



## Renewable Energy

You have many options for using renewable energy at home—from solar-powered outdoor lights to buying renewable energy from your utility to even producing solar electricity at home with photovoltaic (PV) cells.

### Renewable Energy Tips

- A new home provides the best opportunity for designing and orienting the home to take advantage of the sun's rays. A well-oriented home admits low-angle winter sun to reduce heating bills and rejects overhead summer sun to reduce cooling bills.
- Many consumers buy electricity made from renewable energy sources like the sun, wind, water, plants, and Earth's internal heat. This power is sometimes called "green power." Buying green power from the utility is one of the easiest ways to use renewable energy without having to invest in equipment or take on extra maintenance.
- Another use of solar power is for heating water. If you have a swimming pool or hot tub, you can use solar power to cut pool heating costs. Most solar pool heating systems are cost competitive with conventional systems. And solar pool systems have very low operating costs. It's actually the most cost-effective use of solar energy.
- **\$ Long-Term Savings Tip:** If you've made your home as energy efficient as possible, and you have very high electricity bills and a good solar resource, you might want to consider generating your own electricity using PV cells. New products are available that integrate PV cells with the roof, making them much less visible than older systems.

If the following conditions apply, you might want to do more research to see if investing in PV is right for you:

- Your site has adequate solar resources.
- A grid connection is not available in your area or can be made only through an expensive power line extension.
- You want to gain energy independence from your power provider.
- You are willing to pay more up front to reduce the environmental impact of your electricity use.
- Your power provider will connect your system to the electricity grid and buy any excess power you produce.