

SOLAR WATER HEATERS GRANT SCHEME GUIDELINES

Introduction

The application for a grant is made by the householder and the contractual arrangements are between the householder and the scheme administrators (Regulator for Energy & Water Services, REWS). The application form is divided in two parts. Applicants must complete Part A of the application with their personal details. Part A must be completed and submitted to the REWS prior to the purchase and installation of the equipment and Part B has to be completed and submitted to the REWS when the equipment is installed and commissioned.

Part A will be processed and available funds shall be allocated in accordance with the Government Notice published by the REWS. Funds for the scheme are limited and applications are processed on a first-come first-served basis. There is no guarantee that all applications will be successful, even if all eligibility criteria are met.

Steps in Applying for the Solar Water Heater Grant Scheme

Step 1

Read the guidelines on how to apply under the Solar Water Heater Grant Scheme. Annex 1 provides a detailed flow chart of all the process.

Step 2

Contact eligible suppliers of the systems to help assess water demands, conduct a review of energy use and determine the appropriate type and size of system required. It is recommended that the applicant should contact more than one potential supplier.

Step 3

Ensure that you have obtained planning permission for your installation (where applicable).

Step 4

Fill in Part A of the grant scheme application form and submit to the REWS together with the required documentation. Note that at this stage, the application is not yet assessed much less approved and no grant offer has been made in your case. Part A of the application must be approved by the REWS **before** equipment is purchased and installed.

Step 5

In case of acceptance:

If the scheme criteria are met and the application is successful, the applicant will receive a **grant offer letter**. At this stage the applicant may purchase and install the product. Details of successful applications may be published on the website.

In case of rejection:

A letter of rejection will be sent to non-compliant applicants. The reason for rejection will be indicated on the letter. Any requests for review from rejected applicants will be assessed by a Review Committee specifically appointed to hear objections from decisions made under this scheme. Applicants will be informed of the Review Committee decision.

Step 6

When the installation of the Solar Water Heater has been completed, fill in Part B of the grant scheme application form including all required documentation and submit it to the REWS. Part B's must reach the REWS within the deadline date indicated on the grant offer letter.

Step 7

The REWS will assess the grant scheme application Part B and the details of the installed system against information provided in the original pre-purchase application (part A application).

Step 8

Payments of grant schemes will be processed after receipt of a fully and correctly completed Part B grant scheme application including all required documentation. The grant will be paid to the applicant through a bank transfer issued by the REWS.

Step 9

Following payment, the applicant will still be required to participate in any audits that may be carried out during the durability period.

1. Interpretation

In this Scheme, unless the context otherwise requires:

‘applicant’ means any person who makes an application for a rebate in terms of this Scheme, is a resident of Malta, is 18 years of age or more on the day of submission of the application and who is a holder in terms of article 2 of the Identity Card Act, Cap. 258;

‘application’ means an application for a grant made in such manner as required and in terms of this scheme;

‘date of order’ means the date on the invoice or of the first original fiscal receipt, whichever is earlier.

‘date of purchase’ means the date on the last original fiscal receipt relating to the purchase, provided that this date is not later than one year after the date of order;

‘domestic use’ means the use made of a system at a residential premises, which premises is used by an applicant for residential or habitation purposes only and does not include use by landlords or developers, or persons carrying out an economic activity at the place where the system is to be installed.

‘duration of the scheme’ means the period between, and including, the effective date and the termination date;

‘effective date’ means the date of publication of Government Notice in the Government Gazette;

‘fiscal receipt’ means a receipt as defined in the Thirteenth Schedule of Chapter 406 - the Value Added Tax Act, Act XX111 of 1998 as subsequently amended - and also includes any regulation made by the same Act;

‘Malta’ means the Maltese Islands;

‘owner’ includes ‘joint ownership’, ‘emphyteuta’ includes ‘joint-emphyteuta’ and ‘tenant’ includes ‘joint-tenant’, and ‘emphyteuta’ includes ‘sub-emphyteuta’ and ‘tenant’ includes ‘sub-tenant’;

‘RES system’ for this scheme means new solar heating system or solar collector for this scheme;

‘Regulator’ and ‘REWS’ mean the Regulator for Energy & Water Services;

‘solar water heating system’, ‘solar water heating systems’, ‘system’, ‘systems’ or ‘equipment’ means new solar water heaters or new solar collectors approved by the REWS as eligible for this scheme, when meeting the requirements contained in the

Government Notice entitled ‘Registration of Solar Water Heaters, Solar Collectors, Heat Pump Water Heaters and Photovoltaic Systems’;

‘solar collector’ means the part of the equipment of a solar water heater which collects the thermal energy from the sun;

‘solar water heater’ means a system through which solar energy is utilised as an alternative source of energy for the purpose of heating water;

‘termination date’ shall mean the date applications stop to be processed as indicated in the Notice in the Government Gazette;

‘you’ or ‘your’ refers to the individual named as the applicant in the application;

2. Area of applicability

This Scheme applies to the expenditure that is incurred on the purchase of a solar water heating system or solar collector purchased from a retailer in Malta for domestic use and installed in Malta, for which an application has been made for the duration of the Grant Scheme. Grants will not be payable in respect of technologies installed in caravans, boats or boathouses.

