



Pathway to a low CO₂ future. Building to live lightly.

Buying, designing or renovating a “clean, green” home

If you are thinking of designing, renovating or buying a home, you have the perfect opportunity to lower your environmental footprint. Into the boot you can add lowering its current and future running costs, and increasing the home’s comfort.

You’ll need to look at a lot of technical information, but general principles apply to all homes when you intend to improve their environmental performance.

Essentials to consider in central Victoria are:

- **Climate.** We have winters with sub zero temperatures, and summer days over 40°C. Hot summer days and nights are increasing in frequency.
- **Siting and orientation.** Does it make the best use of winter sun, and reduce exposure to western summer sun?
- **Passive solar design.** Use the sun’s energy for winter heating. Well placed windows and air vents can give great cross-flow window ventilation for summer cooling.
- **Thermal mass.** Use a slab floor to retain heat in winter.
- **Insulation.** The higher the R rating, the better the insulation. Double glazing for windows is also very important.
- **Solar hot water and solar electricity.** (See *Take action at home* for more on these topics.)
- **Energy-efficient appliances.**

Where’s the detail?

The “**Your home**” website has comprehensive and up to date information on designing, buying or renovating a home to high environmental standards. It is a one-stop-shop for information and resources, and you can download guides appropriate to your situation from www.yourhome.gov.au

For useful advice on Victorian building standards and legal considerations go to:

www.makeyourhomegreen.vic.gov.au

For information on current rebates, energy and water saving ideas and appliance information go to:

www.resourcesmart.vic.gov.au

The CSIRO Home Energy Saving Handbook on energy-smart design is also a great resource. It’s available from the CSIRO website at www.csiro.gov.au.

Locally

MASG recently organised the design and build of a low energy solar display home locally in Campbells Creek. The house is no longer open to the public, but our website has details on its design features, floor plan, fittings and fixtures. Contacts for local trades and professionals involved in the project are also available.

Check it out at www.masg.org.au – follow the links to Solar Display House.

MASG has a local retrofitting guide, full of advice about local architects, builders and suppliers who don’t cost the earth. Call 5470 6978 and ask about the Carbon Reduction Action Group (CRAG) *Local Retrofitting Guide*.

Join MASG, a great source of information and activities, festivals and activism, and a strong community group of over 100 members working on these problems.