



Tasmania – How to get value for your solar PV system and feed-in tariffs explained

How to maximise the value of your solar power through feed-in tariffs and the set-up of your solar power system.

What is a feed-in tariff?

A feed-in tariff is a payment made in exchange for electricity that is fed into the electricity grid from the generation of renewable energy, such as solar PV, hydro, or wind turbines.

Retailer-paid feed-in tariffs

Retailers offer feed-in tariffs at different rates. Retail electricity offers may include several components such as the daily fixed charge for being connected to the network, the electricity usage charge, any discounts applied to the fixed or usage charges, and the feed-in tariff for electricity you export to the electricity grid.

How is the retailer-paid feed-in tariff rate determined?

Each year the Tasmanian Economic Regulator (TER) determines the minimum feed-in tariff rate that retailers must pay customers for excess electricity generated using their renewable energy systems. The minimum rate set by TER that is applicable from 1 July 2018 is 8.541c per kWh.

Please note, residential customers in Tasmania do not currently have access to different retailers, and are recommended to discuss options with Aurora Energy. A retail electricity offer with an attractive feed-in tariff may come with less appealing features such as higher fixed charges or less attractive discounts for usage, and therefore all components of your bill should be considered.

Which feed-in tariffs are now closed to new applicants?

Prior to 30 August 2013, Aurora Energy voluntarily offered the Net Metering Buy Back Scheme. It offered a 'one-for-one' feed-in tariff at a rate that matched the regulated tariffs for residential and small business customers. This scheme was closed to new applicants from 30 August 2013.

In recognition of the investment made in solar PV, the Tasmanian Government grandfathered the feed-in tariff rate paid to customers with systems already installed at the rate that applied at 30 August 2013 for a period of five years. The grandfathered feed-in tariff rate is 28.283c per kWh for residential customers, and is scheduled to finish on 31 December 2018.

Grandfathered rates were also offered to small business customers, with the same closing dates, but varying rates. For the first 500kWh exported during a quarterly billing period, small business customers receive 38.577c per kWh. After the first 500kWh exported, they receive 28.319c per kWh.

Am I affected by the closure of the Solar Bonus Scheme?

Customers who connected before 30 August 2013 and are benefiting from the grandfathered feed-in tariff will no longer receive these higher tariffs as of 1 January 2019. The regulated feed-in tariff rate of 8.541c per kWh applies to all customers.

Do I have to change my meter?

If you already have solar installed, you do not have to change your meter. However, a new meter will be required for new solar installations.

Smart meters and regulation changes

Existing solar customers are not required to change their meters, however, there may be benefits in installing a 'smart' meter (also known as a digital meter). Most customers currently have 'basic' meters (also known as accumulation meters), which can only measure total accumulated electricity usage.

A basic meter cannot tell how much you consume at a particular time, as it only measures the accumulative electricity usage. On the other hand, a smart meter measures your electricity use every 30 minutes. You can then access information about your electricity consumption via your retailer.

By monitoring household electricity consumption, solar PV customers can better manage their electricity use and schedule consumption to maximise the use of their solar PV generated electricity, instead of unnecessarily purchasing electricity from the electricity grid.

Make the most of your solar power

To maximise the value of your solar PV generated electricity, consider some of the following options to ensure you are using your own generated solar power before paying to use electricity from the grid. This can be done by using timers on appliances such as dishwashers and washing machines, and running these appliances during daylight hours.

Battery storage

Batteries allow households to store solar power for use during non-daylight hours. However adding battery storage to your household may involve a high upfront cost. The overall value of investing in battery storage will differ based on the upfront cost, the retail rates available and your location.

Differences in the weather and the size of your solar PV system will determine the amount of electricity your system will generate. Smaller renewable energy systems mean less unused electricity is generated to store and use when the sun is not shining. Make sure

you compare the overall benefits with the total costs before investing in battery storage, and speak to your retailer to determine if battery storage affects your eligibility for any feed-in tariffs you receive.

More information

For more information about the feed-in tariffs, the schemes previously available and regulatory determinations, visit the Office of the Tasmanian Economic Regulator's website

<http://www.economicregulator.tas.gov.au/>

To help you compare retail offers, see AER Energy Made Easy website

www.energymadeeasy.gov.au

Australian Energy Regulator

Infoline 1300 585 165

Website www.aer.gov.au

Energy Made Easy www.energymadeeasy.gov.au

Other contacts

Indigenous Infoline 1300 303 143

For information in languages other than English call 13 1450 and ask for 1300 585 165

Speak and Listen users phone 1300 555 727 and ask for 1300 585 165

TTY users phone 13 3677 and ask for 1300 585 165

Internet relay users connect to the National Relay Service (<http://www.relayservice.com.au>) and ask for 1300 585 165

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