

Darebin Solar Saver – Bulk Buy Stream



the place
to live

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Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Thank you for your interest in Darebin’s Solar Saver program!

In this document we answer the most common questions people ask about **the Bulk Buy Stream** of the Solar Saver program. If you’re interested in participating, please read through this document carefully so that you understand all the steps and processes involved.

If you have any remaining questions, please don’t hesitate to get in touch:

Phone: 03 8470 8888 - ask for the Solar Saver team

Email: solar@darebin.vic.gov.au

Web: darebin.vic.gov.au

If you’re viewing this document on a computer, you can click any heading or sub-heading in the Contents below to go straight to that section. Click “Back to top” at the bottom right of any page to navigate back to this first page.

Contents

General information about the Solar Saver program	3
Solar Saver Rates stream vs Bulk Buy stream: What’s the difference?	3
Benefits of installing solar through Council	3
What about solar for business and other organisations?	4
Can I also get the State Government rebate?	4
What if I change my mind?	6
When will my system be installed?	6
Will I need a permit? What about heritage status?	6
Details of your solar installation	7
What size solar system will I need?	7
What are the technical details of the systems?	7
Who will install the systems?	7
Where are the panels and inverter made?	7
Warranty: How long will it last?	8
What about insurance?	8
Costs, savings and repayments	9
How much will it cost?	9
How much money will I save?	10
What is the feed-in-tariff? What will I see on my bills?	10

General information about solar power	11
Whygo solar?	11
How does solar power work?	11
Is my roof suitable for solar? Which orientation is best?	12
Will significant modifications need to be made to my home?	12
Are there any reasons why I might not be able to get solar?	13
Is my smart meter compatible with solar power?	13
What about batteries?	14
Landlords, renters and owners' corporations.	15
What are the benefits of Solar Saver for landlords?	15
I am a renter / tenant, can I participate?	15
What if I live in a flat/unit/apartment with a shared roof?	15
COVID-19 (Coronavirus) and the Solar Saver Program	17
Who do I contact with further questions?	17
GLOSSARY	18

General information about the Solar Saver program

Solar Saver Rates stream vs Bulk Buy stream: What's the difference?

This is the FAQ for the Bulk Buy stream of the Solar Saver program. If you are not sure which stream is right for you, please read on about the differences between the two.

There are two streams of the Solar Saver program:

Rates stream (Council pays the upfront costs, you pay it back over 10 years)	Bulk Buy stream (You pay the upfront costs)
In 2022, this program is only available to people facing disadvantage and discriminated communities. The Rates Stream is now CLOSED and only those in the existing waitlist will be contacted at this stage.	All Darebin residents and businesses are eligible.
We have a long waiting list, and we will be in contact once you can have your system installed. There could be up to a 2+ year waiting period.	Expressions of interest open Tuesday 14th June 2022. The program will be open from Monday 27 th June 2022. There is no waiting list. Once you have arranged with the supplier you can get your system installed.
Council pays the upfront cost of the system. You pay it back over ten years, interest free.	You pay the upfront cost of the system. You may be eligible for a State Government rebate (\$1,400 for solar and \$1,000 for an efficient hot water system) and an interest free loan (\$1,400).
You don't pay GST.	Includes GST.
There is a \$6,000 limit on what you can borrow. Usually, should be enough for a system up to 6kW.	Size varies from 2-10kW for residential and up to 100kW for commercial.
Choices are limited to set packages at set prices. Batteries are not included.	You have access to a range of other products if you decide, such as optimisers. Basic systems have fixed prices, any additions will need to be quoted. Batteries are not included.
Darebin will monitor installations through OHS and QA Audits.	

Benefits of installing solar through Council

The Solar Saver program is designed to help Darebin households and businesses install solar power with confidence, both for their own benefit, and the benefit of the broader community.

Many people in Darebin are interested in installing solar but are not sure where to get started.

Knowing which company to trust

- We've done the homework for you via a competitive tender process to find reliable providers who offer quality and value for money.
- We have arranged industry-leading 10-year product and installation warranties, and the panels have a 25-year performance warranty.
- Our installers use best-practice safety measures.

- Our installers are trustworthy and will not sell you anything you don't need.

