



INFORMATION SHEET

Distributed Energy Buyback Scheme (DEBS)



Making the most of our sunshine for a brighter energy future.

On 31 August 2020, the Minister for Energy launched the Distributed Energy Buyback Scheme (DEBS), which introduces payments for energy exported from eligible home batteries and electric vehicles.

Rooftop solar PV panels, batteries and electric vehicles are transforming Western Australia's electricity system and this is one of many measures being progressed as part of the McGowan Government's Energy Transformation Strategy. This Strategy aims to better integrate new technologies, enabling a greener grid for the benefit of all Western Australians and avoids the risk of needing to limit new solar installations.

DEBS will apply to eligible customers installing a new solar PV system or battery, upgrading the size of their existing PV system or moving into a house with existing rooftop solar PV installed.

What will the buyback rate be under DEBS?

Under the new scheme, from Friday 6 November 2020:

- Electricity exported between 3pm and 9pm will earn 10 cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh);
- Electricity exported at other times will earn 3c/kWh.

These prices better reflect the cost of electricity at different times of day, with the 10c provided during the greater demand period when wholesale cost of electricity is high. Rates will differ for some Horizon Power towns. The DEBS rates will be reviewed and adjusted each year, just like other electricity prices.

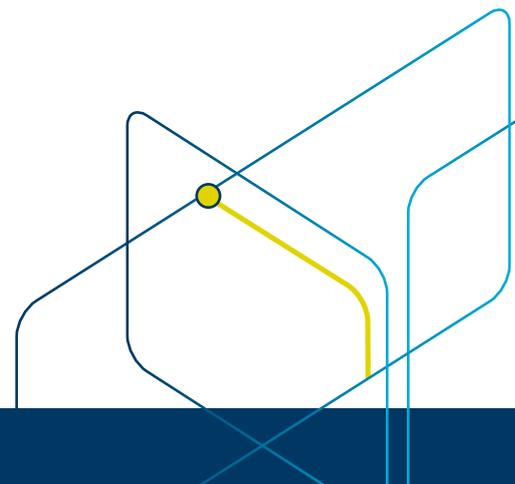
Prior to 6 November 2020, DEBS customers will be paid the current REBS buyback rate for their exported energy (including home battery exports). This is to allow time for retailers to complete software and technical upgrades.

Why introduce DEBS?

The electricity system is changing. Western Australians are taking up rooftop solar panels at a rapid rate, with around one in three households having a rooftop solar system and this is expected to grow to one in two over the next decade.

With new technological developments enabling distributed energy resources (such as solar PV, batteries and electric vehicles) to either use, generate or store electricity forming part of our grid, we are in a prime position to take advantage of Western Australia's abundant sunshine and new technologies.

With DEBS, the new pricing structure encourages households to either use or store their solar energy generation in the middle of the day when it is plentiful and to install west facing panels that will generate electricity later in the day i.e. producing more renewable energy when it is in high demand. DEBS also recognises the growing role of household storage in our electricity system.



What does DEBS mean for customers receiving REBS?

Customers who are already receiving REBS will see no change. However, a REBS customer will switch to DEBS if they:

- Increase the size of their renewable energy system (e.g. upgrade a 2kW solar PV system to a 5kW solar PV system);
- Install a home battery storage system at their premises, including an electric vehicle that is set up to be able to export energy to the grid; or
- Choose to switch from REBS to DEBS. Depending on the type of meter you have, you may need to pay for a meter change.

Who is eligible for DEBS?

As with REBS, the scheme is available to households, not-for-profits, schools and other educational institutions with an eligible system that meets the technical requirements for connection to the grid.

To be eligible, a renewable energy system must have a generating capacity of 5kW or less. A 6.6kW solar system with 5kVa inverter is accepted as having a generating capacity of 5kW. There is no eligibility limit on home battery or electric vehicle battery size, but retailers are only obligated to offer buyback payment for 50 units per day per premises (which is more than a 5kW solar PV system would be expected to generate in ideal conditions).

I'm currently in the process of signing up for a rooftop solar PV system. What do I need to do?

If you are installing a new system or upgrading your existing system, then you or your solar installer need to apply to your retailer (Synergy or Horizon Power) for the buyback rate via the retailer's website. If you are already in the process of finalising your application for buyback payments for your solar export, then you will have a week's grace to finalise and submit it to your retailer. Provided your retailer receives your eligible completed application on or before 7 September 2020, you will receive REBS.

If your application has already been made under REBS, then you will receive REBS unless you choose to contact your retailer to switch to DEBS.

I am a Horizon Power customer. Does this affect me?

Yes, DEBS will apply to Horizon Power customers.

However, customers in towns with high generation costs will receive a corresponding higher buyback rate which does not vary over the course of the day. To find out which buyback rate applies to each town, go to www.horizonpower.com.au/DER.

I am a premium Feed-in Tariff (FiT) customer. Does this affect me?

No, DEBS will not affect you unless you choose to upgrade your solar PV system or install a home battery or export-capable electric vehicle.

You will have recently received correspondence from your retailer advising that your FiT payments are due to end as the ten-year period of your FiT contract expires. You will continue to receive REBS payments after that date. Only if you decide to upgrade your system will you switch to DEBS.

Where can I get more information?

On Energy Policy WA's website under Energy Buyback Schemes you can find more information including a set of Frequently Asked Questions.

You can also contact the appropriate electricity retailer, either Synergy (13 13 53) or Horizon Power (1800 267 926).

To find out more about the WA Energy Transformation Strategy visit our website: brighterenergyfuture.wa.gov.au



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