

Tech Talk

Connection Standards newsletter – October 2011

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To all Registered Electrical Contractors

The aim of this *Tech Talk* is to provide you, your employees, CitiPower and Powercor with information that will help us to improve service for our customers.

Please read the document and pass it onto your employees or associates for their information.

Smart Metering Update

The roll-out of the Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) Smart Meter Program across the CitiPower and Powercor Australia networks continues with over 440,000 smart meters now installed. This includes business as usual works, new connections, together with additions and alterations that are now being undertaken with smart meters as the default metering solution.





Release of Smart Meter DVD

CitiPower and Powercor has produced the first AMI DVD to inform customers about smart meter benefits and explain the installation process.

It was produced for the benefit of customers who have not yet received a smart meter and for key stakeholders such as city and shire councils, business groups and community groups.

The DVD will also be shown during field days and community events.

The DVD content covers the Victorian Government mandated Smart Meter Program, an essential infrastructure upgrade that replaces old mechanical technology and which will enable Victoria to face the challenges of the future. It also covers technology safety and the installation process.

The DVD can be viewed by *Tech Talk* readers on YouTube via a link on the CitiPower and Powercor web sites: www.citipower.com.au/smartmeters or www.powercor.com.au/smartmeters

Still Time to Join – Smart Meter REC Listing

If you have not yet registered with us to feature in the REC Listing for the AMI Smart Meter Program, there is still time to do so!

The REC Listing is used to assist customers who may need the services of a REC to assess and rectify defects in customers' electrical installations identified by smart meter installation technicians.

Many RECs have already responded to our invitation to join the listing, which is growing with each issue of *Tech Talk*.

As Powercor extends the smart meter roll-out to new areas such as Geelong, Ararat, Hamilton, Horsham, Portland and Warrnambool over the coming months, we would like as many RECs as possible from those areas to join the listing.

Those wishing to do work in defect rectification and who have not yet expressed interest with CitiPower and Powercor are invited to do so by emailing us at RECListforcustomerdefects@powercor.com.au

You will need to provide your REC registration number, trading name and full business address, and best contact telephone number.

Remember, it is the responsibility of each REC to ensure that the contact details provided are accurate and up to date. At any stage during the Smart Meter Program – on request in writing – RECs can be added or removed from the list.

Privacy Policy – REC Listing

CitiPower and Powercor is bound by the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth). This privacy policy outlines the manner in which we collect and use the personal information and contact details that you email us when requesting to be included in the REC Listing.

We collect personal information for the purpose of compiling the REC Listing in relation to the Smart Meter Program. We may provide customers with the REC Listing where we identify a defect in their electrical installation. We will take reasonable steps to keep your personal information secure. You can access your personal information at any time on request and you can request removal of your details by emailing us at RECListforcustomerdefects@powercor.com.au

We will comply with all reasonable requests to have inaccuracies corrected.



Maintenance of Renewable Energy Systems

Household use of renewable energy systems has grown significantly as awareness of climate change increases and government incentives to use the technology have been made available.

Many installations have now been in place for three years and as an electricity distributor, CitiPower and Powercor is required to remind owners of their obligations under the Electricity Distribution Code.

Renewable Energy systems with a capacity not greater than 10kW fall in the category of *small embedded generators* in relation to the Code and as such, owners have the following obligations:

- Ensuring that your small renewable generating source operates at the required system frequency of 50Hz (or within any allowable variation that applies)
- Ensuring that your small renewable generating source and any equipment within it connected to the local electricity network, complies with Victoria's Electricity Distribution Code, the Electricity Safety Act 1998 and regulations and all relevant Australian Standards, and is maintained in a safe condition

- Ensuring that your small renewable generating source's electrical protection devices are at all times coordinated with the electrical characteristics of the local electricity network.

CitiPower and Powercor has written to owners to remind them of these obligations and provide some advice on how to remain compliant. As we are not able to provide specific advice for individual systems, we have advised owners to contact their installer or REC if they have any concerns about their system, or would like a preventative maintenance check.

All systems are required to meet Australian Standard AS4777 which covers all requirements under the Electricity Distribution Code. Most systems require very little maintenance and only need an occasional inspection to ensure excessive dust or dirt is not present and all connections are secured and clearly labelled. Some owners may choose to engage a REC to check their system and provide a current certificate of electrical safety.

