

Warwick Sprawson

Submission

10/2/16

Our family has a 1.8kw solar system on our roof. We chose to go solar for many reasons, to reduce our reliance on pollution brown coal, to reduce climate change and, importantly, to reduce our electricity costs. While we are very happy with our choice, going solar presented many unforeseen costs and challenges. The main was battling our existing energy provider, AGL, to actually connect our system. They evidently had no interest in solar (at the time, 2011) and seemed to frustrate the process at every opportunity, with constant delays. It ended up taking several months to get connected, on the way needing to pay a range of steep fees.

So one thing you could consider is making getting connected to the grid a lot easier for solar users.

The other change you could consider is to give solar owners a 'fair' price for the electricity they produce. While the feed-in tariff was very generous in the early years, the Napthine government cut the tariff dramatically. This has basically made solar a much less attractive proposition, including paying power companies around 25c kw/hr for power but only receiving perhaps 11 c kw/hr for the power we produce. This, on top of the inexorable rise and rise in 'poles and wires' charges mean that solar power is not worth while unless you work from home and will use up the majority of the power you produce as you produce it.

So the other thing you could look at is a higher feed-in tariff and significant reduction in the profit that the monopoly owners of poles and wires now enjoys.

Solar power returns the power to the people and should be on every Victorian roof. Please legislate to facilitate this.