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Hydro Energy for the Home.

By **Peter Lenkefi**

Can I really use hydro energy to power my home?

There are really very few people who would be able to take advantage of hydropower in their homes. A small stream simply isn't going to be big enough to power even a micro hydro energy system but if you happen to be one of the very lucky few who have a reasonable size stream or waterway of any sort running through your land then hydro power is an excellent form of power and you should consider looking into it. It has one big advantage over any other sort of renewable energy you may be considering for your home. It will create power 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The wind may stop blowing and the sun might stop shining but the water will always keep flowing. You can get hold of micro hydro turbines that will work with as little as 2 feet of water drop but still may provide you with enough power for the whole year.

Cover all your bases with wind and solar.

Combining this with a turbine and solar energy and you could probably power your neighbor's houses too. Get a grid tie system which will enable you to buy energy from the grid and sell it back to the grid as well; you could be making a small profit as well as becoming completely energy self sufficient and doing your bit to beat global warming.

Finding a hydropower solution for your home.

There are fewer companies that deal with selling and fitting hydropower units simply because there is much less demand for it, but shop around you will be able to find one eventually. Find solar and wind energy companies and ask them if they do micro hydro generators as well; even if they don't supply them themselves they may be able to put you in touch with a company who does. Calculate the drop

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you could get from the water as well as the average water flow so you can give them your measurements and they will be able to tell you what system is required and if it's a viable solution, and if you find the right company they will probably come out and work that out for you.

Canyon Industries.

Canyon Industries Inc are manufacturers of micro hydro generators and are worth considering if you are serious about hydropower. You can visit their site at

www.canyonindustriesinc.com

and contact

them for further information as well as for guidance on your waterflow.

For more more information about hydro energy please visit

<http://www.alternative-energy-tips.com>

An Introduction to Hydro Energy.

By Peter Lenkefi

What is hydro energy?

Fossil fuel reserves have become seriously depleted but conversely our energy use is increasing year on year, our fossil fuel use is now far from being sustainable. Fossil fuels are also responsible for global warming because of the carbon dioxide that is produced with the use of coal power stations and other fossil fuel power stations. In order to stop a further decline in the environment and to replace non-renewable energy many different alternative power sources are being researched and implemented. One such renewable energy source is hydro energy and involves using water to turn turbines, which in turn generates electricity creating hydro energy. The theory is very similar to that of wind energy but instead of the wind turning the sails we use flowing water.

A brief history of hydropower.

The first ever water power station was in Godalming, England in 1881 introducing hydropower as a source of electricity. Previously water turbines had only been used for pumping and irrigation but that has changed significantly now. While some countries have yet to hydro power stations that are efficient and make any significant difference to their energy usage, New Zealand among other countries produce over 70% of its energy from hydro power stations.

Dams.

Dams are built in order to create a man made waterfall; as the water falls it rotates a turbine thus

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converting the kinetic energy into a usable mechanical energy. This is then turned into electrical energy through the use of a generator. The amount of electricity is determined by how far the water falls and the average water flow; some dams provide enough power for up to 10,000 people so it really is an effective form of creating energy for our homes.

It's highly unlikely that you have a good enough source of running water running through your land that you could feasibly build a dam and add a generator and a turbine but even a small dam in a reasonable river can provide a good amount of energy for local residents. A dam with a 10 foot drop and average water flow of 500 cubic feet per second produces enough power to give approximately 3,000,000kwh per annum; almost enough power for 1000 residents.

The downfall of dams.

Like many sources of green energy, hydro energy has its downfalls; although there is only really one downfall for hydro energy. The major obstacle to building dams and creating hydropower is people. Local residents don't want dams erected in the middle of their local beauty spot so unless the opinions of these people can be turned hydropower won't be as popular as wind energy or solar energy.

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