



more than one megawatt. Although a minimum size is not required, most residential systems range between two and four kilowatts. Your system size will depend on your needs and how much electricity you want to generate. You can also build your system by starting small and expanding over time. As long as your total system output is not greater than one megawatt, this modular approach is still allowable.

## **Q** Can I use my current electric meter?

Most residential and small commercial customers have simple meters that are bi-directional, capable of turning in both directions. Some utilities or ESPs may want two meters for net metering, one to measure electricity going from the grid to your home or business, and one to measure the excess going from your system to the grid. If your utility wants two, uni-directional meters, they must pay for them, *not you*. If you enter into a time-of-use billing agreement, you will need to purchase a bi-directional time-of-use meter. Contact your utility for more information.

## **Q** How do I sign up?

It's simple. Contact your utility or ESP and ask if they offer Net Metering. Your ESP and the company that distributes electricity to you may be the same or different companies. Your ESP handles the billing and accounting for Net Metering, while your local distribution company (LDC) handles how your generating system is connected to the grid. You and your LDC may also need to enter into an Interconnection Agreement, which will outline the requirements for safely connecting your generating system to the grid.

**When connecting the system to your grid, your LDC cannot:**

- Require you to purchase or pay for any meters beyond the simple, bi-directional meter that you probably already have, with the exception of time-of-use meters.
- Impose any requirements, standards, or tests on your system—if it meets existing national standards for grid-interconnected systems.
- Require you to purchase any additional insurance.
- Require you to buy your electricity from them or their affiliates.

## **Other common questions about Net Metering**

**Q** If my generating system produces more electricity than I need, is my utility or ESP required to buy it from me?

**A** Utilities or ESPs may, but are not required to, purchase any excess electricity you produce at the end of each year of your net metering agreement. State law says that they do not have to buy your net generation. However, some ESPs, especially those specializing in selling “green” electricity, may be willing to buy your excess solar or wind electricity to re-sell to their other customers.

**Q** Will I have to pay for special meters, inspections or fees to get my system hooked up to the grid?

**A** You are only responsible for having a simple, bi-directional meter, the type you probably already have, unless you decide to purchase a time-of-use meter. If your generating system meets national safety and performance standards, you cannot be charged for additional tests, certifications or fees.

**Q** Will the electricity I might still need to buy from a utility or ESP cost me more than before I became a Net Metered customer?

**A** No, your utility or ESP cannot charge you more for electricity because you are a Net-Metered customer, and no charges can be imposed on the electricity you generate.

## **Q** How can I get more information?

Helpful information and other materials about renewable energy can be obtained from:

### **California Energy Commission**

Call Center: (800) 555-7794

Renewable@energy.state.ca.us

www.consumerenergycenter.org



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**Mary Nichols, Secretary of Resources**



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