Technical details

- You don't need to understand all the technical details to choose the right product.
- We have set high quality and efficiency standards for the products we allow through the program, and our installers will help you choose the right size of system for your roof and your needs.

Financial benefits

- The competitive tender process delivers good value for money for Council and our community.
- The solar provider will give you an indication of how much you can expect to save.

What about solar for business and other organisations?

Businesses, NGOs, community groups and other organisations can participate in the Bulk Buy stream of the Solar Saver program for installations up to 100kW.

As of 1st June 2022, the State Government Solar for Business rebate is as follows:

Rebate amount will be capped at 50% or \$3,500 of the cost on any approved solar system. For example, if the net costs of solar are \$10,000, then the rebate value applied is \$3,500 (not \$5,000) or if the net costs are \$4,000, then the rebate value applied is \$2,000 (not \$3,500).

Eligible businesses will also be able to opt in for an interest-free loan of up to \$5,000 to further reduce the upfront costs of installing solar.

To qualify, your businesses must have less than 50 full-time equivalent employees.

System size cannot exceed 30kW.

Find out more here: <https://www.solar.vic.gov.au/solar-small-business>

For larger installations you can access funding through an Environmental Upgrade Agreement (EUA). For more information on EUAs please visit:

<https://sustainableaustraliafund.com.au/>

Can I also get the State Government rebate?

Households in any Solar Saver stream can apply for the State Government Solar Homes rebate as a point-of-sale reduction to the total cost of your solar system. You may also be eligible to apply for a 4-year interest free loan with them.

Please visit the Solar Homes website for more details and to check your eligibility:

<https://www.solar.vic.gov.au>

As of 1 June 2022, the rebate is as follows:

Solar panel rebates are available of up to \$1,400 plus the option of an interest-free loan (up to \$1,400). There is also an option for an additional

\$1000 rebate on a new efficient hot water system.

Please note that this does change from time to time. Keep up to date by visiting the website above.

What is the process of installing solar through the Solar Saver Bulk Buy?

- Step 1. **Register:** You register your interest in the Bulk Buy program.
- Step 2. **First contact:** Council passes your details on to the solar provider, and they contact you to arrange a quotation – they may ask you for photos or need to visit your home.
- Step 3. **Quotation:** You receive the quotation and if you wish to proceed you arrange payment directly to the solar provider.
- Step 4. **Installation:** Your solar system is installed.
- Step 5. **Post install documentation, final approvals and invoicing:** Once the system has been installed, the solar provider will engage with your retailer for meter reconfiguration. They will also provide you with all documentation regarding warranties, electrical certifications, manuals and connection diagrams. Once all this has been provided, you can proceed to final payment.

What if I change my mind?

Participation in our solar programs is completely voluntary - there is no obligation for you to go ahead with a quotation. If you decide to go ahead and enter into an agreement with the solar provider directly, you will need to negotiate with them if you want to change or withdraw your agreement.

When will my system be installed?

From registering for the Bulk Buy stream to getting your system may take a couple of weeks to a few months, depending on demand, COVID-19 restrictions and other factors.

The installation itself can usually be completed in a single day, or two days or more for larger systems. Once your system is installed it may take some weeks for your retailer to connect your system to the grid (eight weeks is not uncommon). The installer will submit this request on your behalf once your system has been installed.

Will I need a permit? What about heritage status?

You won't need a planning permit to install solar unless you are in a heritage area, or your property is a listed heritage building. Generally, even if you are in a heritage area, if your panels are not visible from the street (or a public park) you won't need a permit. Usually only about 5-10% of Darebin applicants need a permit. You will need to lodge a planning permit if you reside in a heritage overlay area and decide to proceed with an installation. The installer can help you with this process.

Details of your solar installation

What size solar system will I need?

The solar provider will talk to you about what size system will fit on your roof and best meet your needs.

Through these programs we can offer systems up to 10kW for residential properties and up to 100kW for non-residential properties, which will suit most homes and smaller businesses and organizations.

What are the technical details of the systems?

