

Solar panels

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Solar panels are increasingly common, and customers who generate their own electricity have a few extra things to think about when it comes to their energy account. This guide covers the questions you're most likely to encounter — from export payments to billing quirks — and how to handle them confidently.

How solar panels affect a customer's account

Customers with rooftop solar panels generate their own electricity during daylight hours. This reduces how much they draw from the grid, which in turn reduces their consumption and their bills. However, they still need a grid connection for times when their panels aren't generating enough — overnight, on cloudy days, or during high-demand periods.

Any electricity a solar customer generates but doesn't use themselves can be exported back to the grid. This is where the Smart Export Guarantee comes in.

The Smart Export Guarantee (SEG)

The Smart Export Guarantee (SEG) is a government-backed scheme that requires licensed energy suppliers to offer export tariffs to eligible small-scale renewable generators. In plain terms: if a customer exports surplus solar electricity to the grid, they get paid for it.

Key things to know about SEG:

- Customers must have an eligible solar installation — typically under 5MW capacity, which covers virtually all domestic installations
- A smart meter is required, as export payments are based on actual exported units rather than estimates
- SEG payments are separate from the customer's energy bill — they're paid as a credit or direct payment depending on the tariff
- The export rate varies — check the current Good Egg Energy SEG rate in Kraken or the tariff documentation

If a customer wants to sign up for SEG, check their eligibility in Kraken and follow the SEG registration process. If they're already registered and have questions about their export payments, the payment history will be visible on their account.

Billing implications for solar customers

Solar customers sometimes call confused about their bills — particularly if they expected their energy costs to drop dramatically after installation. A few things worth explaining:

Import vs. export

Their bill covers the electricity they've imported from the grid. Their solar panels reduce this, but don't eliminate it entirely unless they have battery storage and very low consumption. Their bill and their SEG payments are separate — the bill won't show a negative figure because of solar generation.

Smart meter readings

Solar customers with smart meters will have both an import register (electricity taken from the grid) and an export register (electricity sent back). Make sure the right register is being used for billing purposes — check in Kraken if there's any doubt.

Direct debit amounts

If a customer has recently had solar panels installed, their direct debit may not yet reflect their reduced consumption. It's worth reviewing the direct debit amount and adjusting if the change in usage is significant and consistent.

Common customer questions

"Why is my bill still high even though I have solar panels?"

Solar panels only generate electricity during daylight hours and only when there's sufficient sunlight. Customers who use most of their energy in the evenings, or who live in areas with limited sunlight, may see less of a reduction than they expected. Battery storage can help maximise self-consumption, but that's a separate investment.

"Can I get SEG payments without a smart meter?"

No – a smart meter is required to measure actual export. If a customer doesn't have one, offer to arrange an installation. In the meantime, they won't be able to receive SEG payments.

"My SEG payment looks wrong."

Check the export register readings in Kraken and compare against the payment calculation. If there's a discrepancy, log it as a billing query and escalate to the billing team if you can't identify the cause.

Good to know: Solar panel installations are increasing rapidly, so expect to see more of these queries over time. If a customer is asking detailed questions about the financial return on their solar installation or whether it's worth getting panels, that's a conversation for a specialist – we can help with the energy account side, but we're not solar installation advisors.