



RESIDENTIAL CASE STUDY
CUSTOMER SHARON HELLER
RYE BROOK, NY



REHAB OF LEGACY RYE BROOK HOME REFRESHES SOLAR HOT WATER SYSTEM



Rooftop solar panels capture the sun's energy, which heats water for use in the home.

“Solar hot water is very efficient and very affordable.”

Sharon Heller is the third generation of her family to live in her Rye Brook home, and the second generation to use a solar hot water system.

“My grandparents built the house in the 1940s, and my parents bought the house in the late 60s from them and I grew up in the house,” says Heller. “When it came time to do the necessary renovations, my goal was always to make this house sustainable.” Heller’s father had installed a solar hot water system in the 1970s through a utility pilot program. “I grew up knowing the benefits of solar hot water,” says Heller.

When she and husband Ron began an extensive rehab of the home in 2012, the original solar panels were still producing hot water. “One of our goals was to have those replaced,” she says. “It seemed to me that this was a no-brainer ... because I had solar hot water in the past, and it had always been a big part of my life.”

Quality Solar Hot Water System Installation

Heller chose Gallagher Solar Thermal in Warwick for the installation. “Pat (Gallagher) was fantastic,” says Heller. “He answered all the questions and walked me right through the process. It took him two or three days to install the whole system. Now it runs itself.” Gallagher installed two large new solar collectors on the roof; they feed hot water into a collector in the attic, then it flows into a 120-gallon basement holding tank integrated with an electric backup system. The electric backup seldom operates, except when they have a houseful of guests.

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Water heated in rooftop collectors flows to the storage tank in the cellar for use anywhere in the home.

Comprehensive Efficiency

Rehabbing other energy systems, they replaced all the home’s windows with multi-pane units and the forced-air HVAC system with radiant heating. They also reconfigured the entryway and reconfigured walls within the large, comfortable home; it can now accommodate their entire extended family.

They never run out of hot water and, most months, they pay only the minimum charge to their electric utility.

Support for Solar Hot Water

Gallagher Solar Thermal also informed Heller and her husband about support and tax credits that made their system more affordable. New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) support was deducted from the total system and installation costs. “Solar hot water is very efficient and very affordable, especially at this time,” says Heller.

Support for solar hot water systems that replace electric hot water heaters is available from NYSERDA; state and federal tax credits can also help make the systems more affordable.*

For more information, visit nyserdera.ny.gov/solar-hot-water



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NYSERDA support is currently only available for customers that heat their hot water with electricity.
*Always consult with your qualified tax professional to determine your eligibility for tax credits.



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