Solar PV Systems			
	Good	Better	Best
Panels	Risen Titan S 400W <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 25 Year Product Warranty• 25 Year Linear Power Output Warranty	QCells Hanwha QPEAK 390W <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 25 Year Product Warranty• 25 Year Linear Power Output Warranty	Risen Titan S 400W <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 12 Year Product Warranty• 25 Year Linear Power Output Warranty
Inverters	Goodwe <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 10 Year Warranty	Goodwe <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 10 Year Warranty	Fronius <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 10 Year Warranty

Racking

- Mibet
- 10-year warranty

Optimisers

- 10-year warranty

Installation

10-year workmanship warranty

For more specific information and pricing, you will need to speak directly with your installer. The Bulk Buy Stream officially launches Monday 27th June.

Who will install the systems?

We have done the homework for you, via a competitive tender process, to find a reliable installer and value for money. Local supplier, eko energy, will be installing Solar PV for this year.

eko energy specialise in the supply and installation of residential and small business solar, energy storage, energy management and energy monitoring systems. They have installed over 9,000 residential and small business solar and battery systems over the last 14 years.

eko energy was selected through a tender process based on safety, quality and service to assist as many householders in their sustainability journey as possible. They are also a trusted solar provider for Moreland, Monash, Yarra Ranges, Glen Eira, Knox, Mornington and more.

Where are the panels and inverter made?

While Council would like to offer Australian-made panels and inverters, currently the price is prohibitive. We offer Risen panels (China), QCells panels (China, Malaysia, South Korea and US), Goodwe inverters (China) and Fronius inverters (Germany).

Through the tender specifications Council has ensured that all panels and inverters are both affordable and high quality. Panels are sourced from Tier 1 manufacturers (the highest level in the Bloomberg ranking system), and inverters must meet the highest efficiency standards.

Warranty: How long will it last?

The panels:

- **10-year product warranty**
Covers physical and electrical problems in a PV module, that either cause it to fail or under perform. Examples include moisture ingress, breakage of the glass, frame or back-sheet, and diode failure in the junction box. Product warranties range from 10 to 40 years, depending on the brand.
- **25-year performance warranty**
Solar panels generally last for 25 years (but some can last as long as 40 years) and guarantee that solar panels will produce a minimum percentage of their rated capacity, which slowly reduces as the panels degrade over time. If they degrade to a point where they do not meet performance expectations within that period, they will be replaced. As a rough guide, Risen panels are expected to be performing at 85% of their original capacity at the 25-year mark.

The inverter:

- **10-year product warranty**
Inverters generally last for 10-15 years, and thus will need to be replaced at some point during the panels' life.

Workmanship:

- **10-year workmanship or installation warranty:**
This is the part of the warranty that is the responsibility of the system installer and covers their workmanship as opposed to the panels or inverters within the system. It is also important to understand whether the installer or solar retailer will assist in enacting any manufacturer warranties should a fault occur with a major system component.

What about insurance?

We recommend that you check with your insurance provider to ensure that your panels are covered by your insurance in case something happens to them that is outside the conditions of the warranty.

Many insurance providers consider permanent fixtures like solar panels to be part of your building, so they include coverage for them in their home insurance policies. To be sure, you should always check the policy documents for any policy you're considering.

Costs, savings and repayments

How much will it cost?

An indication of costs for various system sizes is given below. These figures include Small-scale Technology Certificates (STCs) discounts, but do not include the State Government rebate and/or loan (of up to \$2,800), which can reduce the cost to you even further. These should be used as a rough guide only as there may be additional costs depending on your property (see below).

3 kW	4 kW	5 kW	6 kW	8 kW	10 kW	30kW	50kW	100kW
\$5,250- \$7,300	\$5,680- \$8,100	\$6,450- \$9,200	\$6,950- \$10,200	\$8,250- \$12,100	\$9,400- \$13,200	26,400- \$55,500	\$62,300- \$80,000	\$103,800 \$125,000

The exact cost of your solar system depends on:

