

Fact Sheet 3

# Improve your home's comfort and efficiency



## Residential Efficiency Scorecard

The Scorecard is a home energy rating program.

An accredited assessor visits your home and looks at the building and fixed appliances. You receive a certificate with your home's energy star rating, comfort and appliance efficiency ratings.

Your Scorecard assessor gives you advice on making your home more comfortable. They make your next steps simple, so you don't miss out on energy bill savings.

To find out more about the Scorecard or to find an assessor, visit [www.victorianenergysaver.vic.gov.au/scorecard](http://www.victorianenergysaver.vic.gov.au/scorecard)

## What to focus on

You can use your Scorecard certificate to help find out how to improve the comfort of your home and reduce your energy costs. Your Scorecard assessor can provide more detailed advice on your options.

To improve the comfort of your home, look at the cold and hot weather comfort ratings on the first page of your certificate (circled in red below). There is a list of improvement options for your home.

To reduce your energy bills, look at the first page of your Scorecard certificate to see what contribution solar energy (PV) is making, or could make, to reduce your energy bill. Circled in blue below.

Look at the second page of your certificate. The pie charts show how your main appliances contribute to your energy costs. Circled in green below.

Focus on the appliances with the biggest slices of the pie. Perhaps you can upgrade the appliance or simply change how you use it.

## Why get a home energy rating?

Do you ever wonder why your energy bills are so high, even though you are careful with your energy?

Perhaps your home is uncomfortable in hot or cold weather. Maybe you seem to be running your heating or cooling most of the time.

Older technologies used for heating, cooling, water heaters, lighting and pool pumps can be inefficient, meaning you can pay far more than you need to on your energy bill.

A Scorecard assessment helps you find the best solutions for your home. An accredited Scorecard assessor makes a detailed



## Taking action

This fact sheet looks at some simple and fast ways to help reduce your energy bills.

Check each pie chart on your Scorecard certificate to understand which changes will have the biggest impact for your home.

Remember, your Scorecard certificate shows you the areas of your home to focus on to be comfortable and reduce your costs.

## Heating

- Keep the thermostat at 20°C or below. Every degree higher can increase heating costs by around 10%.
- Close off rooms that are not in use.
- Only run the heater when required. Turn it off overnight and when you leave the house.
- Seal gaps and cracks around doors and windows, use draught excluders (door snakes).
- Use curtains or blinds on windows. For best results use drapes (heavy curtains that reach the floor and either side of the window) to create an air barrier, and pelmets. Keep closed from late afternoon to keep heat inside.
- Use a wheat bag or heat pack to heat yourself. Ensure you follow the instructions to stay safe.
- Try putting on a heavy jumper and use blankets while watching TV at night.



## Cooling

- On hot days, close the curtains during the day to keep the heat out.
- Use external shades on the windows to keep the heat out.
- Use ceiling and pedestal fans before turning on the air conditioning.
- If it is comfortable for you, set the thermostat around 24-26°C. Every degree lower can increase running costs by around 10%.
- Only cool the rooms that are being used.
- Close windows and doors when the air conditioner is on.
- Evaporative coolers work differently to air conditioners and are less effective in humid conditions. For these coolers to work air must be able to leave the home, e.g. through open doors or windows.
- If its cooler outside, consider opening windows at night or early in the morning to let the cooler air in before a hot day.

- Try not to use a clothes dryer, particularly in hot weather. Drying washing outside prevents the house from heating up from the clothes dryer.
- Avoid using the oven on hot days. Try a cold meal or cook outside on the barbecue.

## Hot water systems

- Take shorter showers (4 minutes is good).
- Install a low flow shower head.
- Leave mixer taps in the cold position after use.
- Fix any dripping taps, especially hot water taps.
- Where practical, run your washing machine on a cold wash.

## Lighting

- Switch the lights off when the room is not in use.
- Use natural lighting wherever possible.
- Install more efficient LED (light emitting diodes) or CFL (compact fluorescent light) lamps when new bulbs are needed.

## Pools and spas

- Consider reducing the pump running time, checking it does not affect the water quality.
- Use a pool cover.
- For heated pools, try setting the water heating temperature 1-2°C lower.

## Solar electricity

- Use your appliances during the day if possible so they use the energy directly from the solar system.
- Check your solar system is working well by noting the production regularly, for example, monthly. Address any issues as soon as possible.

Most of this information has come from [Save energy in your home \(sustainability.vic.gov.au\)](http://sustainability.vic.gov.au)

## For more information

Find out more about Scorecard and take look at the other fact sheets in this series

[www.victorianenergysaver.vic.gov.au/scorecard](http://www.victorianenergysaver.vic.gov.au/scorecard).