The Clean Energy Council maintains a list of all solar panel and inverter models that meet Australian Standards. The list is available on their web site www.cleanenergycouncil.org.au

Feed in Tariff Update

The following information is based on recent Victorian Government and Department of Primary Industries website notifications.

On Thursday 1 September 2011 the Victorian Government announced that the Premium Feed-in Tariff (PFIT) is to close, and advised that anyone who has not already paid a deposit or had their panels installed is now highly unlikely to be eligible for the scheme. The Government strongly warned solar system vendors to cease advising new customers that they would be able to receive the PFIT rate.

For full details on the State Government website announcement by the Victorian Minister for Energy and Resources please visit:

<http://www.premier.vic.gov.au/media-centre/media-releases/1856-new-solar-incentive-to-replace-premium-feed-in-tariff.html?qh=YToxOntpOjA7czo1OiJzb2xhcil7fQ%3D%3D>

About 50,000 Victorian households, small businesses and community groups with solar panels are now benefiting from a premium rate for the power they feed back to the grid. Eligible customers who are signed up to the PFIT and receiving credits will continue to receive this rate until 2024.



What should have happened by 30 September?

The DPI advised that by 30 September 2011 installers and their customers needed to lodge the following forms with a customer's electricity suppliers for them to be considered for the premium rate:

- The Solar Connection Form
- The Electrical Work Request
- The Certificate of Electrical Safety.

Electricity suppliers should then be able to complete the process before the premium scheme capacity cap is reached – expected for 30 November 2011. This process includes having a bi-directional meter connected to the grid.

See the DPI website advice of paperwork requirements for Solar Installations: <http://new.dpi.vic.gov.au/energy/sustainable-energy/solar-energy/solar-energy-for-consumers/paperwork-for-buying-solar-panels>

What happens to customers who sign-up between 30 September 2011 and 1 January 2012?

Customers will need to have the right metering in place and be connected to the grid before they can start receiving credits from any sort of solar tariff. This process can take several months.

Anyone who submits their paperwork after 30 September 2011 will most likely be unable to have their meter installed and connected to the grid before 30 November 2011, when it is expected that the capacity cap will be reached and new entrants will be unable to receive the premium rate.

Electricity retailers should be able to start formally

offering new Transitional Feed-in Tariff contracts after the legislation is passed through parliament in November 2011. The transitional rate will start being credited to customer accounts from 1 January 2012.

For further information on specific CitiPower and Powercor processes and forms see the following websites:

www.citipower.com.au/Electricity_Networks/Solar_Connections/

www.powercor.com.au/Electricity_Networks/Solar_Connections/

Frequently Asked Questions:

What happens to people who miss out?

Any customer submitting paperwork after 30 September 2011 should contact their electricity retailer who can advise on the best solar deal available to them.

For more information go to: www.dpi.vic.gov.au/feedintariff

To register for DPI updates on feed-in tariffs go to: www.dpi.vic.gov.au/feedintariffupdates

What are the arrangements and delays for Powercor and CitiPower PFIT metering?

The pending closure of PFIT created a last minute rush to complete systems already ordered and being installed before the 30 September 2011 deadline.

Requests for solar metering including PFIT and Standard Feed-in Tariff (SFIT) must be made via the customer's retailer with all appropriate paperwork submitted and correct, and customers should liaise with their retailer to confirm that a Service Order Number has been issued for the metering work. CitiPower and Powercor will endeavour to ensure all PFIT applications received from retailers arising from the 30 September 2011 **deadline** are metered prior to the expected PFIT closure **in late November**.

What are the ongoing tariff arrangements and metering issues relating to SFIT and TFIT?

Under the PFIT customers were required to transfer to a single element, single meter installation, and to move to an open Time of Use Network Tariff (TFIT) as part of applying for connection to the CitiPower and Powercor PFIT to comply with the net instantaneous metering requirements of the property.

Under the SFIT, customers will have the wiring arrangements advised by their retailer. Most retailers allow customers to remain on their existing network tariffs with two element metering, multiple meters and dedicated controlled load tariffs, as part of receiving a bi-directional metering upgrade as requested by their retailer. Bi-directional metering requires the embedded generator to be installed on the main general power and light circuits with the net instantaneous metering requirements being applied only to that circuit, with other existing dedicated and controlled load circuits being left in place, unless otherwise advised as an "Adds and Alteration" or "Network Tariff Change" by the customer's retailer.