- The size of your system (i.e., how many solar panels you get installed)
- The type of roof and property you have. There are extra charges for:
 - Double storey properties
 - Steep roofs
 - Properties requiring additional equipment or access methods such as scaffolding, scissor lifts etc
 - Tilt frames for flat roofs and brackets for tiled roofs
 - Split arrays – when panels cannot all fit on one section of the roof and have to be split across more than one
 - Tiled roofs
 - Unconventional roof types
 - Optimisers if your roof has some shading or the configuration is split
 - Three-phase power
- Potential additional associated costs outside of the solar programs
 - If you don't have a smart meter you will need a new one installed. The provider we use will organise this.
 - If you have two meters you will need to have them consolidated. This could cost around \$500.
- If your switchboard needs to be upgraded or replaced in order to accommodate a solar system safely, this could cost up to an additional \$800-1,000. You can arrange for this yourself, or you can have it included in your repayment plan.
- If your house needs to be rewired in order to accommodate solar safely, you will need to pay for this. You should seek an assessment and quote from an electrician for this before proceeding and be aware that rewiring can be very costly.
- If your property needs repairs or asbestos removal in order to accommodate solar, you will need to arrange and pay for this yourself.
- Systems over 30kW, will also be dependent on AC cable runs, lifting methods, distributor approvals and other gear requirements.

Our solar provider will give you a quotation after they assess your property. They

will check whether any of the above upgrades are applicable to your property and if required they will be explained to you and, if applicable, reflected in your quote.

How much money will I save?

These programs are designed to save you money on your electricity bills. Generally, you will see a reduction in your electricity bill somewhere between 30-60%. The exact amount of savings will be different for each participant and depend on:

- The size of the solar system you choose - larger systems typically result in greater savings.
- How much electricity you use and what time of day you use it. You save more when you use the power that your system generates during the day, rather than exporting it to the grid.
- How much you pay for your electricity.
- The feed-in tariff (FiT) you receive. This is the price you get paid when you export power to the grid. This currently sits around 6.7c/kWh. From 1 July 2022, this will be 5.2c/kWh.

It is impossible to calculate exactly how much you will save because of all the variables involved, but your quote will include an indicative range of savings expected for your property.

Important note on savings:

Your power bill will not show you how much money you have saved by using your own solar power, it only shows how much electricity you sold back to the grid (exported) and how much you bought from the grid. This means that most of your savings are not visible on your bill because you simply used the power from your solar system and didn't need to buy it. However, you should notice a significant drop in your bills. Your inverter records how much power you produce overall and will give you a live reading of current generation. Speak with your installer to see how to set up a non-line monitoring account to see how much you have produced.

What is the feed-in-tariff? What will I see on my bills?

When your solar system generates more electricity than you're using in your home, excess power is exported to the grid, and you receive credits on your bill for that amount.

It is rare for people to export so much that their bill goes below zero, but in theory it's possible, and your retailer would have to pay you the difference (or more likely give you a credit for a future bill).

How much you are credited for the electricity you export to the grid is called the 'feed-in-tariff'. To find out the current feed-in-tariff rates see:

<https://www.energy.vic.gov.au/renewable-energy/victorian-feed-in-tariff/current-feed-in-tariff>

The power generated by your solar system will always get consumed in house before getting exported to the grid. This is always the best business case. If you don't see

much export, do not worry, this means you are using most of the energy within your house.

Notice that you may be restricted to export electricity to the grid. Although this is rare for residential systems; it is more common in larger commercial systems. Your installer will process your network approval and will advise if you require a limit on the amount of power you can feed into the grid. This may also result in extra charges.

