



# MEDIA RELEASE

**The Hon Peter Garrett MP**

*Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts*

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## **GOVERNMENT ACTION TO END DELAYS FOR SOLAR REBATE**

The Rudd Government has taken action to end unacceptable delays experienced by homeowners seeking to access the Federal Government's \$1,000 rebate for installing a solar hot water service.

Environment Minister, Peter Garrett, said today that the system for processing rebate claims established by the previous government meant in some cases homeowners were waiting up to 26 weeks to be paid their solar rebate.

"The delays being experienced by home-owners under the previous government's system are unacceptable and we have taken action to streamline and change the process so that eligible consumers can get their rebate money in their hands a lot quicker."

Under the Solar Hot Water Rebate program, \$1,000 rebates are available to help eligible Australian households install climate-friendly domestic water heaters in existing homes.

"People trying to do the right thing by installing a solar hot water system shouldn't have to wait almost half a year to receive their government rebate but this is exactly what has happened under the previous government's system.

"The Rudd Labor Government wants to make it easier – not harder - for people to help protect the environment by installing a solar hot water service and get access to the Federal Government's rebate scheme.

"The new system we are announcing today will provide a streamlined application process and changes which will allow licensed installers to verify the installation of qualifying solar hot water systems at the time the old electric storage hot water system is replaced.

"This action will ensure future applications are turned around within the eight week timeframe originally promised – but not delivered – by the previous government."

Mr Garrett said extra staff had also been engaged to clear the backlog of current applications created by the previous government's rebate system.

"These changes are part of the Rudd Labor Government's commitment to investing in renewable energy and dealing with the impacts of climate change.

"The installation of an average solar hot water system will reduce electricity usage by around 3 mega Watt hours per year, saving around \$300 per year in electricity costs and around 30 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions per household over the lifespan of the heater," Mr Garrett said.