**My Family House**

# Our story

Our 3 bedroom rural house was built in 1962. It is on stumps with a timber frame and rendered exterior. It has a north-east aspect and when we bought it 10 years ago, it was heated by a Coonara and open fire and had no cooling. The windows are single glazed aluminum sliding and have external blinds on the north side. Inside all windows have heavy blinds and pelmets. We are a family of four.

# Our energy efficiency improvements

* Installed a solar hot water and 3.5kW solar PV system
* Replaced all lights with LEDs
* Installed split systems in the living room and each bedroom
* Built a pergola on the western side of the house to provide shade in summer
* Insulated under some of the floor

# Other sustainable actions we undertake

* Wash clothes in cold water and only air dry on the clothes line or inside on a clothes horse
* Turn off lights and appliances when not using
* Only use the split systems when really needed, set them to eco mode and appropriate summer and winter temperatures
* Try to use the energy we generate through the solar system on sunny days, for example set the washing machine or dishwasher to come on during peak generation in the middle of the day
* Have our own chooks and veggie garden



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# Why we chose to do these things

To reduce energy costs and reduce our impact on the environment

# The savings and other benefits we have noticed

Our energy bills have over halved, reducing from around $3,000 annual down to $1,200. Our house is a lot more comfortable in summer than it used to be.

# Other improvements we are planning

We want to finish insulating under the floor and replace the windows with double glazed. We are wanting to make our house more comfortable to live in, especially in winter, which will also reduce our energy costs further.

# Our top tips for others wanting to be more energy efficient

Start with simple things such as washing clothes in cold water, turning things off when not in use, setting the temperature of the heater/cooler correctly. Then consider investing in efficiency measures such as insulation, draft proofing, blinds curtains. For us, installing solar and solar hot water has made a huge difference to our energy costs.

**For more case studies and information on actions you can take to reduce your energy use visit www.reb.org.au**