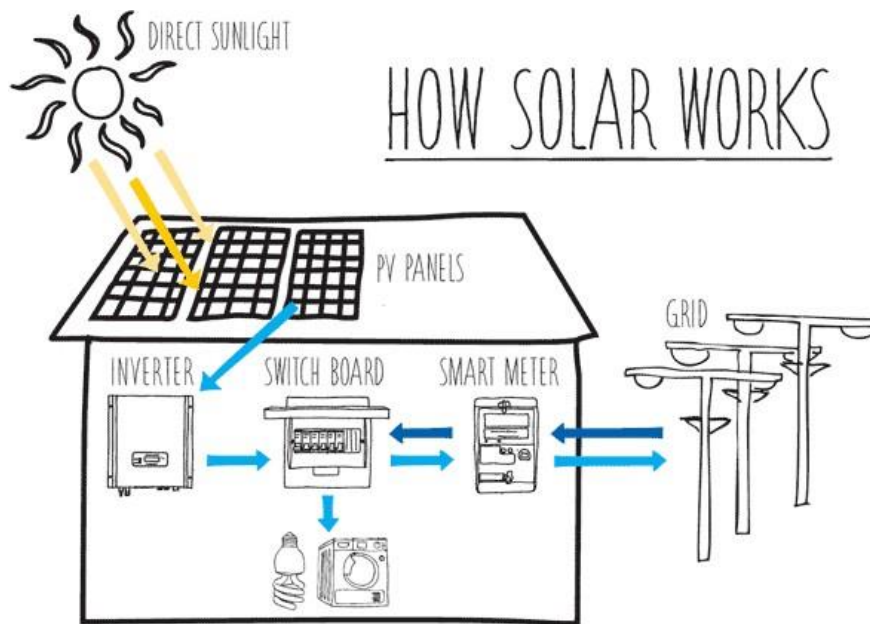
General information about solar power

Why go solar?

- By generating your own solar power, you'll be saving on your electricity bills.
- By installing clean energy, you help keep our air clean and our climate safe.
- It will increase the value of your property

How does solar power work?

- Solar panels on your roof convert energy from sunlight into direct current (DC) electricity, and the inverter then transforms the DC electricity into alternating current (AC), which is used in your house or exported to the grid.
- Whenever you produce more solar power than you're using in your home, the remainder is exported (sold) to the grid.
- Your smart meter records electricity being exported and imported to and from the grid, and you get credited on your bill for the electricity you export to the grid.
- The amount you get paid for your electricity exports is called the feed-in tariff. (See also: [What is the feed-in-tariff? What will I see on my bills?](#))
- Generally, you pay more for what you import than you get paid for what you export. This means that the more your daily power usage happens during the day, the more financial benefit you will get from solar.



Is my roof suitable for solar? Which orientation is best?

When you apply for one of our solar programs, our solar provider will first do a desktop assessment using satellite imagery to see whether solar is suitable for your roof.

While due North is the ideal orientation for maximum solar generation, West and East also work well. While they are a little less efficient than North-facing, for most households it will still be worthwhile. If you use most of your power in the afternoon, then West-facing panels may even be better for you. This can be advantageous to offset afternoon air conditioning costs in summer. Conversely, if you use most of your power in the morning, then East facing panels would be suitable. The best panel direction to maximise self-consumption of solar electricity will depend upon your household's electricity usage patterns.

The pitch of your home's roof is going to be the angle your solar panels are mounted at (unless your roof is flat). The optimum angle is 20–25 degrees, but slightly more or less shouldn't be a problem. If you have a flat roof, an adjustable tilt frame may be used to bring the panels up to the ideal angle, which will slightly increase the cost.

If solar is a viable option for your house, an **obligation-free quote** will be arranged for you.

Will significant modifications need to be made to my home?

No. Solar PV systems are typically installed with minimal modification to the house. The frames for the solar panels are usually built onto your existing roof, and the cables run inside the roof and walls where possible. On a flat roof a special kind of mounting called a tilt-frame is needed, which will add to the cost but will not affect your roof.

For a tiled roof, some of the tiles are removed, brackets attached to the rafters in the roof, and then the tiles go back into place. It's good to have some spare roof

[Back to top](#)

tiles handy during installation because old tiles often become brittle and crack during installation. Often the recommendation is for 20-30 roof tiles to be purchased prior to installation day. For a tin roof it is easy to install solar because the panels are installed directly onto the roof.

Every roof material is suitable for solar, except for slate. Because slate is so fragile, most installers aren't willing to work on it.

Are there any reasons why I might not be able to get solar?

Yes, unfortunately solar doesn't work for all properties. Some of the problems that can come up include the following.

- If your roof does not have enough clear, unshaded space to fit at least the smallest system we can offer then we won't be able to install a system for you.
- Your switchboard and wiring need to be up to standard and able to accommodate solar power safely. If your switchboard or wiring are old, they may not be adequate and may need to be replaced before an installation can go ahead. This can be costly and may need to be paid by you, so you need to weigh up whether it is worth the benefit and whether you can afford it.
- If asbestos is present in your house and/or your switchboard, our installer may not be able to carry out the necessary works. You would need to pay for its removal prior to installation.
- If you are in a heritage area, and if your system would be visible from the street or a public park, you will need to apply for a planning permit. If this permit is not granted, you won't be able to go ahead with an installation.
- If your roof is made from decramastic roof sheets our installer may not be able to carry out the necessary works. This is a kind of pressed metal roof sheeting that is made to look like roof tiles.
- If your roof is very difficult to access safely then our installer may not be able to carry out the necessary works.
- If we determine that the financial benefit to you might be marginal, then we will let you know so you can make an informed decision.