As a part of its announcement, the Victorian Government advised that it would introduce a Temporary Feed-in Tariff (TFIT) as a replacement for the PFIT arrangement. The most notable difference is a significant reduction in rates from 60c/kWh to 25c/kWh. CitiPower and Powercor is unable to proceed with any installations for TFIT until the scheme is passed in legislation; nor can CitiPower and Powercor advise on any aspects of the intended metering designs, installation and tariffing arrangements.

CitiPower and Powercor will be endeavouring to confirm those details with the DPI and Government and will seek to create a TFIT Fact Sheet on its websites once those details are known.

Can I increase the capacity of my solar system by adding new panels or larger inverter after the cap has closed and continue to receive the PFIT?

You will not be able to add additional panels (and/or larger inverter) to your existing solar system after the PFIT has reached its capacity cap, expected for 30 November 2011.

If you add extra panels/larger inverter after this time you will no longer be eligible for the premium rate, but can apply to your retailer to move to the SFIT, or for the new TFIT, at 25c per kilowatt hour for excess electricity fed into the grid. Any customer submitting paperwork after 30 September 2011 should contact their electricity retailer who can advise on the best solar deal available to them.

Note: CitiPower and Powercor requires a revised Network Solar Connection Form be submitted for any upgrade of panels or inverter, to ensure its date of installation can be recorded in place of the equipment listed in the original form. A Certificate of Electrical Safety will be required for any prescribed works on LV wiring, and any inverter upgrade will require an anti-islanding test to be undertaken by the network, and an appropriate fee will apply. All paperwork associated with upgrades should be sent via the customer's retailer.

Systems can be upgraded under SFIT without limitation, however the above paperwork must still be submitted.

For more information on the PFIT closure go to the DPI website at:

<http://new.dpi.vic.gov.au/energy/sustainable-energy/solar-energy/solar-energy-for-consumers/feed-in-tariffs/premium-feed-in-tariff/about-the-closure>



Civil Contractors

Since 1 January 2010 it is a requirement that only registered civil contractors can provide civil works that form part of the installation of distributor assets, such as cables, conduits, public lighting columns and kiosk substation foundations.

A register of civil contractors who have pre-qualification or approval is available on the VESI website www.vesi.com.au. The civil contractors' register can be found on the VEDN tab. Any civil contractor listed on the register can work in any of the Victorian distributors' geographic areas.

Typical civil works that may have assets that are owned by CitiPower or Powercor are:

Type of work	VEDN contractor	Open trench inspection
Service Pits \leq 50 mm ² cable	Yes	As per Pit Process
Service Cables (50 mm ² cable	Yes	Civil and Electrical
LV mains cables	Yes	Civil and Electrical
HV cables	Yes	Civil and Electrical
Conduits	Yes	Civil
Substation Foundations	Yes	Civil
Conduits from road reserve to a substation on the customer's property	Yes	Civil

All civil works including substation foundations and conduit installation in the road reserves and on private property:

- Must be undertaken by a VEDN approved civil contractor
- Must be inspected for compliance to the appropriate technical standards prior to backfill, including the recording of the as-built details by an endorsed detailer
- The inspection (Open Trench Audit – Civil) must be completed by an endorsed VEDN Worksite Auditor (Civil) or Electrical/NW Auditor.

The purpose of the Open Trench Audit is to ensure that underground electrical assets of all network projects are inspected at preliminary construction stage/s to verify that:

- Assets are installed in accordance with CitiPower and Powercor technical standards and approved drawing/project work instructions
- Non-compliant items are identified and rectified prior to trench back-fill or recorded for re-inspection at a later stage (depths/clearance to other assets etc)
- As-built details have been accurately recorded when assets are visible.



No Longer Pulling the Fuse

Remote Energisation Invitation

TIME
4.00pm - 5.30pm
Followed by refreshments

TO RSVP:

- Select your venue
- Reply via a. Email to AskAM@powercor.com.au OR b. SMS 0427 842 167
- Your full name, REC registration number and venue choice.

