



8 Things to Know About Solar Water Heating

- 1) What is solar thermal?** Also called Solar Water Heating (**SWH**) displaces the use of the existing hot water heating system, typically supplementing your natural gas, electric or (in remote locations) propane systems.
- 2) Generations of Solar Water Heating.** SWH is a mature technology dating back to Leonardo da Vinci. In 1909 an American inventor patented the grandfather of our current solar water heating technology- with a separate storage tank.

Unfortunately, the discovery of “abundant” and “cheap” fuel sources busted the solar water heating boom. In the new millennium and with our realizations about limited fuel sources- solar water heating is back on the boom cycle with certified technologies, qualified installers, like Aztec Solar, as well as state and federal rebates.
- 3) What? 1/3 the price!** Yes. SWH heating systems are a third of the price of solar electric and \$1 for \$1 produce more energy.
- 4) Rebates.** The savings with SWH technology is better than ever, with maximum utility rebates of \$1850 and an additional 30% Federal Tax Credit. Get back some value as a utility ratepayer for clean, green technology.
- 5) Shading – no problem.** Another amazing attribute of SWH is that the panels generate heat, not electric current (AC), therefore solar water heating collectors are not as sensitive to shade or cloudy days.
- 6) Plenty of water.** A home’s average water heating tank is 50 gallons, whereas the average solar back up storage tank supplies 80 gallons of sun heated hot water. This means plenty of hot water for the showers and the laundry.
- 7) Let’s talk percentages.** SWH panels are between **70%-90% efficient**, compared to between 16%-24% efficient for solar photovoltaic (electric) systems. No inverters are needed for SWH, the sun’s energy directly heats the water- this is the main reason SWH’s efficiency is higher.
- 8) It only takes two.** Two solar water heating collectors can supply a family of 4 with between 60%-75% of their water heating needs annually. If you don’t think you have the roof space for a 3kW solar electric system, you should consider hedging against your future utility bills with a SWH system.

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