

## Sunny way to cut bills

SOLAR energy can dramatically reduce power bills on a commercial or domestic level and is sympathetic to the environment, according to architect and solar consultant Garry Baverstock.

But he said Australia was way behind the rest of the world in awareness of solar energy.

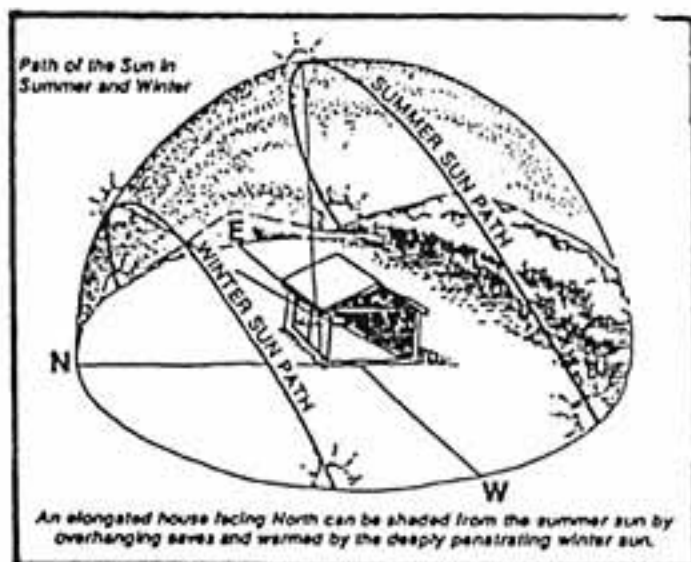
Despite the achievements in solar design, Mr Baverstock said climatically disastrous houses were still being built because people did not know or understand basic principles of solar design and therefore did not use it.

Mr Baverstock is an architect and the managing director of Tecto Solar Design which was formed in 1978.

In 1981 he became honorary secretary of the International Solar Energy Society, he tutors students at the University of WA and Curtin University, founded the Housing Industry Association division Low Energy Building Council of Australia and has won numerous awards for his designs.

Tecto is building a Solar Energy Information Centre in South Perth, which will give people easy access to information on the alternative power source.

Mr Baverstock said there



were many solar energy systems available but people did not know about them, largely because many small operators did not have the capacity to market their products or get the message across to the public.

"We live in a fairly forgiving climate that is not life threatening and we are fortunate enough to have cheap energy at the moment," he said. "But in the next 10 to 20 years that will all change."

He said people's increased awareness of the Greenhouse Effect and the hole in the ozone layer had encouraged the development of solar design, but there was still a long way to go.

He said proper use of solar energy depended on increased awareness by the public, architects and builders.

"Because people don't

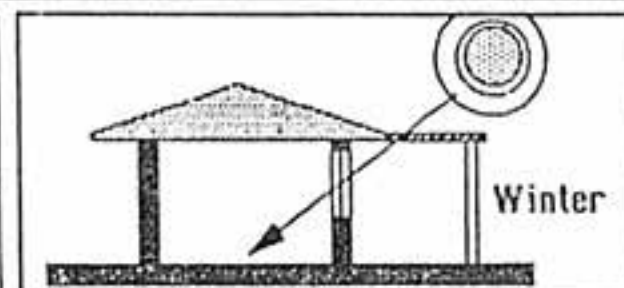
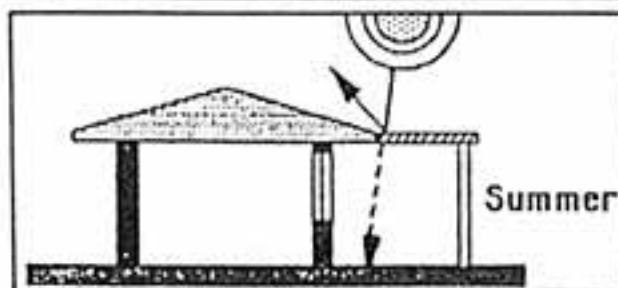
know about solar design they don't ask for it so architects don't take it seriously," Mr Baverstock said.

He said people needed to know about solar design so they could asked architects to use it.

Architects needed to be fully trained and capable in solar design and builders needed to have an understanding of what is needed in construction, he said.

He said solar energy had been an embryonic industry in Australia for 30 years, but he expected dramatic changes in the next 10 years with an increased level of awareness and more products available.

"WA is behind the rest of Australia in solar design, not in ideas and experience but in awareness and Australia as a whole is running way behind America," he said.



The Tecto Pergola is designed to control the passage of the sun's rays. The angles of the beams allow maximum penetration of rays in winter and minimum penetration in summer. It utilises

the principle that in winter the sun is lower in the sky and in warmer months it is almost directly overhead, so the sun rays are deflected by the beams.

