

Solar PV Connection Process

When can my solar PV system be connected to the network?

Your system can be connected once all of the applicable connection eligibility criteria have been met. This includes:

- application to your electricity retailer to ensure that your contract is appropriate
- application to Western Power for technical approval of your proposed system
- Western Power has approved your system
- Western Power approved metering is installed

Do I need to contact my electricity retailer if I want to have a solar PV system installed?

Yes, you must contact your retailer when looking to install a solar PV system, even if you do not wish to participate in a buyback scheme. All electricity customers have a contract with their retailer and this must be adjusted to allow for generation. If a customer does not contact their retailer they will be in breach of their contract; and also the approval given by Western Power.

From 1 July 2013, all applications to Western Power will require a 'Retailer Reference Number' to be included on the application form.

What is a Retailer Reference Number?

A Retailer Reference Number is a unique reference number given to you by your Electricity Retailer once your application for solar PV or other embedded generation system has been accepted. The 'Retailer Reference Number' will be issued by your Electricity Retailer for all applications received after 1 July 2013 and is to be used on your application to Western Power for any application submitted after 1 July 2013.

What needs to happen to the meter at my property prior to the connection of a solar PV system?

The Electricity Industry Metering Code (2012) requires a Western Power approved bi-directional electricity meter to be installed **before** connection of your solar PV system to the network. The existing meter at your property will need to be changed or reconfigured - this is arranged via your electricity retailer.

What is a bi-directional meter?

A bi-directional meter is a meter that is capable of measuring electricity flowing two ways, and is programmed to record net electricity consumption and generation at your property.

How do I know if the existing meter at my property needs to be changed or reconfigured to allow for a solar PV system to be connected?

All meter types (electronic and mechanical, old and new) must be either changed or re-configured. This is required to be undertaken **before** your solar PV system is connected to the network.

Who changes or reconfigures the meter before a solar PV system is connected?

Western Power will change or reconfigure the meter when requested by your electricity retailer. This request will occur automatically after Western Power has given technical approval for your system.

How will you know that the meter has been changed or reconfigured?

Western Power will leave a card in your letterbox once this service is completed, so that you can contact your solar installer. In addition, a green sticker labelled 'IMPORT/EXPORT' will also be placed on your meter by Western Power once the service has been completed.

How long will it take for Western Power to change or reconfigure the meter?

Western Power will use best endeavours to complete this service within five business days of the request from the retailer in metropolitan areas and within 10 business days for country areas. Some customers may experience extended timeframes where meter installation conditions require a specialist crew to complete the service.

What are the consequences of connecting a solar PV system to the Western Power network without a bi-directional meter?

Under the Electricity Industry Metering Code (2012) this is meter interference. If bi-directional flows occur at a connection point without a bi-directional meter the customer, property owner and the electrical contractor that commissioned the system may be prosecuted in accordance with the Energy Operators Act 1979.

In addition to this, if your solar PV system is connected without the installation of a bi-directional meter Western Power will be unable to determine an actual value for your electricity consumption and, in accordance with the Electricity Industry Metering Code, will estimate your consumption and apply a substituted reading. Western Power will not estimate energy generation credits and a zero generation reading will be applied.