Is my smart meter compatible with solar power?

Yes, all smart meters are compatible with rooftop solar systems. Smart meters monitor how much power you use from the electricity grid (import) and how much is sent back to the grid from your panels (export).

When your solar system is installed your Electricity Distributor Network (CitiPower, Jemena or AusNet) will reprogram your meter remotely so that the smart meter knows you have a solar system. There will be a small, one-off fee for this service – usually in the order of \$50-100, which will be added to your next electricity bill.

If you don't yet have a smart meter, you will need to arrange for this before the solar system can be switched on.

What about batteries?

Many people are interested in batteries; however, batteries are not yet as financially beneficial as solar panels alone. For this reason, Council is recommending that you install solar power now, so you can start getting the benefits, rather than waiting for battery prices to drop. The Bulk Buy program does not include batteries but speak to your installer if you wish to do so.

Costs

At this stage batteries are still very expensive. A typical medium-large solar system might cost around \$7,000. But a battery on top of the solar system, can cost around \$10,000 extra (minimum), so a total of say \$17,000.

While a grid connected solar system will typically pay for itself in 3-5 years, a battery will take 8-12 years. Given that most batteries only carry a 10-year warranty, if they fail just after 10 years there may be no net financial benefit.

Benefits

Most people are not home to use the power that their solar system is generating during the day. By installing a battery, you can save what your solar system produces during the day and use it in the evening and morning.

This saves you money because you pay more for the power that you buy from the grid in the morning or evening than what you get paid for the power that you export back to the grid during the day when you're not home to use it.

There is a State Government rebate for batteries (<https://www.solar.vic.gov.au/solar-battery-rebate>).

You can also sign up to a Virtual Power Plant (VPP). These power plants manage the batteries on your behalf, charging and discharging them when it is convenient to do so. You may get a premium tariff for that energy, which may be better than your Feed in Tariff. This will need to be organised by you and negotiated with the Virtual Power Plant provider.

There is a State Government pilot program on VPP, although you can find your own (<https://www.solar.vic.gov.au/virtual-power-plant-pilot>).

Landlords, renters and owners' corporations.

What are the benefits of Solar Saver for landlords?

The potential benefits of installing solar on a property that you rent out to tenants include:

- Increased property value
- Increased attractiveness as a rental property (which may lead to longer tenancies, higher rent, and a higher occupancy rate)
- Ownership of the asset after paying it off
- Contributing to increasing local clean energy.
- Taxation Ruling TR 2017/2 Income tax: effective life of depreciating assets provides a table listing the effective life of depreciating assets. In accordance with TR 2017/2 the effective life of solar power generating system assets is twenty years.
- Further information on depreciating assets is available on the ATO's website, www.ato.gov.au by inserting 'QC 51237' into the website's search function.
- This is general information only, so you should seek individual advice from your tax accountant about your specific circumstances.

I am a renter / tenant, can I participate?

- Yes, but you will need permission from the owner of the property.

What if I live in a flat/unit/apartment with a shared roof?

- If you live in a semi-detached house that has its own roof space, even if you may share a wall with a neighbour, then these points do not apply to you.
- For many apartment buildings, flats and units, your roof is part of what is called a *common area*. Each property has equal share to the roof space.
- If your roof is a shared space, you will need permission from your Owners' Corporation.
- We recommend that you get this permission in writing, and that you forward this to us to keep with your records (however that is not a requirement to participate in the program).
- There may not be enough space for each apartment to install solar PV panels.
- Solar power systems can be shared across separate apartments using some sharing technologies. This may add a significant cost to the installation of a system, but it does have many benefits. Read more in the Arena website: [SolShare technology invention smashes barriers to solar apartments - Australian Renewable Energy Agency \(arena.gov.au\)](http://www.arena.gov.au)

We recommend you start a conversation with your neighbours as soon as possible. Some advice on talking to your Owners' Corporation:

