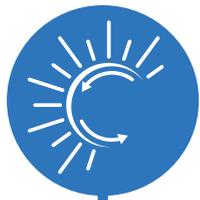


Frequently Asked Questions





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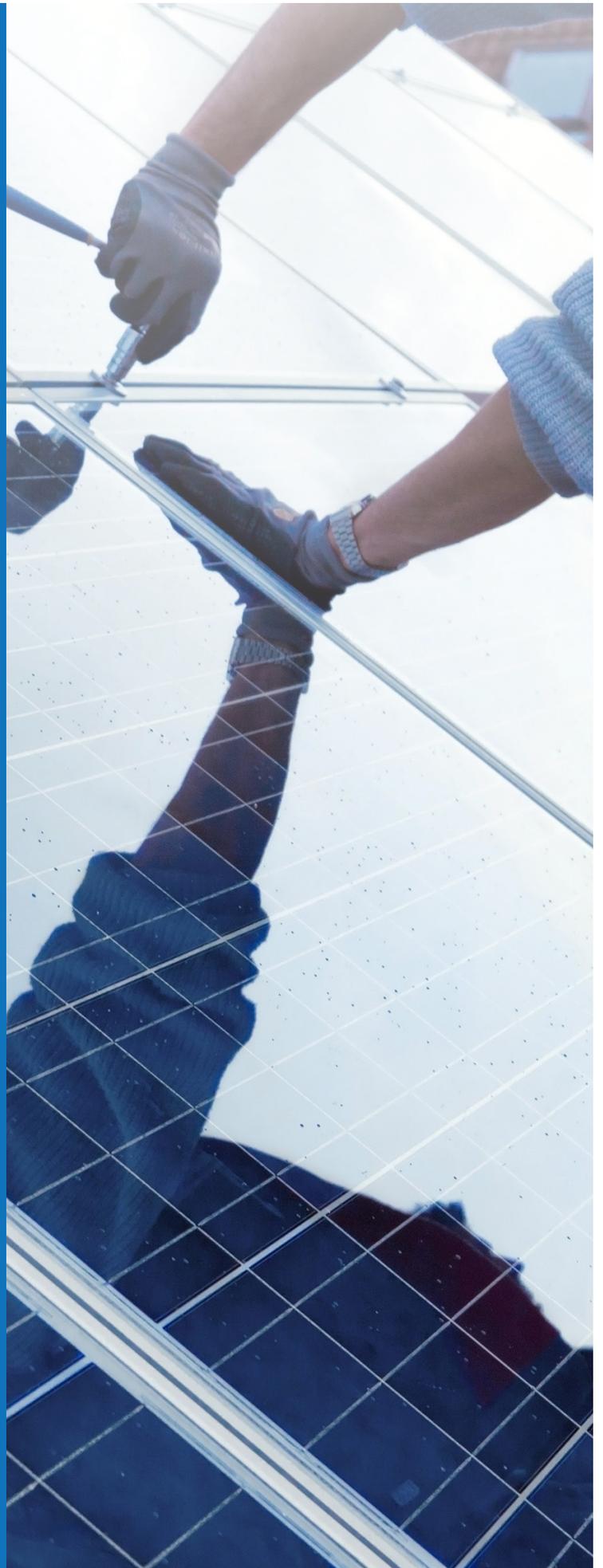
Acknowledgement of Country

The Government of South Australia acknowledges and respects Aboriginal peoples as the state's first peoples and nations, and recognises them as traditional owners and occupants of land and waters in South Australia. Further, we acknowledge that the spiritual, social, cultural and economic practices of Aboriginal peoples come from their traditional lands and waters, that they maintain their cultural and heritage beliefs, languages and laws which are of ongoing importance, and that they have made and continue to make a unique and irreplaceable contribution to the state.



Switch for Solar makes it easier for concession holders to access solar energy, by allowing eligible households to 'switch' some of their future concession payments in return for a 4.4kW solar PV system installed on their home at little to no upfront cost.

Households that join Switch for Solar can lower their energy bills for years to come.





The Program

Who is involved in the program?

Switch for Solar is an initiative of the **Government of South Australia**.

