

# ***My Next Step Could Be:***

## **Consider the following:**

- What should my next car be
- What should my next hot water service
- What should my heating be
- What should my cooling be
- What should my next cooker be
- What should my next Clothes Washer, Dishwasher and other appliances be

## **Also - Can I get off Gas**

- **Hot water**      *refer - "What should my next hot water service "*
- **Heating**        *Refer - "What should my heating be"*
- **Cooking**        *Refer - "What should my next cooker be"*

*Note there is a major review underway at the moment in how to create incentives to get off gas. Watch for new announcements from the Victorian government through DEECA (formally DELWP)*

## **My Next Car:**

Electric cars now offer the range and come at a cost that can be competitive with a car powered by fossil fuels. They can be charged at home and at fast charging stations that are being rolled out on an accelerating rate. In planning for your next car you should seriously consider these.

### Advantages:

- Minimal to no fuel costs
- Minimal maintenance costs
- Minimal emissions

### Disadvantages

- Battery life is currently limited but improving
- Range is currently limited by availability of fast charging stations
- Cost

### Should I go for a hybrid.

- A hybrid that can be plugged in can be run as an electric car. Limited range as an electric vehicle
- A hybrid that cannot be plugged in is a more efficient fossil fuel vehicle
- They will have higher maintenance costs
- They may be "stranded assets" when obsoleted by advances in electric vehicles

The Your Home web site has some useful tips:

<https://www.yourhome.gov.au/energy/transport>

## My Next Hot Water Service

The typical life of a hot water service is 15 years. If yours is over 10 years old then you should be thinking about the next replacement, given when it goes, you will want to move quickly.

Lets make an assumption that you have already decided to have Solar PV installed. If not why not?

Thus you want to use that free electricity to heat your hot water.

You probably want to use the hot water often when the sun is not shining.

So do you store the energy generated in batteries or in a hot water tank.

If you relied on battery storage then you could use an electric instant hot water service. This is a major drain on the battery storage and not very efficient.

If you selected an air source Heat Pump with a storage tank, then the water can be heated while the sun shines, the energy being stored in the water for use when needed.

Government rebates (federal and State) consider Heat Pumps as solar.

If the right sized tank is chosen there should be little electricity consumed overnight in heating the water.

Advantages:

- Free hot water once installed
- Minimal emissions

Disadvantages:

- Cost of initial purchase

The Your Home web site has some useful tips:

<https://www.yourhome.gov.au/energy/hot-water-service>

Links to Rebate schemes:

[Solar and heat pump hot water system rebate | energy.gov.au](#)

[Solar hot water rebate | Solar Victoria](#)

[Victorian Energy Upgrades scheme](#) (formerly VEET).

Like all these schemes you need to have a supplier who is registered to claim the rebates.

## **My Next Heating System**

The most common space heating currently is gas ducted.

This is using fossil fuels that are becoming more emissions intensive as we search for more and more alternative sources of the gas.

The alternatives are wood and electric.

Wood is fine if the source is renewable, that is, it is being replaced by plantings, preferably on the same property on which it is burnt. It does however add to particle pollution but that is another issue.

Lets make an assumption that you have already decided to have Solar PV installed. If not why not?

You may also have batteries installed or plan to.

You have brought your insulation up to standard and the house is reasonably well sealed.

Electric heating now makes a lot of sense.

Note the benefits of thermal mass, that is heat retained by concrete slab or internal masonry walls, is not dependent on heating in the slab but any heat available in the room is absorbed by the slab or internal masonry walls.

There are typically five types of electric heating that can be used:

1. In slab resistive heating
2. In slab hydronic
3. Hydronic with radiators
4. Reverse cycle heat pumps – single units
5. Reverse cycle heat pumps – ducted system
6. Ground sourced heat pumps

### **1. In Slab electric heating**

This would rely on the concrete slab trapping the energy captured by the solar PV array during the day and releasing it at night. The slab would have to be well insulated below and on the edges. It will be very slow to respond to changes in need such as when it has been off for a period. It will be difficult to zone and isolate the zones effectively. It is not something that can be retrofitted.

