



# Portland General Electric

## Net Metering • Frequently Asked Questions

**IMPORTANT:** PGE does not partner with any specific installer. As with any home investment, it is important to get multiple bids. The Energy Trust of Oregon maintains a Trade Ally Network of qualified installers. Energy Trust validates licensing, reviews installations and upholds an installer code of conduct. You can find their list of [qualified installers here](#).

### APPLICATION PROCESS

#### **Q: I'd like to go solar/green. How can PGE help me?**

A: We are committed to helping our customers go green. Our Net Metering program helps offset the cost of the electricity you buy from us with the energy you generate at home. With Net Metering, you will be billed the net difference between your energy consumption and excess generation. If you produce excess credits in a given month, you may accumulate credits to offset future bills. Please note, each month you will have a basic service charge of \$11-13.

#### **Q: Can you tell me about the Net Metering application process?**

A: Our application process starts when you or your contractor sends us a completed application through PowerClerk. Within three business days, we will email you a confirmation that we have received your application. Next, our Technical Team will review your application to make sure our grid can safely and reliably support your solar generation. If any upgrades are needed, it is at the customer's expense and we will provide you with details and a cost estimate. For this reason, we recommend that customers and contractors wait for approval of the application before starting to build a solar system. Once we have approved the application, your next step is to obtain an approved municipal or county electrical permit and signed agreement. After this is done, we will request a bidirectional meter on your behalf.

#### **Q: How much does the Net Metering application cost?**

A: Residential Customers: For systems with a capacity of 25kW or less, the application is free of charge! However, if there is a high demand for PGE's infrastructure in your neighborhood, our engineer may need to conduct a study and we would request a Level 3 application fee. This fee is dependent on your requested system size. The base fee is \$100 plus \$2 per kW.

Commercial/Industrial Customers: For systems with a capacity of 25 kW to 2 MW, the application fee is \$50 plus \$1/kW.

#### **Q: I'd like to go solar/green. How can PGE help me?**

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## BILLING

### Q: Why do I have an energy bill when my contractor promised me that I wouldn't have any bills?

A: Depending on your system size, the Net Metering program can offset a portion of your energy usage. You also need to consult your contractor to determine what the expected monthly production is of your solar panels. PGE customers are still responsible for a monthly basic fee that is typically between \$11 – 13. This fee covers customer service, maintenance on PGE poles and wires, and other services.

### Q: Where can I see my excess solar generation (not just the net difference)?

A: PGE is not able to see your total generation with the bidirectional meter. You will need to consult with your solar contractor to determine if a production meter was installed at your home. The production meter measures all of your solar generation and generally allows you to see your total generation through the meter's online software. When your solar panels are generating energy, the energy first goes to offset your usage and if there is excess energy, it is sent on to the PGE grid. We are only able to see the excess energy that is fed onto our grid.

### Q: Why can't I see any solar credits on my bill?

A: Your system may not be generating excess energy. When your solar panels are generating energy, the energy is first applied to your electrical usage and reduces your bill. If there is excess energy after that, it is sent on to the PGE grid and measured by the bidirectional meter whereby we will then credit you.

### Q: How can I see my Excess Generation Summary?

A: Log in to your PGE account, navigate to the View Bill tab and click on Download Bill. Once your statement downloads, scroll to the third page and you find your generation summary.

The screenshot displays the PGE online account interface. On the left is a navigation menu with options like 'View Bill' and 'Download Bill'. The main content area shows bill details: Amount Due: \$141.00, Due Date: 3/19/2019, Previous Amount Due: \$292.24, Payments/Adjustments: \$0.00, Balance Forward: \$0.00, and Current Charges: \$141.00. A 'Download Bill' button is highlighted. To the right, there is a bar chart showing monthly kWh usage for 2018 and 2019. Below the chart is a table with the following data:

Period Ending	Avg Daily Temperature*	Monthly kWh	Monthly Cost
Mar 2019	N/A	1709	141
Mar 2018	N/A	1651	155.06

\*Temperature source: Hillsboro Airport

At the bottom, there is a link to 'View Payment History' and a note: 'Know your options: See Power Choices to compare prices, power sources and impacts.'

**Q: What happens to my excess solar credits? What is my true-up month?**

A: Your excess credits will automatically be applied to future bills in the annual billing cycle. The annual billing cycle ends in March, and at that time any excess credits will be transferred to a low-income fund (directed by a non-profit). This is the Low Income Energy Assistance Program. It is required by Oregon rules.