- Ask to put solar on the agenda at your next Owners' Corporation meeting.
- Think about how you can communicate with other owners before the meeting – do you have a group Facebook page, an email list, or phone number for your fellow owners? Or could you put up a notice on a noticeboard or drop a note into their letterboxes? If you need help with this, please ask us – we can provide a template or point you to appropriate materials. This FAQ could be a good start.
- If you don't already attend Owners' Corporation meetings, find out how many owners usually take interest and what a quorum is (how many people do they need to attend to make a decision)?
- Let your neighbours and/or other owners know that there is an opportunity for them to access solar through our programs – share our website with them www.darebin.vic.gov.au/solar
- If you want to read more about sustainability for multi-residential buildings check out [these resources from the City of Melbourne](#).
- If you need help, please ask us.

COVID-19 (Coronavirus) and the Solar Saver Program

Darebin's Solar Saver team is working closely with our supplier to manage safety during home visits during Covid-19 outbreaks. Your safety, and the safety of our contractors, is our top priority. If your home visit is coming up or yet to be scheduled, the installer will call you in advance to find out:

- Whether there is any need to enter your home during the visit (usually this will only be if your switchboard is located inside your property).
- If so, whether there is anyone at home who is at high risk (i.e., older residents and people with existing medical conditions or immune deficiencies).
- If there is anyone at home who is sick, or who is in isolation because they might have come into contact with an infectious person or have recently been overseas.

If there is someone at home who is at high risk, sick or in isolation, or if you would simply prefer to avoid all contact, the installer will schedule your site visit for a later date.

If your site visit proceeds, the installer will avoid entering your home if possible. If there is a need to enter your home, the installation crew will be taking the following precautions:

- Wear masks – (this will be updated following the latest medical advice)
- Clean their hands thoroughly with hand sanitiser before and after entering your home
- Make the visit as quick as possible (under no circumstances more than 10 minutes inside your home)
- Avoid physical contact with you all together – no handshakes or any other physical contact
- Avoid touching any surfaces unnecessarily – and they will bring disinfectant wipes and wipe down anything they do touch
- Keep a safe distance from you and anyone else in the house (at least 1.5 metres).

Please see <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus> for the latest advice and information.

Who do I contact with further questions?

Please get in touch directly if you have questions. **Make sure you mention that you are interested in the Darebin Solar Saver Bulk Buy stream.**

Phone: 03 8470 8888 and ask to speak to the Solar Saver team
Email: solar@darebin.vic.gov.au
Web: darebin.vic.gov.au

GLOSSARY

Distributor (DNSP) = the company that is responsible for distributing energy and maintaining the powerlines and poles that carry your electricity. There are three in Darebin: AusNet, Jemena and CitiPower. Your distributor will be mentioned in your electricity bill.

FIT = Feed-In Tariff = the money you get paid when you feed excess energy back into the grid. Currently the minimum FIT in Victoria is 6.7 cents per kilowatt hour. This is subject to change – [see Question 25](#).

Inverter = the machine that converts the energy collected by your panels into energy you can use in your house.

kW(hr) = kilowatt (hour) = unit of measure for electricity consumption (per hour).

NMI = National Meter Identifier = a unique number that identifies your home or business for the purpose of electricity billing. You can find your NMI on any electricity bill.

Pitch = angle (of your roof) – this affects your solar panels because they need to be on a particular angle to the sun to be most efficient (can be adjusted by using special mounts).

PV, Solar PV = (Solar) Photo Voltaic (Panels) = Solar Panels.

Retailer = the company that sells you electricity (e.g., Origin, AGL, TruEnergy, Powershop, Diamond Energy etc etc).

Smart Meter = the device that records your electricity use. This is how your power company (retailer) knows how much to charge you. It also tells them how much energy you are putting back into the grid.

Special Charge Scheme = a mechanism that allows Council to buy your solar system upfront and you to pay back the cost over time. The way this works is that Council will charge you a small additional payment (a Special Charge) on your quarterly rates notice. You can repay the loan over up to 40 instalments over up to 10 years in this way.

Virtual Power Plants (VPP) = they are companies that can manage your battery and improve the return of investment for these devices. They are not compulsory if you chose to install batteries.