

green products



Easy going solar

Origin, one of Australia's leading green energy providers, is offering householders an easy way to buy a new solar hot water system, or to solarise their existing gas or electric hot-water service. Origin will install a solar collector on your roof, producing heated water that is then added to your regular hot water storage. It means you use less energy to heat the water as it's already warm. Solar systems not only lower your household's greenhouse gas emissions, they can save you up to 60 per cent on annual water heating costs. The energy provider arranges all aspects of the process for new or retrofit systems, from the design to the installation, including Government rebates, making the switch to solar easy. Households can solarise their hot water system from as little as \$2,395 – less if you have an existing electric hot water service. The offer is available nationally and is not limited to Origin customers. You can request a quote or purchase a system online.

The company is also a leading supplier of grid-connected solar systems to power the home, while its GreenEarth Solar and GreenEarth Wind 100 per cent GreenPower-accredited products, received the top rating from the independent group Green Electricity Watch (greenelectricitywatch.org.au)

• For more information, phone 132 463, or visit: www.originenergy.com.au/gosolar.



zinc-plated, steel frame and enclosed by a mesh cover. It has been designed to handle most plumbing situations. Most simply, your down pipe can be directed straight into the top of the tank's mesh surface. The overflow outlet connects easily to your existing down pipe with a flexible pipe provided. The DIY tank can be easily relocated or packed away and stored. For greater capacity, two or more tanks can be plumbed together or installed at separate down pipes. It comes with all connections and parts so all you need is a small, flat piece of land. Construct and install yourself, or get a plumber in. And it qualifies for many of the council rebates for water tanks.

The tank is available at Kmart and most major hardware stores for \$449.

• Ph: 03 9551 7726; W: www.handytank.com.au

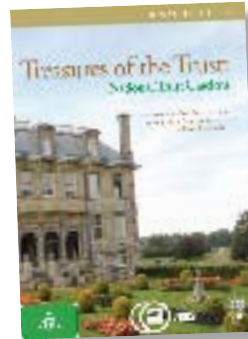
Trusted British treasures

Treasures of the Trust, a National Trust Gardens DVD gives you a rare look at some of the finest National Trust gardens in Britain and Northern Ireland. Each episode in this 2-disc set celebrates a different garden, its owners and designers,

and has archival plans and designs. The gardens include:

- Sissinghurst Castle Garden, designed by writer Vita Sackville-West;
- Stourhead, with its rare plants, tranquil lakes and towers;
- Biddulph Grange Garden, full of Victorian eccentricities;
- Hidcote Manor, an arts and crafts masterpiece; and
- Kingston, with its magnificent wooded parkland.

• The DVD is available at ABC shops, ABC Centres and online at: www.abcshop.com.au for \$39.95.



A HANDY TANK TO HAVE

Handytank™ is a new DIY option for urban water harvesting. The 1000-litre tank comes in a flat-pack box and can be easily transported home in most family cars.

Less than 120 centimetres in diameter, it is ideal for small gardens or where space is limited. The tank's durable marine-grade PVC bladder is supported by a clip-together, tubular,

Earthy burials

While eco-coffins made from recycled cardboard have been filtering into the funeral industry for years, a South Australian company has now launched coffin-free funerals. White Knight Funerals' Natural Earth Burial service cuts out the waste of resources such as timber, plastic and formaldehyde used in traditional casket burials. Instead, the deceased is conveyed to the funeral in a specially designed 'transporter' which looks just like a traditional coffin. After this has been lowered into the grave, and after loved ones have left the gravesite, the bottom of the transporter is opened and the body – covered in a shroud of natural fibres – slips

directly onto the earth. Apparently it is a gentle and smooth operation. A bonus for those contemplating their post-death contribution to the planet is that natural decomposition can start at once! Also, there are not the energy costs associated with cremations.



ILLUSTRATION: MARY-ANNE COTTER

"Burying a person in a sealed, plastic-lined coffin is just absurd," says Kevin Hartley, Director of White Knight Funerals. "It wastes money and materials, pollutes the environment, and can delay natural decomposition for decades," he said.

Among other environmentally-conscious burial options is the 'Enviroboard' coffin from LifeArt (shown here). Made in Australia from recycled materials, this sturdy fibre-

board (similar to cardboard)

coffin is suitable for burial or cremation and is fully

biodegradable. The coffins come in a range of colours and themes or can

be personalised with your own design. (Note: It is legal to bury a body without a coffin in all states except ACT.)

- White Knight. Ph: 08 8431 6604; or go to: www.whiteknightfunerals.com

- LifeArt. Ph: 02 9737 0004; or go to:

www.lifear.com.au

