



INFORMATION SHEET

Emergency solar management



Preparing our power system for even greater levels of rooftop solar.

New and upgraded rooftop solar PV systems will now have the ability to be managed in emergency situations that could otherwise lead to widespread loss of power.

The new requirements will apply from 14 February 2022 and enable a secure power supply as we transition to a renewable energy future. If you have an existing rooftop solar system, you will not be affected by this change unless you decide to upgrade.

What will happen in an emergency?

During an emergency, generation from managed rooftop solar systems will be turned down or off. During these times households will be able to use power as normal.

South Australia introduced similar capabilities in 2020 and since then households have been affected for about one hour.

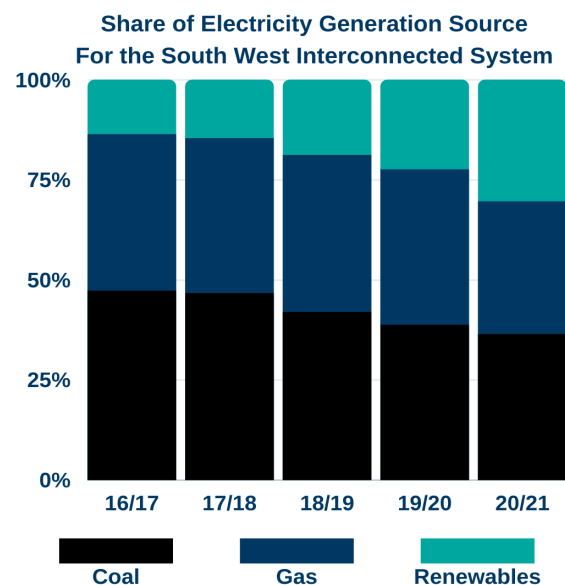
Emergency solar management will be the last resort before entire suburbs with high volumes of solar exports lose power.

Before households are impacted, all other tools will be exhausted, including turning off other large generators. Large generators are already subject to this type of management and will not be compensated when this occurs.

Rooftop solar is now the largest source of generation on the WA main grid



- 1 in 3 homes now have solar. That's over 340,000 households
- 50,000 homes installed solar in 2020
- The share of renewables in our grid is growing



I'm looking to install solar – how will this affect me?

From Monday, 14 February 2022, all new and upgraded rooftop solar systems with inverters of 5kW or less will need to be capable of being remotely managed in emergencies. This means if you are:

- installing a new rooftop solar system inverter of 5kW or less from 14 February 2022; or
- upgrading an existing rooftop solar system inverter of 5kW or less from 14 February 2022; or
- adding a battery, with your solar inverter remaining 5kW or less, from 14 February 2022;

then your system must meet the requirements for management capability. Your installer will give you options on how your system can meet the requirements.

Key take aways:

The new requirements will:

- **only apply to new and upgraded rooftop solar** existing customers with solar panels will not be affected;
- **only be used in emergencies** expected to be infrequent and for short periods, and will prevent loss of grid power during these critical times;
- **not interrupt power supply to customers** only rooftop solar generation is reduced. Customers will continue to receive power from the grid;

There's a long-term plan underway to reduce the need for this emergency measure including investment in storage, improving pricing signals, and allowing for customer devices to provide energy services for payment.

Why do we need to manage rooftop solar?

Very high levels of solar generation can present risks to our power system at times of low load, which can be when generation from solar is high and electricity demand is low.

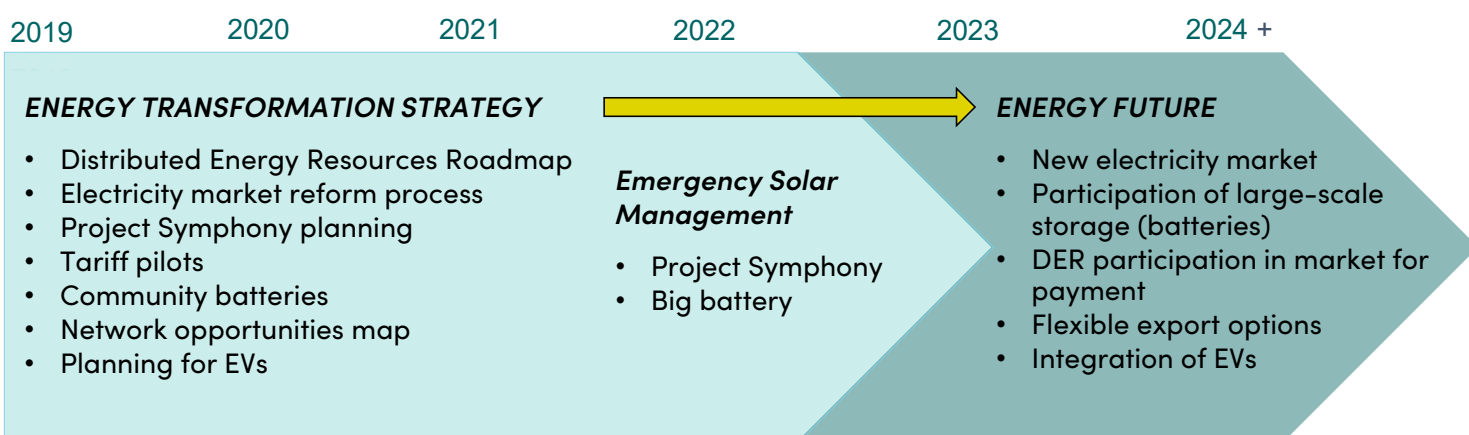
At these times, large thermal generators are not required to operate. However, these generators perform critical services in our power system.

Managing rooftop solar will prevent blackouts during times of low load. As other measures are put in place, it will not be required as often.

- **only impact households as a last resort** other options to protect the power system, including turning off large-scale generators, will be exhausted first; and
- **allow more renewables overall** – by managing risks during these infrequent emergency times, greater levels of rooftop solar installation will be possible.

Where are we heading?

Emergency Solar Management is a stepping stone to the future power system, where household rooftop solar will be orchestrated through virtual power plants as part of the decarbonisation of the power system.



Energy Policy WA

(08) 6551 4600

www.energy.wa.gov.au

info@energy.wa.gov.au

Disclaimer: The material provided in this information sheet is general in nature and a guide only. It does not take your personal circumstances into account and so you cannot rely solely upon this material when deciding to act. Additional matters or factors may be relevant to you. Where appropriate, seek professional advice.