3. Eligible Applicant

To be eligible, an applicant must:

- have obtained planning permission (where required) for the installation. The building should also be covered by a planning permit;
- You must be the freehold owner of the property OR the owner of a long leasehold interest in the property (i.e. a leasehold term with more than 5 years remaining) with all necessary consents from the owner of the property. If you are a joint owner of the property, you are entitled to apply for a grant on behalf of the other joint owners provided they have agreed to your doing so and will comply as necessary with all of these terms and conditions. The property must be used principally by you or your family for your own private residential purposes. You are not entitled to receive a grant if the property is used principally for business purposes, including the letting of the property on a commercial basis (even if your tenants' use of the property will be residential);
- not obtain any other grants or subsidies for this system from any other schemes that include national or public funds such as Government of Malta funds or EU funds.

- install the equipment in a residential premises and is not used by the applicant to carry out an economic activity or as an undertaking;
- not be applying on behalf of an undertaking and not be a landlord of the property where the system is installed;
- provide the REWS with a bank account to enable transfer of the grant amount directly to the applicant's account;
- allow REWS Auditors to perform on site inspection of the equipment installed and facilitate such inspections;
- accept that the applicant's name together with the eligible grant amount may appear on public documents.

Households that have already benefited from, or have an open grant offer under a similar Solar Water Heater schemes are not eligible to apply for a grant.

Other members of the same household may not apply for a grant on the same technology (i.e. solar water heaters or solar collectors).

Lack of adequate sun exposure of the solar water heating system or solar collector may disqualify an installation.

The REWS reserves the right to refuse the grant and take legal action to recover the amount granted with interests and any other costs incurred, in case of:

- incorrect information being stated by the applicant in this application;
- some conditions of the scheme not being met;
- the grant having been already given.
- other reasons where the 'bona fide' intention of the applicant is manifestly missing.

4. Eligible expenditure

The expenditure to be reported is in respect of the purchase price of the system as shown on the original fiscal receipt.

The eligible costs are:

- For solar hot water systems: Costs of solar hot water panels and storage tanks, plus their fixing to the roof or ground, including VAT, but excluding (i) the cost of any extended warranty beyond the standard warranty that installers are required to provide free of charge; (ii) the cost of any other materials, works or other costs such as, but not limited to, any cost of plumbing at property; and (iii) costs of permits or certification.

- For solar collectors: Costs of solar hot water panel plus their fixing to the roof or ground, including VAT, but excluding (i) the cost of any extended warranty beyond the standard warranty that installers are required to provide free of charge; (ii) the cost of any other materials, works or other costs such as, but not limited to, any cost of plumbing at property; and (iii) costs of permits or certification.

5. Eligible Technology

The chosen technology model and manufacturer must be registered with the REWS. The registered list of manufacturers and models will be accessible on www.rews.org.mt¹. The product manufacturer is the company that makes the product. The model is the version of the product that has been selected for use. It is your responsibility to ensure that approved products are used.

6. Manner of application and supporting documents

- (i) Applications Part A (Application for Grant) and Part B (Request for Reimbursement)) under this Scheme are to be submitted online, by mail or by hand personally by the Applicant or by an adult member residing in the same household of the Applicant at REWS offices during the period established in the Notice in the Government Gazette.
- (ii) Retailers are required to register their equipment as soon as it is available for sale.
- (iii) Applications shall be accompanied by the documents listed in the application form.
- (iv) Only those applications that are found to conform to all the provisions of this Scheme shall be eligible for payment of the grant referred to in paragraph 8 of the Scheme.

IMPORTANT NOTE: You must not enter into a binding contractual commitment or otherwise pay out any money (including any deposit) in relation to the purchase of a technology or the carrying out of any installation work (other than certain preliminary ground or civil water works) before receiving a grant offer letter. If you fail to comply with this requirement, you may not receive a grant offer letter, (either because REWS exercises its right not to make an offer where particular requirements are not met and/or because insufficient funds are available) and you may find, as a result, that you are committed to pay the full cost of the technology/installation work yourself.

