

Solar Bonus Scheme

Queensland homes and small businesses with roof-mounted solar power systems that sign up for the Queensland Government's Solar Bonus Scheme get paid 44c for every kilowatt hour (kWh) of surplus electricity they generate and feed into the grid. That's more than double the current general domestic use tariff of 21.35c/kWh (inc GST as at 1 July 2010).

On top of this, the home or business needs less electricity from the grid, as the solar panels are helping to provide power to the home or business when the sun is shining.

Between July 2008 and September 2010, more than 42 600 Queenslanders have signed up to the Solar Bonus Scheme, providing more than 78 megawatts of solar power capacity on Queensland homes and businesses.

The Solar Bonus Scheme is designed to make solar power more affordable for Queenslanders, stimulate the solar power industry and encourage energy efficiency. Household by household we're working together to double Queensland's use of solar energy in five years.

How does the scheme work?

The solar bonus is paid for electricity fed into the grid at times when the solar system generates more electricity than the household or business is using.

When the meter reader visits a customer's home or business at the end of the quarter, the total amount of surplus electricity exported to the grid and the total amount imported from the grid are read and passed onto the customer's electricity retailer to calculate the bill.

The customer's quarterly solar bonus payment for the electricity exported to the grid is deducted from the total electricity consumption charge on their bill.

How much would the scheme reduce my electricity bill by?

The average consumer operating a 1.5 kilowatt (kW) solar system could save over \$400 on their electricity bill just by using less electricity from the grid. If they were signed up to the Solar Bonus Scheme they would also receive payments for exporting excess electricity (generated from the solar panels) back to the grid, meaning these savings could be even higher. Energy efficient homes and businesses could make even greater savings.

What has the scheme achieved so far?

Since the scheme began in July 2008 until October 2010, approximately 47 000 households had signed up to the scheme, feeding more than 20.6 million kilowatt hours of power back into the electricity grid.

The scheme also contributes to the Queensland Government's Toward Q2 target of reducing the state's carbon footprint by one third by 2020.

Who is eligible to receive the bonus?

To be eligible to receive the solar bonus, customers must:

- consume less than 100 megawatt hours (MWh) of electricity a year (the average household uses approximately 7.9MWh a year)



- purchase and install a new solar power (photovoltaic) system (not solar hot water system) or operate an existing system that is connected to the Queensland electricity grid
- generate surplus electricity that is fed into the Queensland electricity grid
- have an agreement in place with their electricity distributor (Ergon Energy, ENERGEX or Country Energy - limited to Queensland territory) and have appropriate metering installed
- have solar power systems with a capacity of up to 10 kilo Volt Amperes (kVa) for single phase power and 30 kVa for three-phase power
- hold an electricity account with an electricity retailer
- customers wishing to claim the solar bonus should contact the electricity retailer that supplies them with grid-connected electricity.

More information

For more information about the Solar Bonus Scheme or other solar initiatives in Queensland, visit www.qld.gov.au or call 13 GET SOLAR (13 438 76527).

Information updated 2 December 2010.