### **2. In Slab hydronic heating** has the same limitations.

However it can be switched to having heat provided by a heat pump. See 3 below.

### **3. Hydronic heading with radiators.**

This can be powered by a Heat Pump which heats the water which is circulated by pipes to radiators positioned in all rooms where heating is required. It can be easily zoned by turning the off of room radiators.

Heat is captured during the day from solar PV generated electricity and stored in the water.

It can have an electric booster fitted which can boost from the batteries or from the grid.

Pipes can be run under the floor in a suspended timber floor house. In a house with a concrete slab floor, pipes can be run around the wall skirting boards or in the ceiling cavity and down the walls.

Heat pumps used for hot water may not provide sufficient heat. There is not an obvious solution to this as yet. One solution is offered by Daikin.

For example:

- [Altherma Hydronic Heating | Daikin](#)

Advantages:

- Low emissions production
- Zoned
- Can be retrofitted
- Low running cost

Disadvantages:

- Cost of installation

#### **4. Reverse cycle heat pumps – single units**

These air source heat pumps are the most common form of air conditioning in houses currently.

The technology has improved greatly and the star rating can be taken as a reliable guide. Once considered of questionable benefit at extreme temperatures they now perform quite well year round.

Typically one large unit can be installed that provides heat to all of the living areas that can reasonable be opened up. Smaller ones can be installed in rooms such as studies or bedrooms where heating may be required.

Note there are floor mounted units now available which work more from convection than from air flows. These look more like equivalent floor mounted gas units or panel heaters. May be appropriate for isolated rooms such as a study or bedroom. For Example; [FLOOR STANDING | Daikin](#)

Advantage:

- Cheap
- Efficient to run
- Low maintenance

Disadvantage:

- Down draft of air
- Cost may add up if many isolated rooms requiring heat

Note there are floor mounted units now available which work more from convection than from air flows. These look more like equivalent floor mounted gas units or panel heaters. May be appropriate for isolated rooms such as a study or bedroom. For Example; [FLOOR STANDING | Daikin](#)

## **5. Reverse cycle heat pumps – ducted system**

There are multi-point and ducted heat pump systems a large compressor services multiple outlets. Some do not like the downdraft effect of wall mounted systems and may elect for a ducted system with a centralised heat pump unit and floor vents. It can be zoned with the same restrictions on minimum number of zones opened that apply to ducted gas systems.

Note multiple single units are more efficient than having a single unit ducted.

## **6. Ground Source Heat Pumps**

A variation on heat pumps is to install a ground sourced heat pump. These are much more efficient as they draw heat from a level of the ground that has a constant temperature, winter and summer. However the cost is high and not normally considered as justified in a retrofit.

The Your Home web site has some useful tips:

<https://www.yourhome.gov.au/energy/heating-and-cooling>

## My Next Cooling System

There are two commonly used cooling systems:

- Evaporative Coolers
- Reverse Cycle Heat Pumps (air source)

Lets make an assumption that you have already decided to have Solar PV installed. If not why not?

You may also have batteries installed or plan to.

You have brought your insulation up to standard and the house is reasonably well sealed.

Summer sun is denied access to the house with external shading.

If cooling is still required then electric cooling now makes sense.

Note the benefits of thermal mass for heating may in fact be a penalty for cooling. Heat retained by concrete slab or internal masonry walls, will be slowly released. Best not to allow it to be heated in the first place.

### 1. Evaporative Coolers

#### a. Typical installations

Typically, residential and industrial evaporative coolers use direct evaporation, and can be described as an enclosed metal or plastic box with vented sides. Air is moved by a centrifugal [fan](#) or blower (usually driven by an electric motor with pulleys known as "sheaves" in [HVAC](#) terminology, or a direct-driven axial fan), and a water pump is used to wet the evaporative cooling pads. The cooling units can be mounted on the roof (down draft, or downflow). To cool, the fan draws ambient air through vents on the unit's sides and through the damp pads. Heat in the air evaporates water from the pads which are constantly re-dampened to continue the cooling process. Then cooled, moist air is delivered into the building via a vent in the roof or wall.

