



PV Industry Alert

July 2016 – Issue 27

Online Form A and MEGU application form to be closed

As you may have read in our recent [RELAY newsletter](#), after 1 August 2016 the Ergon Energy Electrical Partners Portal will be the only available online channel to lodge a Form A. For customers who don't have access to the internet, please call us on 13 74 66 and we can send you a hard copy. Both the online Form A and the online Micro EG Unit application form will be withdrawn at midnight on Monday 1 August to direct all lodgements through the one channel. This will deliver maximum efficiency to both users and Ergon Energy.

Please note - applications for systems sized above 30kVA will continue to be managed by our Major Customer Group and the process for these is detailed on the [Major Business Connections](#) webpage.

It's great to see that more than 30% of electrical contractors are already registered to use the Portal, and we are currently seeing more than 90% of Form As being lodged online. If you are still experiencing difficulties using the Portal, we have developed a [Help Page](#) on our website to guide you. If you need further help, please call us on 13 74 66 (7.00am - 6.30pm Monday to Friday).

Solar Team changes

The new email address for our Solar Team is solarteam@ergon.com.au

This replaces the old email addresses energysystems@ergon.com.au and ccgmeg@ergon.com.au. Please update your records as we'll only keep the old email address active for the next two months.

Note - our 1300 553 924 phone number remains unchanged.

Connection Standard responsibilities

With the transition to the new Portal, we have seen a number of applications being submitted which do not meet the *Connection Standard for Small Scale Parallel Inverter Energy Systems up to 30kVA*. Recently, we have also noticed a rise in applications for over 30kVA systems not complying with the relevant Standard as well.

It is the responsibility of the person submitting the application and the installer to ensure that the system complies with the requirements of the relevant *Connection Standard*. Where Ergon Energy identifies installations that do not meet the standard, the installer is responsible for resolving the issue to Ergon Energy's satisfaction. In a worst-case scenario, we may have to disconnect the unit and equipment may need to be removed. Installers that do not comply with the relevant *Connection Standard* may be referred to the Clean Energy Council.

Also, a reminder that all applications for exporting inverters rated above 2kVA that are proposed to be connected to the Main network (not SWER or Isolated) must include a Reactive Power Control setting of at least 0.9 lagging.

Revised Connection Standard being finalised

The revised *Joint Energex and Ergon Energy Connection Standard for Micro EG Units up to 30kVA* will be released soon.

We're receiving a number of applications for inverters with partial export limitation, reflective of the draft version of the revised Connection Standard. However, until it is released, applications for inverters with partial export limitation cannot be accepted.

Inverter replacements under warranty

Following industry feedback about our advice in February's PV Industry Alert No. 25 we wish to clarify our policy on inverter replacement under warranty as follows:

- If an installer needs to replace an inverter without Reactive Power Control (RPC) functionality that is under warranty we will allow replacement with the same non-RPC inverter as originally installed. An application must still be lodged.
- Similarly, if a single phase inverter rated above 5kVA needs replacing under warranty, and the premises is only single phase, we will allow replacement with the same model of inverter, even though it exceeds the maximum 5kVA single phase limit.

Unaccredited inverter replacements

Some inverters may no longer be included on the Clean Energy Council's (CEC's) accredited inverter list after 8th October 2016 due to the AS/NZS 4777.2:2015 compliance requirements. This is important as our application portals only list accredited inverters.

We can still accommodate applications for replacements under warranty of inverters which are no longer accredited. These applications can only be lodged using the PDF version of the application form, via email or fax, please be aware these may take longer to process. Importantly, these unaccredited inverters can **only** be used for replacements of inverters under warranty.

Please note if you make an application up to 8th October 2016, and then are unable to install the unit and lodge a Form A until after then, if the proposed inverter is no longer accredited from the 9th October 2016, we reserve the right to cancel that application and any connection offer associated with it.

Guidance on going off-grid

With reducing costs for solar PV/battery systems and a rise in off-grid enabled products on the market, many more people are considering making the switch.

We're here to support customers in any decision-making about their energy future. So, for customers who are thinking of going off-grid one day, we've developed [a new web page](#) featuring the top 10 considerations we believe customers should make before taking that big step. Our goal is to provide balanced information to help the research and decision-making process. So, if your customers are asking you questions about going off-grid please steer them to our new information.

We're particularly keen for your feedback on this initiative so would encourage your emails to the solarteam@ergon.com.au

Reminder: Applications essential for batteries

Under the electricity legislation, the customer or their agent (e.g. PV retailer) must submit an application to connect an Energy Storage System (ESS) to Ergon Energy, and gain our agreement, before installing such a unit.

Where a battery requires an AS 4777 accredited inverter to feed electricity to a grid-connected electrical circuit, even if the battery is not capable of exporting to the grid, it is considered an ESS. Uninterruptable Power Supplies or batteries connected to a non-grid-connected electrical circuit are exempt from our application requirements.

Installing a battery on a new or existing AS 4777 accredited inverter without seeking our approval places the customer in breach of the electricity legislation and their ongoing supply contract. Action then taken could include disconnecting the ESS and solar PV inverter/s from the network. Installers that connect a battery system to the grid without an application to Ergon Energy may be referred to the Clean Energy Council.

[More details](#) are available on our website.

PV unit application insights

Total PV systems connected (Ergon)	Applications per month^	Application rate trend	Percentage assessed	Percentage offered desired capacity*	Non-exporting applications (percentage of total)^	Online application rate
>118,000	995	Steady	50 – 55%	85 – 90%	21%	>98%
* the remainder have had viable options offered to them						
^based on an average of the last six months						

Helpful links

NEW!! Ergon Energy [‘Smarter Energy’](#) web pages for customers – Solar Power, Battery Storage and Electric Vehicles

Ergon Energy [‘Solar PV’](#) web page for installers:

[Joint Ergon Energy/Energex Connection Standard](#) for Small Scale Parallel Inverter Energy Systems up to 30kVA:

Standard for [Connection of Embedded Generators](#) [>30kVA] in the Ergon Energy Distribution Network