ConcessionsSA will help households review their eligibility and apply for the program. ConcessionsSA will also help eligible households verify the savings they will achieve through Switch for Solar, before joining the program.

Program partners Sharpe Energy Hub and ZEN Energy will carry out site inspections to confirm household eligibility, and install solar PV systems on households that join the program.

What are the benefits of joining?

Switch for Solar allows eligible concession holders to 'switch' their future concession payments for:

- lower electricity bills
- a solar PV system installed on their home at little to no upfront cost.

A typical household joining Switch for Solar could be \$210 to \$665 better off every year, compared to the energy concession and Cost of Living Concession they currently receive (based on an electricity usage of 4000kWh/year, and dependent on the household's electricity retail plan tariffs over the Switch for Solar period).

Each household joining the program will receive an estimate of their possible savings, specific to their energy usage and current energy plan, as part of the sign-up process.

Can you tell me more about the 'little to no' upfront costs?

Many households will be able to join the program, and start saving money on their bills with no upfront costs to them.

If there is an upfront cost, it will only be a small portion of the total value of the solar PV system.

An upfront cost might happen when:

- installing a safe, efficient, and compliant solar PV system at the home requires work over and above a typical installation. For example, major switchboard or meterboard upgrades, major wiring upgrades, or asbestos removal
- the household's electricity retailer charges a fee to upgrade the home's electricity meter so that it will support solar
- the household chooses to upgrade the size of the solar PV system to something larger than 4.4 kilowatts at the same time.

Any upfront costs will be explained and agreed with the household prior to installation. You can cancel your *Switch for Solar* agreement if you do not wish to pay an upfront cost.



Eligibility

Who can participate in the program? Who is eligible?

Switch for Solar is currently available for up to 1,000 eligible South Australian households, or until May 2022, whichever comes first.

To be eligible your household must:

- own and live in a detached or semi-detached house in an eligible suburb
- hold an eligible Centrelink or DVA card or receive an eligible Centrelink or DVA payment
- not already have a solar PV system

- use more than 2,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity per year
- currently receive the energy concession and the Cost of Living Concession
- agree to not receive the energy concession and Cost of Living Concession for 10 years.

Your home will need to pass a site assessment from a program partner to confirm it is suitable for a solar PV system installation.



Eligible suburbs

Athelstone, Banksia Park, Campbelltown, Dernancourt, Felixstow, Goolwa, Goolwa Beach, Goolwa North, Goolwa South, Highbury, Hindmarsh Island, Holden Hill, Hope Valley, Modbury, Modbury Heights, Modbury North, Newton, Paradise, Redwood Park, Ridgehaven, Tea Tree Gully, Vista.



Eligible cards

Commonwealth Seniors Health Card
DVA Pensioner Concession Card
Veteran Gold Card

- Totally and Permanently Incapacitated (TPI)
- Extreme Disablement Adjustment (EDA)
- War Widow
- issued to a person with 80 or more overall impairment points under the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004*



Eligible payments

Disability Support Pension
Age Pension
Widow Allowance

How can I confirm if I am eligible?

The Switch for Solar Assessment will confirm whether your household can join the program.

Concession holders who believe they meet the eligibility criteria can apply for a Switch for Solar Assessment online at www.sa.gov.au/switchforsolar or by calling the program hotline on (08) 8226 3100.

The program hotline is open from 9:00am to 5:00pm Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays).

I receive one of the concessions but my partner receives the other. Are we eligible?

Yes, as long as both concession holders agree to all requirements of the program, including not receiving the energy concession and Cost of Living Concession for 10 years.

I receive the concessions but my partner owns our house. Are we eligible?

Yes, provided that you and your partner both agree to all requirements of the program, including not receiving the energy concession and Cost of Living Concession for 10 years.

What happens if my partner moves out of the house and they were receiving one or both of the concessions?

If your eligibility for the program was dependent on another household member receiving the energy concession and Cost of Living Concession and they will be moving out of the property, please contact us before they move out to discuss your options. You will not be removed from the program.

Will I still be eligible for the South Australian Concession Energy Discount Offer from Origin Energy?

