

Going Solar - What You Need to Know

If you are thinking of installing small scale photovoltaic electricity generation, it is a good idea to check out the fine print first to make sure your chosen solution meets all your needs. The type of meter needed to support your installation and the resulting tariff you are assigned to will have an impact on your electricity bill both in terms of how much you are paid for the energy you produce and the tariffs you pay for electricity drawn from the electricity grid.

Before you sign up for an installation, call your electricity retailer and discuss your individual needs. Getting it right the first time will save you time and money.

There are two types of tariff paid to customers generating electricity through small photovoltaic installations:

Standard Solar (SFIT)

Customers choosing this option are paid a Standard Feed-in Tariff (SFIT) by their retailer for the energy their installation feeds back into the electricity grid. This is generally the same rate which customers pay for the electricity they draw from the grid.

You will need to discuss with your retailer the metering and tariff arrangements for this type of feed-in tariff.

Premium Solar (PFIT)

In Victoria, customers with eligible photovoltaic installations are paid for the excess energy put into the electricity grid excluding what is consumed at your home or premises. Net metering is required to facilitate this type of payment. This is in contrast to gross metering which measures all the energy generated without taking into consideration what is used at the customer's home or premises. Customers should ensure their payback calculations are based on the **net** output of their house after deducting their own load consumption, rather than the total capacity of the solar panels and/or an inverter.

To be eligible customers must be a resident, small business or community group installing a photovoltaic installation with a maximum capacity of 5kW. There is also a state wide cap on the capacity of this scheme of 100MW limiting access to the scheme to early applications only. Customers can elect to be paid a Premium Feed-in Tariff (PFIT) by CitiPower or Powercor of \$0.60 per kilowatt hour via their electricity retailer for the net energy they produce which is fed into the electricity grid.

Customers choosing this option will need a bi-directional meter installed and will require any associated wiring work to consolidate and control loads to be done by a Registered Electrical Contractor (REC) at their own cost.

For more information on metering, wiring and load switching see:
[Network Specific Requirements](#)

Access to the PFiT requires installation of net metering (and transfer to a Time of Use tariff if the premises currently have a controlled load hot water or slab heating). Wiring arrangements under this feed-in tariff is not able to accommodate existing dedicated circuits servicing hot water, slab heating or Powercor’s Climate Saver reverse cycle air conditioning tariff. Some customers will require wiring work to be done at their own cost.

Customers and installers can access further information including application forms and guidelines for the installation of embedded generators from:

[Electricity Networks - Connecting Generation](#)

See the table for further details. Note all customers choosing to be paid the Premium Feed-in Tariff will pay Time of Use tariffs for the energy they draw from the grid.

Existing Customer Types	Standard Solar (SFiT)	Standard Solar (SFiT)	Premium Solar (PFiT)	Premium Solar (PFiT)
	CitiPower	Powercor	CitiPower	Powercor
Single phase customers with no offpeak electric hot water.	C1R – no network tariff change. Meter is replaced with a bidirectional meter.	D1 – no network tariff change. Meter is replaced with a bidirectional meter.	Tariff changed to add Premium Feed-in tariff and move to C3R or C3RB Time of Use consumption tariff. Meter replaced with bidirectional smart meter.	Tariff changed to add Premium Feed-in Tariff and move to D3 Time of Use consumption tariff. Meter replaced with bi-directional smart meter.
Single phase customers with a dedicated circuit for hot water.	C1R.CDS, C1RB.CDSB or C2R (two element meters) – no tariff change. Typically retains existing dedicated circuit load control. Meter is replaced with bidirectional meter.	D1. DD1, D2 or D3.HW (two element meters) - no tariff change. Typically retains existing dedicated circuit load control. Meter is replaced with bi-directional meter.	Tariff changed to add Premium Feed-in Tariff and move to C3R or C3RB Time of Use consumption tariff. Switching service provided for approved single phase hot water. Meter changed to a one element smart meter.	Tariff changed to add Premium Feed-in Tariff and move to D3 Time of Use consumption tariff. Switching service provided for approved single phase hot water. Meter changed to a one element smart meter.

Existing Customer Types	Standard Solar (SFIT)	Standard Solar (SFIT)	Premium Solar (PFIT)	Premium Solar (PFIT)
Multi-phase customers with dedicated circuits for hot water	C1R.CDS, C1RB.CDSB or C2R (two element meters) – typically no tariff change. Retains existing dedicated circuit load control. Meter is replaced with bi-directional meter.	D1. DD1, D2 or D3.HW (two element meters) – typically no tariff change. Retains existing dedicated circuit load control. Meter is replaced with bi-directional meter.	Tariff changed to add Premium Feed-in Tariff and move to C3R or C3RB Time of Use consumption tariff. Customers may need to engage an REC to undertake wiring work at their own cost for multiphase hot water control and boost wiring. Switching service provided for approved single phase hot water. Meter changed to a one element smart meter.	Tariff changed to add Premium Feed-in Tariff and move to D3 Time of Use consumption tariff. Customers may need to engage an REC to undertake wiring work at their own cost for multiphase hot water control and boost wiring. Switching service provided for approved single phase hot water. Meter changed to a one element smart meter.
Customers with slab heating and/or Climate Saver tariffs.	C1R.CDS tariff – typically no tariff change. Typically retains existing dedicated circuit load control. Meter replaced with bi-directional meter	D1. DD1.CS tariffs –typically no tariff change. Typically retains existing dedicated circuit load control. Meter replaced with bi-directional meter.	Meters and tariffs are consolidated and customers need to engage an REC to undertake wiring work at their own cost, including installation of timer/contactors to control slab heating. Tariff changed to add Premium Feed-in tariff and move to C3R or C3RB Time of Use consumption tariff. Switching service provided for approved single phase hot water. Meter changed to a single element smart meter.	Meters/ tariffs are consolidated and customers to engage an REC to undertake wiring work at their own cost, including installation of timer/ contactors to control slab heating. Tariff changed to add Premium Feed in tariff and move to D3 Time of Use consumption tariff. Switching service provided for approved single phase hot water. Meter changed to a single element smart meter.