

PV INDUSTRY ALERT

This alert is the fifth in a series to keep the solar PV industry up to date with issues that may impact on the connection of inverter energy systems (IESs) to the Ergon Energy network.

Thanks for your feedback

In August and September, Ergon Energy held Solar Industry Information Sessions at locations across Queensland.

More than 360 industry representatives attended, with another 50 accepting but unable to attend.

We received extensive feedback from these events and are using this to improve processes and communications.

The sessions were another way for Ergon Energy to build collaborative relationships within the solar industry and we were encouraged to note the appreciation of attendees.

Key insights gained included:

- Industry representatives want to be able to liaise with Ergon Energy on behalf of their customers to provide them a better service.
- There is frustration at the differences in standards and requirements between Ergon Energy and ENERGEX.
- There is concern at the current inability of Ergon Energy Queensland (the retailer) to offer a Power Purchase Agreement to customers with systems that don't qualify for the Queensland Government's Solar Bonus Scheme (SBS).

Ergon Energy is progressively responding to all issues raised, and some responses are highlighted in this Alert.

Please follow the manual

PV sales consultants and installers must be aware of two key differences between Ergon Energy's and ENERGEX's

requirements, as outlined in the Queensland Electricity Connection and Metering Manual. They are:

1. Ergon Energy requires meter panels to be hinged, while ENERGEX does not.
2. Ergon Energy requires meter isolation links to be back-wired. ENERGEX allows them to be front-wired.

Non-compliance with Ergon Energy's requirements may generate a Form B to the customer to rectify any issues, and the new meter may not be installed.

In addition, if the Ergon Energy Electricity Officer deems the electrical installation to have a major defect, a Form B will be raised and the premises may be disconnected.

A Form B will also be raised for minor defects.

Achieving optimal outcomes

Ergon Energy's technical assessments on applications for IESs are conducted using the best data available.

To assist this process, Ergon Energy's new IES Application form (see PV Industry Alert No. 4 and the Ergon Energy website) seeks more information about phases and other aspects of the customer installation and the local network. This information will assist in delivering more accurate technical assessment outcomes and ensure the maximum allowable inverter size is approved, up to the size applied for.

If your customer is advised the inverter size applied for cannot be approved, yet you believe the local network should be able to support it, the customer, or their authorised representative (as per new Application form), can seek a reassessment, provided they can supply valid information to support their request.

Our assessment process is rigorous so we will not undertake reassessments just because a customer is disappointed with the outcome.

Know the Solar Bonus Scheme

The Queensland Government's SBS has greatly assisted the state's PV industry.

It is important that PV sales consultants are familiar with its rules to ensure correct information is delivered to customers.

Customers applying to upgrade to a larger PV system are often unaware that if their total inverter size is greater than 5kW, the system is ineligible for the SBS.

Incomplete forms rejected

Ergon Energy continues to receive incomplete *Application for Network Connection of an Inverter Energy System* forms. And we continue to send them back to customers. We reiterate the importance of completing all fields in Parts 1, 2 and 3.

Meter and applications update

There remain delays installing new IES meters in some areas. We also recognise there have been delays in processing of applications. Ergon Energy has committed additional resources and is working hard to quickly reduce the backlog and thanks customers and the PV industry for their patience.

It must be highlighted that many meter installations are delayed because an Application form hasn't be lodged or the customer hasn't signed and returned their Agreements.

Solar Support Team

We remind you that Ergon Energy has established a dedicated Solar Support Team to assist customers and industry representatives with any questions about connections of solar PV systems.

If you have any questions, please contact Ergon Energy's Solar Support Team on 1300 553 924, 8.00am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday, or email energysystems@ergon.com.au