Yes. While you will not be receiving the energy concession, you will still be identified as an energy concession recipient and remain eligible for the South Australian Concession Energy Discount Offer from Origin Energy.

If you are not already part of the South Australian Concession Energy Discount Offer, you can learn more about it by calling Origin on 1300 791 465 (7am to 9pm weekdays and 9am to 5pm Saturdays).

I already have a solar PV system. Am I eligible?

No. Switch for Solar is only open to households that do not already have a solar PV system.

Why is my suburb not eligible?

Suburbs have been selected for Switch for Solar based on where our network can best accommodate new solar installations, and to maximise the benefits to households that participate. The program may extend to other suburbs in the future.

Why are some residence types not eligible?

To maximise the benefits to households that participate, Switch for Solar has a range of eligibility criteria that homes must pass in order to join. Some of these criteria are reviewed in Stage 1 of the Switch for Solar Assessment (for example the concession cards you hold and/or payments you receive, the amount of electricity you use, and your type of home and home ownership), and some are reviewed during the Stage 2 site inspection.

The program may extend to other residence types in the future.





My concessions

What concessions do I 'switch' to join the program?

The concessions to 'switch' are the energy concession and Cost of Living Concession, for the next 10 years. For most households, these concessions together are currently valued at \$446.51 per year.

In return, you will receive a 4.4 kilowatt solar PV system installed on your home at little to no upfront cost. This solar PV system can save a typical South Australian household hundreds on their yearly electricity bills.

A typical household joining Switch for Solar could be \$210 to \$665 better off every year, compared to the energy concession and Cost of Living Concession they currently receive (based on an electricity usage of 4000kWh/year, and dependent on the household's electricity retail plan tariffs over the Switch for Solar period).

Each household joining the program will receive an estimate of their possible savings, specific to their energy usage and current energy plan, as part of the sign-up process.

Why do I need to give up my concessions to participate, and why for 10 years?

All solar PV systems installed under Switch for Solar are installed at little to no upfront cost to the household.

To do this, the South Australian government covers the cost of the system and its standard installation at the time of install. This cost is then recouped over 10 years using the energy concession and Cost of Living Concession payments the household has agreed to 'switch'.

By 'switching' concession payments for a solar PV system, the concession household receives all the benefits from solar panels that they may not have otherwise been able to have installed.

Do I have to give up the energy concession and Cost of Living Concession indefinitely?

No. If your circumstances have not changed your concessions will automatically restart after 10 years. You will also continue to own and receive all the bill saving benefits of the solar PV system on your home.

Do I have to give up other South Australian concessions?

No. You do not need to give up any other South Australian government concessions.

Can I contribute my own money to keep my concessions, or switch them for less than 10 years?

In most cases, no. Under the program your agreement will be to switch your energy concession and Cost of Living Concession for 10 years, to receive a 4.4 kilowatt solar PV system at little to no upfront cost.

Under the program you will only be able to switch your concessions for less than 10 years, if there are exceptional circumstances for your agreement to be cancelled. Requests to cancel an agreement for exceptional circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

If you want to purchase a solar PV system without switching your concessions, you will need to do this outside of the Switch for Solar program and the upfront costs are likely to be more. If you choose to do this, we recommend you speak to multiple Clean Energy Council Approved Solar Retailers in your area. You can search for these retailers on the Clean Energy Council website at <https://www.cleanenergycouncil.org.au/consumers/buying-solar/find-an-approved-solar-retailer>.





Joining the program

How do I join *Switch for Solar*?

Joining *Switch for Solar* happens over five easy steps:

1

Complete the online form at www.sa.gov.au/switchforsolar or call (08) 8226 3100 to apply for a *Switch for Solar* Assessment. You will need your Centrelink Customer Reference Number (CRN) or Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) File Number to complete the application.

2

ConcessionsSA starts the *Switch for Solar* Assessment by reviewing your application against the eligibility criteria. This includes checking the concessions your household receives, the Centrelink/DVA cards you hold and/or payments you receive, the amount of electricity you use, and your type of home and home ownership. A home visit is not required for this part of the assessment.