<p>Melbourne - Caroline Springs Mercurie 234 Caroline Springs Blvd Thursday 22 September RSVP & include date in reply by 15 September</p> <p>Melbourne - Caroline Springs Mercurie 234 Caroline Springs Blvd Monday 24 October RSVP & include date in reply by 14 October</p> <p>Caulfield Caulfield Race Course Station Street Thursday 27 October RSVP by 14 October</p> <p>Preston Ridges Hotel Bell City 215 Bell Street Wednesday 26 October RSVP by 14 October</p>	<p>Ballarat Mercurie Hotel 613 Main Rd Thursday 13 October RSVP by 3 October</p> <p>Bendigo The Hotel Shamrock Cor Williamson St & Pall Mall Wednesday 12 October RSVP by 3 October</p> <p>Geelong Four Points by Sheraton 10-14 Eastern Beach Rd Tuesday 18 October RSVP by 1 October</p> <p>Horsham Best Westlander Motor Inn 100 Stawell Rd Tuesday 11 October RSVP by 3 October</p>	<p>Mildura Mercurie Hotel 120 Eighth St Wednesday 21 September RSVP by 15 September</p> <p>Shepparton Parklake Hotel 481 Wyndham St Thursday 29 September RSVP by 15 September</p> <p>Swan Hill All Seasons Resort 405-415 Campbell St Wednesday 28 September RSVP by 16 September</p> <p>Warrnambool Mid City/Country Comfort 525 Raglan Parade Monday 17 October RSVP by 1 October</p>
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Please remember your RSVP is essential for attendance at the Remote Energisation awareness sessions!

REConnect Self Service Portal

REConnect is currently in its final developmental stage and the time is finally getting closer to Go Live. Testing of the system is presently in progress. This will be followed by a trial period where a small number of RECs will submit actual EWRs on the portal. The trial will test the system's reliability and performance so that it meets the expectations of external and internal users. On satisfactory completion of the trial, we will be in a position to announce the dates for Go Live.

The REConnect project team is in the midst of presenting training sessions to retailers and RECs in the Melbourne metropolitan area and regional Victoria. The training sessions have been well received by both retailers and RECs who have voiced their excitement about the new EWR self-service portal.

RECs who have attended the training have endorsed this initiative which CitiPower and Powercor has undertaken. The aim is to develop a system solution that alleviates the concerns that RECs have with the current manual process for submitting an EWR. They are positively excited that the system provides a variety of features such as:

- The ability to submit and view the status of a job 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

- The ability to trace all jobs
- Streamlined EWR process with the inclusion of attaching CES and other documentation to the EWR
- Receipt of SMS or email updates on job progress
- Receipt of an anticipated connect by date
- Time reductions with following up jobs between retailers and CitiPower/Powercor
- The prospect of eliminating the chances of lost paperwork.

We are getting close to finalising design of the CitiPower and Powercor website to incorporate easy access to the REConnect portal and the simple REC registration process. The website will also contain training materials such as simulations of the portal, to provide potential users with the ability to learn about the functionality of the portal from remote locations.

Ongoing training sessions will be provided to all RECs in various locations. If you would like to express an interest in attending a training session, or have any questions in relation to REConnect, please email us at REConnect@citipower.com.au or REConnect@powercor.com.au



Your Choice – a Resource for Customers

As RECs you are sure to be fielding many questions from your customers regarding electricity costs. The main thing customers can do about rising electricity costs is to compare retailers. The Victorian Government's Your Choice website www.yourchoice.vic.gov.au contains practical tips and tools to assist customers in making an energy choice and is the most authoritative source of information available to customers regarding tariff comparisons and changing retailers. You can help your customers by helping them to take advantage of this resource.

Tech Talk

Tech Talk is published on a needs basis with the aim of providing relevant information for Registered Electrical Contractors as part of CitiPower and Powercor's commitment to provide industry best practice service to our mutual customers.

Contact us if

- You are a Registered Electrical Contractor or associated industry participant and you don't currently receive a copy of *Tech Talk*, but would like to
- You currently receive *Tech Talk* and will change, or have changed, your address
- You would prefer to have *Tech Talk* emailed to you.

Please advise Tina Totikidis – Powerful Customer Service Coordinator, at powerfulcustomerservice@powercor.com.au