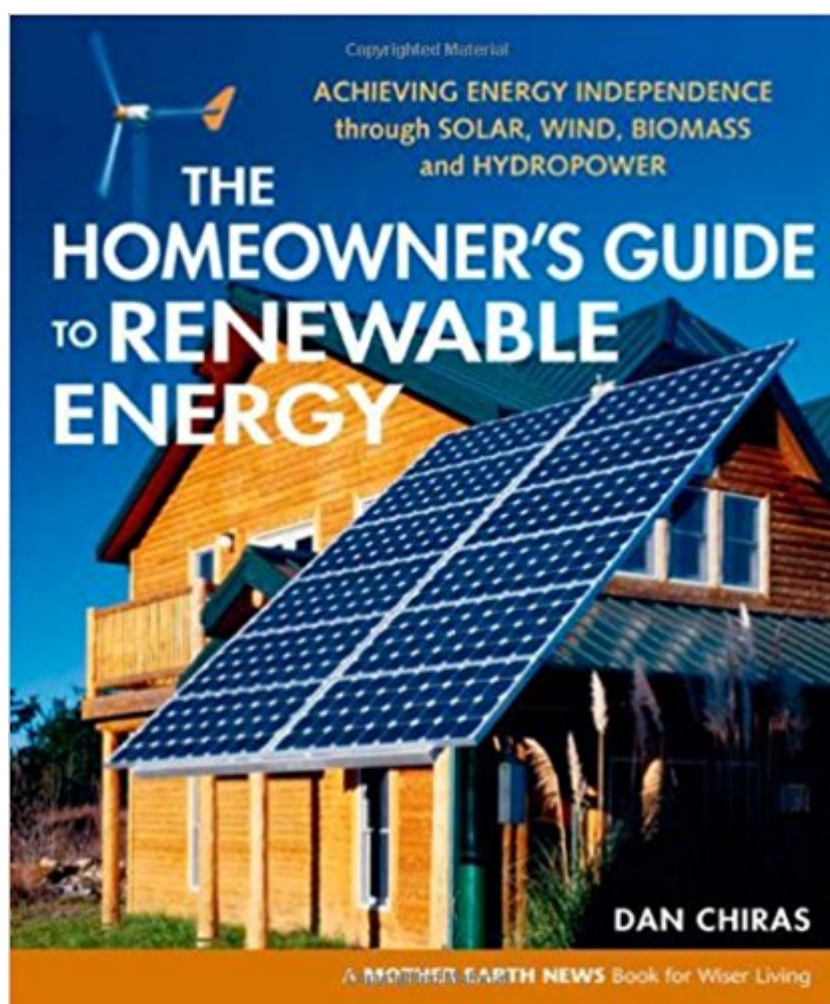


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# The Homeowner's Guide To Renewable Energy: Achieving Energy Independence Through Solar, Wind, Biomass And Hydropower (Mother Earth News Wiser Living)





## Synopsis

The coming energy crisis caused by a peak in global oil and natural gas production will profoundly affect the lives of all North Americans. As the price of these vital fuels rises, homeowners will scramble to cut their fuel bills. Two options for meeting the upcoming challenge are dramatic improvements in home energy efficiency and efforts to tap into clean, affordable, renewable energy resources to heat and cool homes, to provide hot water and electricity, and even to cook. These measures can result in huge savings and a level of energy independence. The Homeowner's Guide to Renewable Energy tells you how. It starts by outlining the likely impacts of fossil fuel shortages and some basic facts about energy. It then discusses energy conservation to slash energy bills and prepare for renewable energy options. Focusing carefully on specific strategies needed to replace specific fuels, the book then examines each practical energy option available to homeowners: Solar hot water, cooking, and water purification Space heat: passive and active solar retrofits Wood heat Passive cooling Solar electricity Wind-generated electricity Electricity from microhydropower sources Emerging technologies hydrogen, fuel cells, methane digesters, and biodiesel The Homeowner's Guide to Renewable Energy gives readers sufficient knowledge to hire and communicate effectively with contractors and, for those wanting do installations themselves, it recommends more detailed manuals. With a complete resource listing, this well-illustrated and accessible guide is a perfect companion for illuminating the coming dark age. Dan Chiras has studied renewable energy and energy efficiency for three decades and has installed several renewable energy systems. He lives in a self-designed passive solar/solar electric home. An award-winning author of over 20 books, he is a sustainability design consultant who teaches courses on renewable energy, green building, and sustainability at Colorado College.