3

If Step 2 is successful, a program partner contacts you to arrange a site inspection of your home to confirm it is suitable for a solar PV system. The site inspection considers all the technical details required for a safe and well-performing solar installation, including suitable roof space, roof shading, and condition and arrangement of electricity meters, meterboards, and switchboards.

4

If Step 3 is successful, you receive an estimate of your possible savings and confirmation of any upfront costs from your program partner.

5

If you are happy with the estimated savings and any upfront costs from your program partner, you accept your offer, are confirmed for the program, your solar PV system is installed, and you start saving on your electricity bills!

What will I be agreeing to if I join *Switch for Solar*?

If you join *Switch for Solar* you will be agreeing to:

- stop receiving both the energy concession and Cost of Living Concession for 10 years
- take ownership of the solar PV system after it is commissioned and be responsible for its maintenance
- notify ConcessionsSA if you move or sell your house in the next 10 years
- enter into a contract between yourself and the program partner installing the solar PV system
- allow your electricity retailer to send copies of your electricity bill to the South Australian government, so we can review your savings from participating in the program.

When will my concession payments stop?

Payments will stop after the solar PV system has been installed at your house. ConcessionsSA will notify you when your payments have stopped.

Will I own the solar PV system?

Yes. From the day of installation you will legally own the solar PV system and be entitled to all the warranties that come with it.

Can I get a solar PV system bigger than 4.4 kilowatts?

Yes. You can contribute your own money to increase your solar PV system to something larger than 4.4 kilowatts. However the amount that you contribute, how you pay it, and what you receive for it (over and above the 4.4 kilowatt system that is part of the program) will be an agreement directly between you and the program partner installing your system. Regardless of the system size you have installed, you will still be agreeing to switch your concessions for 10 years.

Before you commit to a larger system, make sure the program partner has talked you through how much more it will benefit you compared to a 4.4 kilowatt system.

Can I get a battery through the program?

No. You cannot get a battery through *Switch for Solar*.

You can however contribute your own money to have a battery installed to complement your solar PV system. However, the amount that you contribute, how you pay it, and what you receive for it will be an agreement direct between you and the program partner installing your system.

Before you commit to a battery, make sure the program partner has talked you through how much more it will benefit you compared to only having solar installed

You can also learn more about home batteries and check your eligibility for state government subsidies and low interest loans for a battery through South Australia's Home Battery Scheme website at www.homebatteryscheme.sa.gov.au.

Can I engage my own electrician or installer to install the solar PV system?

No. The South Australian government has gone through a detailed process to select a small group of program partners to install solar PV systems under the program. These program partners have been selected to ensure that the systems use quality components, are installed safely and expertly, and will perform for years to come. If you accept an offer to join the program, your solar PV system will be installed by one of the program partners.

Will I need to change my electricity retailer?

No, you do not need to change your electricity retailer to join the program.

However, once you have your solar PV system installed, you may wish to consider whether your energy retail plan is still the best plan for you. You can search for and compare different energy offers in South Australia by using the Australian Government's Energy Made Easy comparison service, either online at www.energymadeeasy.gov.au or by calling 1300 585 165.

You can also consider the South Australian Concession Energy Discount Offer from Origin Energy. Learn more about it by calling Origin on 1300 791 465 (7am to 9pm weekdays and 9am to 5pm Saturdays).

What happens if my/our circumstances change in the future?

Your eligibility for *Switch for Solar* will be based on your household's circumstances at the time that you are assessed, and not on what occurs in the future. Once you join *Switch for Solar*, you will be on the program for 10 years unless there are exceptional circumstances for your agreement to be cancelled.

The government appreciates that some participants might unexpectedly move out of their house (for example selling or renting it to someone else) within the 10 year term of their *Switch for Solar* agreement, meaning they will also lose access to the benefits of the solar PV system. If this happens to you, please contact the *Switch for Solar* team on switchforsolar@sa.gov.au or 8226 3100 before you move out, to discuss your options.

Further questions

For any further questions about *Switch for Solar*, visit the program website at www.sa.gov.au/switchforsolar, email switchforsolar@sa.gov.au, or phone 8226 3100. The program hotline is open from 9:00am to 5:00pm Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays).

For questions about South Australian government concessions, call the ConcessionsSA Hotline on 1800 307 758.