Because the cooling air originates outside the building, one or more large vents must exist to allow air to move from inside to outside. Air should only be allowed to pass once through the system, or the cooling effect will decrease. This is due to the air reaching the [saturation](#) point. Often 15 or so air changes per hour (ACHs) occur in spaces served by evaporative coolers, a relatively high rate of air exchange.

#### b. Is it useful

For those extreme heat days it will have the effect of lowering temperatures and do it using less energy than a Reverse Cycle heat pump air conditioner.

Unlike a ducted air conditioning system, these vents are ducted to the external air. So while it is operating, it is achieving 15 or so air changes through the drawing in of air cooled relative to the outside. This will improve your comfort.

If however your house has well suited and installed ceiling insulation, you may be as well off without having created these massive holes in this to provide for the ducts. You may also aspire to 5 or less air exchanges per hour. Keeping the heat out may be a better starting point than drawing in the cooled air.

The real concern comes in winter when you are seeking to retain heat generated in the building. The ducts and vents represent an enormous degradation of your building insulation. While there are covers that can be applied to close of the vents, in practise these are seldom used.

Even in summer, on days when it would not normally be necessary, you will find it necessary to run the cooler to make up for the heat penetration made worse due to the lack of building sealing and compromised of insulation.

### **c. Conclusion**

Do not penetrate the insulation unnecessarily.

Seal the dwelling as best you can.

Install a high star rating reverse cycle heat pump air conditioner if necessary. This can efficiently provide both heating and cooling.

## **2. Reverse Cycle Heat Pumps**

### **a. Reverse cycle heat pumps – single units**

These air source heat pumps are the most common form of air conditioning in houses currently.

The technology has improved greatly and the star rating can be taken as a reliable guide. Once considered of questionable benefit at extreme temperatures they now perform quite well year round.

Typically one large can be installed that provides cooling to all of the living areas that can reasonable be opened up. Smaller ones can be installed in rooms such as studies or bedrooms where cooling may be required.

Often night time occupied rooms such as bedrooms do not require this as they can be opened up to get cooler night time air flow enhanced by ceiling fans.

There are floor mounted units now available which work more from convection than from air flows. These look more like equivalent floor mounted gas units or panel heaters.

Advantage:

- Cheap
- Efficient to run
- Low maintenance

- More efficient than ducted systems

Disadvantage:

- Down draft of air. Can get floor mounted ones that rely more on convection.
- Cost may add up if many isolated rooms requiring heat

### **7. Reverse cycle heat pumps – ducted system**

Some do not like the downdraft effect of wall mounted systems and may elect for a ducted system with a centralised heat pump unit. It can be zoned with the same restrictions on minimum number of zones opened that apply to ducted gas heating systems. A ducted system is not as efficient as multiple single units.

Note multiple single units are more efficient than having a single unit ducted.

### **8. Ground Source Heat Pumps**

A variation on heat pumps is to install a ground sourced heat pump. These are much more efficient as they draw heat, or the absence of heat in the case of cooling, from a level of the ground that has a constant temperature, winter and summer. However the cost is high and not normally considered as justified in a retrofit.

The Your Home web site has some useful tips:

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## **What should my next Cooker/Stove be**

Gas has been the popular type of stove tops over many years. The old electric hot plates were inefficient and difficult to control.

Induction cookers now offer an electric alternative. In this process it is the saucepan that is heated not the stove surface. Cooking vessels must be ferrous, that is iron or steel.

It is possible to get an induction cook top that can just sit over your gas cook top.

Induction cooking has good electrical coupling between the pan and the coil and is thus quite efficient, which means it puts less waste heat into the kitchen, can be quickly turned on and off, and has safety advantages compared to gas stoves. Cooktops are also usually easy to clean, because the cooktop itself does not get very hot.

## **What should my next Clothes Washer, Dishwasher and other appliances be**

The Your Home web site has some useful tips:

<https://www.yourhome.gov.au/energy/appliances>