

INSULATION - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why is insulating my home so important?

Insulation acts as a barrier to heat flow and is essential to keep your home warm in winter and cool in summer. A well insulated and well designed home will provide year-round comfort, cutting cooling and heating bills by up to half. This, in turn, will reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

What types of insulation are there, and how do they work?

There are two main types of insulation products that work in different ways:

- * Bulk insulation works by trapping pockets of still air within its structure. This air provides a barrier or resistance to heat flow.
- * Reflective insulation works by reflecting large amounts of heat away from its polished metallic surface and/or by reducing the radiant heat being emitted from the surface.
- * There are some insulation products that combine bulk and reflective materials and their properties.

Are there any rebates of insulation?

Yes. But only for ceiling insulation in an existing home. If you are building a new home you are not eligible.

* The **NSW Government** is offering up to **\$300** for ceiling insulation installed in an existing home between 1 October 2007 and 30 June 2009. It must have an efficiency rating of R2.7 or greater. Full eligibility criteria and the application form are available from www.environment.nsw.gov.au/rebates or by calling 1300 361 967

* The **Australian Government** is offering up to **\$1600** towards ceiling insulation (or solar hot water, but not both) installed in an existing home after 3 February 2009. It must have an efficiency rating of R3 or greater. Full eligibility criteria and the application form are available www.environment.gov.au/rebates or by calling 1800 808 571.

What does the 'R-value' mean?

The R-value is a measure of the insulations performance. The higher the R-value the greater the resistance to heat transfer and the greater the savings. To be eligible for the NSW Government rebate you must install ceiling insulation with an R-value of at least 2.7. To be eligible for the Australian Government rebate you must install ceiling insulation with an R-value of at least 3. Refer above for links to more information on rebate eligibility.

Can I get a rebate if I choose to install the insulation myself?

NSW Government rebate: Yes, subject to meeting all the eligibility criteria which is available from www.environment.nsw.gov.au/rebates or by calling 1300 361 967.

Australian Government rebate: No. You must have the insulation installed by an approved supplier. For more information go to www.environment.gov.au/rebates or call 1800 808 571.

What insulation should I use?

It really is up to you. Here is some general information to help you make a decision.

- * Batts – glassfibre, rockwool, sheep wool and polyester – suitable for use in ceilings, framed walls and under timber floors.
 - * Blankets – foil backed glassfibre, polyester and rockwool – suitable for use under metal roofs and in metal walls.
 - * Boards – expanded or extruded polystyrene (may have foil attached) – suitable for use in cathedral or raked ceilings, under timber floors and suspended concrete floors, around concrete slab edges, and within framed and full masonry walls.
 - * Loose fills – cellulose fibre, sheep wool and granulated rockwool – suitable for use in ceilings, must be professionally installed.
 - * Reflective – reflective foil, concertina foil batts, sarking and multi-cell reflective foils – suitable for use directly under roof, in ceilings, framed walls and under timber floors.
 - * Composite – made from a combination of materials, often combining bulk and reflective materials, double layers of materials with insulation sandwiched between, concrete reinforced polystyrene wall systems, lightweight concrete etc.
- To be eligible for rebates you must ensure your choice meets the required R-value (detailed above).

Ask the installer about the R-value when seeking quotes.

Are there any important tips for installing insulation?

- Yes.
- Avoid gaps in the insulation. If only 5% of an area is left uninsulated, up to 50% of the potential benefits may be lost.
 - Keep bulk insulation dry at all times.
 - Have your wiring inspected by a licensed electrician to ensure it can be safely covered by insulation.
 - Avoid loose-fill insulation if your roof space is excessively draughty, unless a sealant can be added to bond its top surface.
 - Reflective foil should be installed with a still air gap of at least 25mm width next to the reflective surface. Tape up any holes, tears or joins in the foil.
 - Caution! Do not install insulation within 90mm of hot flues or exhaust fans. Do not put insulation over or within 25mm of recessed light fittings.

Where can I get more information on insulation?

www.energysmart.com.au

www.yourhome.gov.au