**Q: Can excess credits that are transferred to a low-income fund during the true-up month be claimed on my taxes as a donation? (Low-Income Energy Assistance Program)**

A: Please contact your tax preparer for more information. Unfortunately, we are unable to provide tax guidance.

**Q: Why is the true-up month March for residential customers?**

A: March is the true-up month because this allows customers to use any excess credits generated in the summer during the winter. Most customers generate excess credits in the summer and use these credits in the winter.

**Q: Can I change my true-up month?**

Yes, you can change your true-up month. The Oregon rules for residential customers automatically designate the March billing cycle as the true-up month because this allows customers to use any excess credits generated in the summer during the winter. Please contact us at 800-542-8818 to speak to a Customer Service Representative who can assist you.

**Q: What is my meter read date in March (True-Up Date)?**

A: Your true-up date occurs after your last March meter read. Generally, your meter is read around the same time every month.

**Q: How can I obtain my meter reads?**

A: You are welcome to call our Customer Service Team at (800) 542-8818 to get your monthly meter reads.

**AGGREGATION**

**Q: I'd like my excess credits to transfer to another bill. Is this possible?**

A: Yes. The addresses of the solar generation system must qualify for aggregation to be able to transfer credits. The criteria is as follows: account properties are on contiguous property, have the same PGE account holder or co-app, share the same feeder and include only one net metered account.

**Q: Can PGE approve my aggregation request before my Net Metering application is approved?**

A: Aggregation is a billing function and not a wiring function. To process an aggregation request, the Net Metering account # and the additional account(s) to be aggregated are required in writing with a customer signature. Requests can be reviewed to determine if they currently qualify before a Net Metering application is received. Aggregation is set up once Permission to Operate (PTO) is issued. There must be an existing and active Net Metering account to set up this billing function.

**Q: Are my excess credits being applied to my other account? Is aggregation set up on my existing Net Metering customer account?**

A. There is no Net Metering Generation Summary on aggregated accounts or meter read information. On the Net Metering account, there will be a Net Metering Service Agreement and a note under Account stating “Aggregation.” There will be no Net Metering Generation Summary and, at times, the statement will not contain meter reads.

(503)228-6322 or 1-800-542-8818 PortlandGeneral.com		Account # 000000000	
Service Address: JOHN DOE 0000 SE POWELL BLVD PORTLAND, OR 97202		Previous Amount Due	103.27
		Payments	103.27 CR
		Balance Forward	0.00
		Current Charges	12.02
		<b>AMOUNT DUE</b>	<b>\$12.02</b>
		<b>Due date for current bill</b>	<b>04/23/19</b>
Cycle: 04			
<b>This month's charges</b> (Turn over for details)			
Meter #0000000000, Schedule 07			
Energy Charges (0 kWh)		11.00	
		11.00	
Total Taxes and Fees		1.02	
<b>Current Energy Charges</b>		<b>12.02</b>	
This bill is for your records only, please do not pay			
Thank you for your payment.			
		<b>Your energy use</b>	
		Meter # 0000000000	
		Schedule 07 (residential rate)	
		Service Period	Meter Reading
		04/05/19	
		03/07/19	
		29 days of service	0 kWh

**DISCONNECTS**

**Q: Does a breaker fulfill the PGE's disconnect requirement?**

A: Although a breaker has a similar function to the disconnect, a breaker does not meet PGE's disconnect requirement to be able to lock out a breaker. The breaker would require additional hardware PGE does not have, whereas a padlock can be used to simply lock out a disconnect.

**OUTAGES**

**Q: Why do my solar panels not work during outages?**

A: Your solar panels actually do work during an outage, but your inverter does not work. Grid tied inverters electrically rely on the PGE grid and cannot work without being connected. Non-grid tied inverters allow for this capability and include more components that enable them to operate independently.

**Q: Is there any way for me to “unhook” so that I can use the solar panels when my power is out?**

A: Some inverters have a receptacle that allows you to install one device, such as a cell phone, to the inverter during an outage. If you are interested in operating multiple appliances or lights in your home during an outage, there are several options available to you including installing a non-grid tied inverter or a battery system with a non-grid tied inverter attached that isolates the home from the grid during an outage. This is customer-owned equipment that we do not install or service, so please speak with an electrician or solar contractor for more information.

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