



SOLAR AND FEED-IN TARIFF BASICS

Information for Victorian customers

This fact sheet offers general information about issues with solar, including the connection process. It also explains how to check your bill.

Is solar right for you?

If you have researched solar installations you will be in a better position to make the right choice for you.

Once you have agreed to a solar panel installation and have signed a contract with your energy retailer you are locked in. It will be an expensive mistake if you change your mind. Ask yourself the following questions when considering a solar panel installation:

- How much electricity are your solar panels likely to produce?
- How big does your solar panel system need to be to make savings on your bill?
- Do you have the right location for the solar panels to maximise their generation capabilities?
- How much electricity can you feed back into the grid?
- Will your electricity contract, tariff or service to property charge change if you install solar panels?

Make sure that you compare products and quotes offered by different solar installation companies and confirm that they are Clean Energy Council (CEC) accredited.

Some misleading solar installation companies may claim that:

- if you install solar panels you will never have to pay electricity bills again
- you should get solar now because the rebates are ending.



For more information refer to the Victorian Government's website: <http://ow.ly/ZSgFM>

The solar connection process—12 steps from installation to your first bill

1. Installation of the solar panels and inverter by the solar installer.
2. The inverter should be 'locked open' (switched off) to prevent solar PV generation until the appropriate metering is in place.
3. A hard copy of the Solar Connection Form is then sent to the distributor (usually by the solar installer).
4. Submission of your paperwork to retailer:
 - Certificate of Electrical Safety (CES)
 - Electrical Works Request (EWR)
 - Solar Feed-in Tariff Application Form (if required).
5. Contact your retailer to confirm that all paperwork was received and completed correctly.
6. The retailer raises a service order to the distributor to arrange for appropriate metering and network tariff reassignment.
7. Ask your retailer for the service order number and confirm that the correct type of solar meter and network tariff will be used.
8. The distributor completes either a meter exchange or meter reconfiguration. You will be charged a truck visit fee for these works.
9. The distributor arranges for the network tariff to be reassigned to the appropriate solar feed-in network tariff so that generation can be separately recorded.
10. The distributor reads your meter either physically onsite or remotely and provides these readings to the retailer.
11. Your retailer issues a bill in line with your normal billing cycle.
12. You receive your bill stating usage and export generation amounts. This bill will generally include the fee for your solar meter.



Solar 'Nett' metering

The most common solar metering in Victoria is 'Nett' metering, which means that:

- your property uses the solar-generated electricity first
- only the excess solar-generated electricity is exported to the grid for which you receive solar feed-in credits from your retailer for every kWh exported
- you pay for any electricity you import from the grid.

GST and concessions on your electricity bill

GST is calculated as 10% of your total taxable charges. Concessions and bill credits, including solar credits, are not subject to GST. GST only applies to electricity charges, not the solar electricity generated by you. Concessions are applied after all discounts and solar credits.

Solar feed-in tariffs

A solar feed-in tariff refers to the payback you receive per kWh fed back into the electricity grid. Talk to your retailer about which feed-in tariff is available to you.

General Feed-in Tariff (GFIT):

- available to new customers from 1 January 2013
- the minimum rate is currently 5.0 cents per kWh for 2016
- the rate is reviewed and updated annually by the Essential Services Commission
- available to solar and other eligible forms of renewable energy, such as wind, hydro or biomass, with a system size less than 100 kilowatts.

Standard Feed-in Tariff (SFIT):

- closed to new applicants on 31 December 2012
- scheme ends on 31 December 2016
- if you change retailer or move premises you may lose SFIT
- talk with your energy retailer before adding more panels as it may not be possible to continue receiving SFIT if more panels are added.

Transitional Feed-in Tariff (TFiT):

- closed to new applicants on 31 December 2012
- scheme ends on 31 December 2016
- you can change electricity retailers
- you will lose TFiT if you add new panels
- if you move premises you will lose TFiT.

Premium Feed-in Tariff (PFIT):

- closed to new applicants on 29 December 2011
- scheme ends on 1 November 2024
- you can change retailers
- you will lose PFIT if you add new panels
- if you move premises you will lose PFIT.

Checklist

Don't know where to start? This checklist may help.

Your solar interval meter:

- Have a look at your meter and familiarise yourself with the information on the display.
- Did you check the distributor's information about your meter?

Your bill:

- Compare your bills. Have your solar credits been applied?
- Has the tariff you agreed to been applied?

Talking to your company:

- Talk to your retailer about your billing concerns.
- Talk to your distributor if you are concerned about your meter.

Contacting EWOV:

- If you can't sort out the problem with your electricity retailer or distributor directly, contact EWOV.
- Have **all your details ready**, including bills and your own notes.

What EWOV can't investigate

EWOV can't investigate complaints about solar installation companies. Please contact Consumer Affairs Victoria on **1300 55 81 81** or the Clean Energy Council: <http://ow.ly/ZSgVT>

Information about FiTs was sourced from the Victorian Government's website: <http://ow.ly/ZSgZI>