser against more than a 15 percent degradation of system performance over the 10-year period that may occur as a result of faulty installation.

For more information
To learn more about solar water heating and the available rebate, visit the following:
Residential: pge.com/solarwaterheating

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This form is intended to be informational only. The California investor-owned utilities and Program Administrators do not guarantee the quality or performance of any contractor and are not responsible for any goods or services selected. Please see the most recent version of the CSI-Thermal Program Handbook for the most up-to-date information at www.csithermal.com. The CSI-Thermal Program is funded by California investor-owned utility customers and is administered by regional Program Administrators under the auspices of the California Public Utilities Commission.