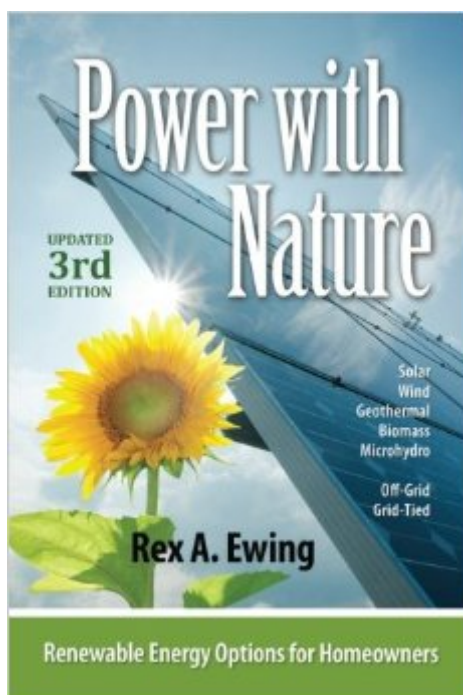


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# Power With Nature, Updated 3rd Edition: Renewable Energy Options For Homeowners



## Synopsis

Take a step toward self-reliance by harnessing free energy from the sun, wind, water, and the earth to power your home. Power with Nature will get you started on the right path, whether you are connected to the grid or far from the nearest power pole. For Off-Grid & Grid-Tied Homes: - Passive Solar & Other Smart Ways to Conserve Energy - Solar PV, Wind & Microhydro Systems - System Sizing, Pricing & Tax Credits - Backup Generators - Geothermal Heat Pumps - Solar Thermal Collectors - Biomass (Wood) Heating - Finding & Storing Water - Going on Vacation - Extensive Appendix (worksheets, maps, resources & more)

## Book Information

Paperback: 240 pages

Publisher: PixyJack Press; updated 3rd edition edition (November 9, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0977372499

ISBN-13: 978-0977372492

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.6 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 15 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (26 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,420,179 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #52 in [Books > Engineering & Transportation > Engineering > Energy Production & Extraction > Alternative & Renewable > Wind](#) #140 in [Books > Engineering & Transportation > Engineering > Energy Production & Extraction > Alternative & Renewable > Solar](#) #253 in [Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Home Improvement & Design > How-to & Home Improvements > Plumbing & Household Automation](#)

## Customer Reviews

Wow, I can only say I wish Rex Ewing had written Power By Nature five years ago when my wife and I were first planning our great escape to the mountains of Colorado. Our house site was a long way from the nearest power line, and we hated the idea of seeing power poles go up on our peaceful mountaintop. But when we started looking into solar and/or wind power, the literature available at the time was so technical, we felt like we'd need an engineering degree just to read the book. I'm pretty handy, but we finally gave up and, as Ewing so drolly puts it, turned ourselves over to Planet Power. If we'd had his book, I think we might have made a different choice, because he explains everything clearly and simply, gives you lots of practical advice on what to do and how to do it, and best of all, because he and his wife have done it already, he makes you confident you can

lead a normal life with all those normal necessities we all have to have - from computers to VCR's and freezers. With no more bills to pay from the power company. Even more amazing, somehow Ewing manages to make even the most technical parts fun to read. There are plenty of anecdotes and stories, and the book starts off with a modern-day fable that will put a smile on your face. We're recommending this book to all our friends plotting escapes of their own - it's must reading!

Rex Ewing's *Power with Nature* was the only book we needed to tell us how to power our vacation home in Costa Rica. Our home is about ten miles from the nearest electrical lines and we had decided to do solar electric. I prepared myself mentally for plowing through a bunch of technical details and began reading. I was pleasantly surprised. In addition to telling you all the nitty gritty about power, this book is witty and fun to read, quite user friendly. After reading Ewing's explanation of the different options for off-the-grid power, we decided on a roof-top solar array with a bank of batteries in the basement. Here in Costa Rica there is plenty of sun in the dry season. But in the rainy season we get lots of rain and the streams are all full. That's a problem because the cloudy conditions mean less solar energy. So we decided to supplement the solar with a water-driven Jack Rabbit turbine--something we didn't know existed before reading this book--in the stream that runs behind our house. I'm a complete dunce about electricity and my husband is just as bad, but Ewing's book tells it all in a way that even we could understand. We did exactly what he said and, guess what? Everything worked, just like it did for Rex and LaVonne. If you want to learn about alternatives to traditional forms of power, or do like we did and actually build it yourself, I highly recommend *Power with Nature*.

Obviously some reviewers couldn't get past the fable at the beginning of this book. If you enjoy a good yarn, read the fable. Rex is a great storyteller. If you only read for the nuts and bolts, skip the fable. Rex covers the nuts and bolts, in detail. He has a wealth of hands-on personal experience with solar and wind systems. That makes for more useful descriptions of how to do stuff, and more honest appraisals of whether you need to. This is real-world experience talking. Learn from his mistakes. Rex has an engaging, folksy way of explaining highly technical stuff that's easy to understand, and fun to read. He covers everything you need to know about, whether you're off-the-grid, or selling your excess electrons to your friendly local electric utility. Lots of great pictures, graphics and sidebars to keep it interesting. This is one of the best, maybe THE BEST, renewable energy intro book available.

First, I want to give this book an extra star - I award it 6 out of 5 stars, it's that good. The book itself gets off to an unusual beginning. The fable style takes you by surprise at first then, as you persevere everything clicks into place. That fable provides background for the rest of the book which is exactly what the author intended. To have a book that, by necessity provides technical information, yet lets you read it without even considering a lack of a science degree is a critical success factor. This book is immensely useful and readable... and enjoyable. Whoever says conservation and science are stuffy subjects needs to have this book to reverse their view. My wife, Mary, and I are going to retire to a home with solar and wind energy. We know that will be a daunting task. Rex Ewing's book provides enough to remove the fear and trepidation of our plan. Thanks to you Rex and your wife LaVonne.

This book is useless unless you find it helpful to have someone tell you, "We bought a XBC Z-95 system for our cabin and it works just great!" You will not, I repeat NOT, "be entertained by Cat of the Wind; Dog of the Sun-a primer charmingly disguised as a fable," as one editorial reviewer puts it. Somehow the author has got it into his head that a story is a great way to convey technical info. (Keep in mind this story is written by someone with no creative writing skills.) The same reviewer continues, "And you'll be enlightened by page after page filled with practical, hands-on information...." Perhaps they reviewed another book by mistake. 'Hands-on information' implies that you would be able to build your own system after reading this book. At best, you might be able to pick up the phone and order your own system. I guess it's great that one no longer has to build a home power system from scratch. But this book will only be useful for those who have several thousands of dollars to spend and require some very basic info. in order to make an informed purchase.

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