



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 (photo voltaic) 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?


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.

The solar connection process—8 steps from installation to your first bill

1. Application for pre-approval. Please note no work can take place until final approval is granted by the relevant distributor.
2. Once approval has been granted a solar system can be installed in line with the pre-approval.
3. Following the installation, your installer will submit paperwork including the following:
 - Certificate of Electrical Safety (CES)
 - Electrical Works Request (EWR)
 - PV connection form, which maybe also called an Embedded Generator (EG) or solar connection form.
4. Once paperwork has been processed, the retailer raises a service order to the distributor to arrange for appropriate metering and network tariff reassignment.
5. The distributor will complete a meter reconfiguration and you will be charged a fee for these works.
6. The distributor arranges for the network tariff to be reassigned to the appropriate solar feed-in network tariff so that export can be separately recorded.
7. Your retailer issues a bill in line with your normal billing cycle.
8. You receive your bill stating usage and export generation amounts. This bill will generally include the fee for your solar meter.

 For more information refer to the Victorian Government's website:
<https://bit.ly/2Lcsg5n>



Solar metering

In Victoria, solar meters are set up so 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

This is known as 'Nett' metering.

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
- from 1 July 2018, retailers must offer at least **one** of the following:
 - a single rate of 9.9 cents per kWh, or
 - a flexible rate, as per below:

Period	Weekday	Weekend	Rate: cents per kilowatt hour (c/kWh)
Off peak	10pm to 7am	10pm to 7am	7.1 c/kWh
Shoulder	7am to 3pm, 9pm to 10pm	7am to 10pm	10.3 c/kWh
Peak	3pm to 9pm	n/a	29.0 c/kWh

- 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 (SFIT) and Transitional (TFIT) Feed-in Tariffs:

- both schemes ended on 31 December 2016
- on 1 January 2017, SFIT and TFIT customers were moved to GFIT.

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 or battery storage
- PFIT is connected to the property, not the consumer.



Checklist

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

Solar 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>



The Victorian Government's Victorian Energy Compare website (compare.switchon.vic.gov.au) has useful energy tools and an independent price comparator.

More information about FiTs is available from the Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning's website: goo.gl/5vew5i