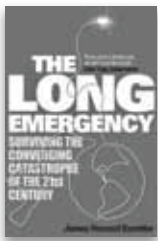


# Reviews...



## **The Long Emergency**

**By James Howard Kunstler**

RRP \$26.95

Published by  
Grove Press NY

339 pages, 15 x 22.5cm, paperback

— REVIEW BY ROB HADDEN —

Having heard James Kunstler talk at a conference, and read his book afterwards on the post oil environment on earth, I have had my theories on the diminishing returns of the alternative energy industry confirmed. I have always maintained that all of the alternative systems rely on oil and mining of metals to make them and therefore while providing cheap energy, they still need to retain the polluting industries to create the equipment.

James' contention is that after peak oil really takes effect, the shockwaves throughout the world will be enormous and potentially catastrophic to our western way of life as we know it. Our whole current way of living has been predicated on a freak accident of nature and no government has addressed the problem of what happens when the oil runs out ...as it must and will.

There is NO alternative energy source in the wings, be it hydrogen, biomass, electricity or whatever to replace oil and he explains in detail why this is so. Run cars on electricity? Sure, but there will be no roads to run them on as oil is required to create and repair them. Broadacre agriculture will fail (no gas to make the fertiliser on the gargantuan scale necessary) and we will have to learn to live and grow local again. This is a book that cannot be summarised in two hundred words, but if you really want to know how we will cope (or not) in the decades to come, read this book as it will jolt you out of your complacency – oil will run out and no, we will not be running our entire trucking fleet on electricity or hydrogen, period. And guess what happens when there is no transport... ■

[www.kunstler.com](http://www.kunstler.com)



## **The Earth Garden Water Book**

RRP \$19.95

Published by Earth Garden Books  
128 pages, 20 x 26.5cm, paperback  
B/W photos and illustrations

— REVIEW BY ROB HADDEN —

Our constant drought has made us so much more aware of the need to conserve our dwindling water supplies now and into the future, but with that also comes the need to find information about this and how to go about it. There are just so many ways to collect water and conserve it that it becomes all rather confusing, and the range of choices can make coming to a decision seemingly impossible.

However, help is at hand in the form of a booklet put out by the good folk at *Earth Garden*. Designed to help us through the maze of endless possibilities involved in collecting rainwater (when it decides to oblige us by precipitating...) and to help in the harvesting for future use.

It is easy to read and set out in a logical format that covers all you want to know about collecting the precious liquid: how to purify it once it is stored, how to conserve the water, planning on re-use and recycling, water saving tips and a final section on water saving suburbs.

There are many clever and varied devices for saving water available today; this book highlights these and gives us insight also from many contributors who have shared their eureka moments.

From making your own \$200 tank by recycling old rusted corrugated iron tanks and giving them a concrete liner, to making your own diaphragm pump and/or a silent water wheel to pump water, the diversity of ideas you can do for yourself are showcased.

For those of us who feel more inclined to purchase a ready made tank, there is advice and pros and cons of the various sorts available off the shelf. From polyethylene to concrete to corrugated iron, they all get an airing and this should help you to make a decision.

Cleaning and purifying water is also well covered and there is an astonishing array of products out there now – and growing. Some simple ideas are put up for discussion and these are mostly hand made from freely available plumbing supply shop parts.

What happens when we water? Well, the chapter on conserving will help to illustrate this, with numerous examples to choose from. Composting toilets from homemade to store bought are shown, and smart water management is demonstrated.

Having conserved our water, we find out all about wetland recycling, grey and black water re-use, worm farms, treatment products and follow this up with water saving tips from the readers of *Earth Garden*. This neatly dovetails into the last chapter on water saving suburbs from around Australia, demonstrating what some councils are doing now to help conserve our dwindling supplies. It is rather ironic that in living memory, councils forbade the collection of water on a suburban property. Oh, how times have changed – and for the better. ■

Available from The Good Life Book Club,  
03 5424 1814, [www.goodlifebookclub.com](http://www.goodlifebookclub.com)

**To view extracts from this book, see overleaf and p.22**