



Additional Costs to Consider When Installing Solar

When purchasing a solar PV system from DT Electrical your quote will include specific panels, an inverter, or multiple micro inverters, monitoring devices (if specified) and the appropriate roof mounting system needed. It also includes the balance of system (such as railing, wiring, electrical components) and other operational costs such as pre-approval fees and electrical inspection charges. It is important to check that all these items are included in any other quote you receive as not all solar companies will factor these into their initial quote.

▶ Connection Costs:

The quote you receive from DT Electrical outlines your system costs and will tell you your final out of pocket price (total system cost less any government incentives you qualify for) to have the system installed. At DT Electrical, we also take care of the connection paperwork for you. However, this price doesn't include the additional connection costs incurred from third parties that are involved, such as your Electricity Retailer or Energy Distributor.

▶ Metering Costs:

To access the feed-in tariff, your electricity meter may need to be reconfigured to be compatible with a solar system in order to measure both the power you use (imports) and the power you send to the grid (exports). This meter will record your power imports and exports every half hour. Most reconfigurations are done remotely. Check with your retailer for the likely cost of this reconfiguration.

You may also need to pay for an upgrade to a digital meter if your current meter is analogue. The new meters are provided by your electricity distributor. The cost of this is passed from the electricity distributor to your electricity retailer. Generally, this cost is recovered by your electricity retailer through increased network charges on your monthly electricity bill.

▶ Switchboard Modifications:

In order to install a grid connected solar power system at your premises, you will need to have a compatible switchboard and meter. We can help you determine if your switchboard and meter is compatible. We also supply approximate pricing for upgrades if required. These works are not included in your solar system quotation unless specified.

All relatively recently built homes have a compatible switchboard type. A standard installation is one where two blank "poles" (spaces) are available for the solar circuit breaker, or isolator switch, to be installed. In some situations (depending on the install location), one "pole" may be sufficient.

If there is no space for additional circuit breakers in the board, we may be able to install an additional housing module for your switchboard.

Our fees for the supply and installation of additional modules are:

- ▶ Single pole module \$150.00 ex GST
- ▶ Double pole module \$200.00 ex GST
- ▶ Triple pole module \$250.00 ex GST

All domestic installations must have as a minimum, one safety switch in the electrical switchboard, also called an RCD (residual current device). The safety switch detects leakage of current to earth and interrupts the supply to power points. Some switchboards may require a main switch upgrade or additional switches to be compliant.

Our fee to replace, upgrade or install a new switch (single phase up to 63A) is \$150.00 ex GST.



► Switchboard Upgrades:

Older switchboards have a greater tendency to short-circuit, meaning that there is a risk of the fuses catching fire, or risk of electric shocks. If your current switchboard still uses replaceable wires on the fuses, it is a safety hazard and should be replaced to ensure it can handle your power requirements, has the necessary safety switches, and meets current electrical standards.

Switchboard upgrade costs will vary from home to home depending on size and specific requirements. We can provide a personalised quote to suit your needs. Your switchboard upgrade will involve the replacement of all ceramic fuses for modern, safe circuit breakers and RCDs. This occurs in a neat enclosure along with the rewiring/tidying of the cables behind your panel; before finishing with the testing the entire installation and residence. It can also include the replacement of asbestos panels, new service fuses and the upgrade of your consumers mains cables.

► What Are Feed In Tariffs?

Feed in Tariff's are funded by the State Government and Electricity Suppliers. For each Kilowatt Hour (kWh) of energy a solar system produces which you do not use in your home is sold back to the grid. For every unit of electricity your solar system produces that you consume means that you do not have to purchase that unit from your electricity retailer.

The Feed in Tariffs vary from State to state, some electricity retailers offer additional Feed in Tariffs for switching to them when you install Solar Power. To take up a feed-in tariff, you will need to sign a contract with an electricity retail company of your choice.

Shop around for the deal that best suits you as different electricity retailers may offer different prices and different terms and conditions. All retailers with more than 5,000 customers must offer eligible new customers the feed-in rate of a minimum of 8 cents per kilowatt hour.

For more information about Feed in Tariff's in Victoria please visit:

<http://www.energyandresources.vic.gov.au/energy/environment-and-community/victorian-feed-intariffschemes/new-feed-in-tariff>

► Billing Rates:

The installation of a new meter may affect your electricity billing rates.

You may move from an off-peak tariff to a time-of-use (TOU) tariff. A TOU tariff is a pricing structure that changes depending on the time of day you consume power. In peak demand periods (day), charges will be higher than consumption during lower demand periods (night). So, while electricity is most expensive during the day, this will be offset by your solar PV system producing energy during this time also.

If you move from an off-peak tariff to a time-of-use (TOU) tariff, this will particularly affect your dedicated off-peak loads, such as hot water, space heating and air-conditioning.

You should check with your electricity retailer about any tariff changes that will occur as a result of installing solar and carefully weigh up the advantages and disadvantages before making a decision. This should be considered before you install your solar PV panels.