## Book Information

Series: Mother Earth News Wiser Living (Book 3)

Paperback: 352 pages

Publisher: New Society Publishers (February 1, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 086571536X

ISBN-13: 978-0865715363

Product Dimensions: 7.5 x 0.9 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.6 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars 27 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,414,911 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #16 in [Books > Engineering & Transportation > Engineering > Energy Production & Extraction > Alternative & Renewable > Hydroelectric](#) #47 in [Books > Engineering & Transportation > Engineering > Energy Production & Extraction > Alternative & Renewable > Wind](#) #122 in [Books > Engineering & Transportation > Engineering > Energy Production & Extraction > Alternative & Renewable > Solar](#)

## Customer Reviews

Energy bills have skyrocketed in North America, and traditional energy sources can be as damaging to the environment as they are to your pocketbook. The Homeowner's Guide to Renewable Energy will show you how to slash your home energy costs while dramatically reducing your carbon footprint. Completely revised and updated, this new edition describes the most practical and affordable methods for making significant improvements in home energy efficiency and tapping into clean, affordable, renewable energy resources. If implemented, these measures will save the average homeowner tens of thousands of dollars over the coming decades. Focusing on the latest technological advances in residential renewable energy, this guide examines each alternative energy option available including: Solar hot water and solar hot air systems Space heat: passive and active solar retrofits and heat pumps Wood heat Passive cooling Electricity from solar, wind and microhydro Hydrogen, fuel cells, methane digesters and biodiesel. This well-illustrated and accessible guide is an essential resource for those wanting to enter the renewable energy field. Packed with practical tips and guidelines, it gives readers sufficient knowledge to hire and communicate effectively with contractors and is a must-read for anyone interested in saving money and achieving energy independence. --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

Dan Chiras is an internationally acclaimed author who has published over 24 books, including The Homeowner's Guide to Renewable Energy. He is a certified wind site assessor and has installed several residential wind systems. Dan lives in a passive solar home in Evergreen, Colorado.

The book is well thought out and the author makes the explanations easy to understand. Although not the most exciting subject matter I've ever read, I am learning a lot and becoming more excited about using these energies! I love the book!

This book isn't going to be your bible to getting 'off-grid', but it is a fantastic introduction to anyone

who isn't already very well-read on the subject. I'm a civil engineer with a quite a lot of experience in housebuilding/renovation and a healthy interest in renewables, but this book was still well worth reading for me. You don't need to buy this book, but I'd be surprised if anyone who bought it found it to be a waste of money.

I found this book to be more satisfying than the author's more popular book, "The Solar House". Of course, they aren't functional substitutes for each other. This book goes deeper into renewable energy systems available to address the energy needs of residential buildings and related topics. I appreciate his discussion on conservation, the breakdown of the energy consumption of a 'typical' residence, etc. This book goes deeper into energy than "The Solar House" goes into passive design, providing almost enough information to evaluate and size some systems. The amount of information presented varies by system, as solar photovoltaic and wind power get a more detailed treatment than biomass. For someone wanting enough information to select, size and/or design systems -- or more realistically to evaluate the proposals generated by a systems provider -- supplemental information will probably be required.

This is a good book for people who want a better understanding of what can be achieved using renewable energy in a residential application. It only gets 4 stars from me because the author gets a bit preachy at times about his opinions on fossil fuels and future scarcity, high price, etc. He does practice what he preaches and uses personal examples in much of the book.

For the local prison library.

I found this book to be very informative. It provides a wealth of knowledge about being self-sufficient. I am particularly interested in solar and wind power and this book provided some very good information about each of these subjects. Would highly recommend this book to anyone who is thinking about living green.

Not only did I find this book useful, I enjoyed reading this book. I am not a techy science person, nor do I usually seek out nonfiction, but I found that this book was written for people like me - people who are interested in making some changes in our homes to help our planet and lower our bills. The book was set up with clear chapters outlining the pros and cons of various types of renewable energy sources (wind, water, solar, and more) and how we can retrofit our homes to use them. It

contained several comparison charts for the different options described, including cost comparisons, and the author provided detailed information about the information in those charts. The book also explored small changes we could easily make, and there was a section about the future of renewable energy. Written to be thoroughly understandable and readable, this book helped me become much more aware of things I could do to make some "green" changes, which was exactly the information I was seeking. All in all I recommend this book highly!

This is very good review of renewable options. You don't have to be an engineer yet it is more than you've read in the newspapers and such. I saw some things I hadn't heard of. It is realistic, not everything works everywhere. It takes into account cost and return. It is not a tech manual, you won't know how to install the whole system (whichever it would be) but you'll likely know which way to go if need more. If I have a beef it is that the photos could be more and better.

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