¹ The registered list may be obtained from REWS offices.

7. Grant Claim Deadline

Grants are valid for six months from the date of the grant offer letter. Please confirm with your qualified installer an installation date for your technology. If your installation has not been completed within the given timeframe your grant will expire and a claim cannot be made. If you are unable to install a system within the timescales outlined above, do not submit a grant application at this time. We will welcome an application when you are ready to install subject to availability of funds and to the termination date of the scheme.

8. Grant payable under this Scheme

The applicable rate and grant is stipulated in the Notice in the Government Gazette announcing this call.

9. Payment of Grant

Once all criteria are met and application has been approved, the application will be passed for payment and a bank transfer representing the relevant grant amount will be issued. The grant will be paid **ONLY** to the applicant through a bank transfer.

10. Validity of application

An application shall not be deemed to have been submitted unless it is full and complete and unless it contains all the information and is accompanied by all the documentation requested therein.

11. Duration of the Scheme

Applications for this call may be validly received as from the date of publication of the Government Notice until the date stipulated in the Government Gazette. The scheme may be modified or terminated before that date by means of a notice in the Gazette. This scheme may be renewed as may be deemed necessary by the REWS also by means of a notice in the Gazette.

12. Amendments to the Scheme

The REWS shall have the right to make any amendments to this Scheme by the publication of the said amendments in the Government Gazette or to publish

clarifications to the Scheme by the publication of such clarifications on its website www.rews.org.mt

13. Period of operation

The Regulator is required to ensure that the funds it administers provide a certain amount of environmental benefits. For this reason, one of the conditions of the grant is that the system will remain installed and in use, and will not be modified in such a way as to degrade its performance for a period of at least five years after installation. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that this condition is met. The retailer shall therefore include a warranty of 5 years on the system. The REWS and other national authorities may perform on site inspections throughout this five year period to ensure that the equipment is still in operation.

14. Audit

The REWS and other national authorities have to be able to verify, if need be, that any grants paid by the REWS were used for the purposes intended by the grant scheme. For this reason, you must ensure that you comply with the record keeping and inspection requirements set out in the following paragraphs.

- (a) You must keep a record of all relevant documentation that you obtain in relation to the technology and its installation, including in particular any quotations and invoices from the relevant qualified installer or any other contractors involved in the installation work. You must keep these records for at least 5 years following payment of the grant and if the REWS asks you to do so at any time (and as long as it gives you reasonable prior notice) you must allow authorised representatives of REWS and/or its agents and/or any national audit bodies to inspect and take copies of these records.
- (b) If the REWS asks you to do so at any time (and as long as it gives you reasonable prior notice) you must permit REWS and its authorised inspectors or other representatives to have access to the property for the purposes of inspecting the technology and/or verifying whether the energy efficiency measures required by these terms and conditions have been put in place.
- (c) If the REWS asks you to do so at any time, you must provide such additional information and co-operation as REWS may request for the purposes of the REWS monitoring energy use of the property and/or the performance of the technology. The REWS will be entitled to use this information, amongst other things, for the purposes of publishing reports in relation to the relevant technology.

15. Data Protection

Personal information provided is protected and used in accordance with the Data Protection Act. The information shown on this application form will be used and shared by/with the REWS and its agents, the Ministry for Finance, the VAT department and other Government entities involved in administering and supervising the scheme. The REWS may also use this information to demonstrate market transformation trends.

The REWS may check information given by the applicant with relevant authorities and / or Government entities in Malta.

16. Compliance with legislation

You must ensure that the installation (and the building where this installation is sited) complies with a valid development permit, or is permitted development under the Development Notification Order.

You must ensure that in carrying out any activities in connection with the installation and use of the technology you and anyone acting on your behalf complies with all applicable laws and regulations. This grant is subject to Maltese legislation. The grant is also made to the applicant personally and may only be transferred in case of death of applicant or transferring of property, in which case, the contract of sale/donation/separation shall specify the terms of obligations from the applicant to the new owner of the premises. The grant does not confer any rights. The REWS will not lose any right that it has under these terms and conditions if it does not exercise that right or delays in exercising it.

17. Liability

The REWS cannot and does not guarantee or underwrite the performance of any technology and you should ensure that the retailer and installer you contract with provides you with all necessary information in relation to the warranty cover they will be providing.

In cases where the supplier does not conform to any provisions set out in the scheme, the supplier/installer shall be obliged to either change the equipment to bring the installations within the provisions of the scheme or pay the grant to the end consumer. This does not exclude the possibility that the end consumer may take legal action against the retailer to provide him with equipment as originally requested.

Annex 1 – Flow Chart

