

## Net Metering Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is net metering?**

Net metering allows customers to offset their energy use by generating power on their property and connecting it to a utility's grid. When customers generate more than they consume, the electric meter "spins" backwards, providing a kilowatt-hour (kWh) credit for energy produced to offset energy consumed. Systems connected to the grid are referred to as "interconnected."

### **How does net metering work?**

Net metering customers install renewable sources of generation at their homes or businesses. Energy generated is consumed at the premise first and any excess flows from the meter to Idaho Power's lines. Production is credited against consumption, and the customer is billed at the end of the month based on "net" overall usage (kWh consumed minus kWh produced).

### **How much do I pay for the power I use?**

Net metering customers pay the same retail rates for power they use as Idaho Power's standard service customers. However, the net metering tariff — including the current rate structure and interconnection requirements — is subject to change and does not represent a guarantee of future pricing.

### **What happens if I generate more electricity than I consume?**

Beginning with each customer's January 2014 billing cycle, customers who generate more electricity than they consume over the course of a month will receive a kWh credit carried forward to offset consumption in future months. Excess energy credits carry forward indefinitely until they are entirely used to offset consumption or a customer discontinues service at the applicable home or business, whichever comes first.

### **Can I transfer excess generation between accounts?**

In some cases, it may be possible to transfer excess generation between meters among accounts held by the same customer provided the meters are on the same primary feeder, the meters are located on the same contiguous property and the electricity is for the customer's requirements. Credits may only be transferred between Schedules 1 and 7 or between Schedules 9, 19, and 24. Transfers happen one time per year and fees apply. Call the net metering line at 208-388-2559 for more information.

### **What type of generation is allowed under net metering?**

Idaho Power's net metering tariff is available to wind, solar, hydro, biomass, geothermal and fuel cell technologies.

### **Who is eligible for net metering service?**

Residential (Schedule 1) and small commercial (Schedule 7) customers may connect up to 25 kilowatts (kW) of generation. All other rate classes may connect up to 100 kW of generation. Residential Time Of Day customers (Schedule 5) may not participate in net metering.

**What is the basic process for interconnecting a net metering system? How long will it take?**

- The process begins when a customer submits a completed application form and \$100 application fee to Idaho Power. Applications are available at [www.idahopower.com/netmetering](http://www.idahopower.com/netmetering) or mailed upon request.
- Once a complete application is received, Idaho Power provides the customer with a completed application acknowledgement stating all application requirements have been received.
- Idaho Power then conducts a feasibility review based on information provided in the application. During this review a planning engineer checks the lines and transformers serving the customer's property to ensure Idaho Power's equipment can accommodate the proposed system.
- Within seven business days of the completed application acknowledgment, Idaho Power provides the customer with the results of the feasibility review.
- If approved, the customer may continue with the installation.
- If upgrades are needed, Idaho Power works with the customer to determine the costs of upgrading the grid to accommodate the proposed system. If the customer chooses to proceed, grid upgrades are made by Idaho Power at the customer's expense. Once the required upgrades have been completed, Idaho Power provides notification that the customer may proceed with installation of the project.
- Once the system has been completely installed and passes the state electrical inspection, the customer must submit a System Verification Form detailing the final installed components of the net metering system.
- Upon receipt of the System Verification Form and passage of the state electrical inspection, Idaho Power conducts its own inspection within ten business days. At this inspection, Idaho Power tests the disconnection equipment, visually inspects the system and places utility required signs on the system. These signs alert Idaho Power crews that on-site generation occurs at the property and helps crews locate the disconnect in case of an emergency.
- Once the net metering system has passed Idaho Power's inspection, Idaho Power installs a new meter programmed for net metering within fifteen business days.

**Does Idaho Power have any specific interconnection equipment requirements?**

Idaho Power requires a grid-tied inverter. Inverters with either the UL1741 or IEEE1547 listings meet Idaho Power's requirements for interconnection. Inverters without these listings require additional testing. Idaho Power also requires a disconnect switch on the customer side of the meter. For complete rules, visit [www.idahopower.com/netmetering](http://www.idahopower.com/netmetering).

**What does it cost to become a net metering customer?**

Aside from the cost of the system itself, Idaho Power requires a \$100 application fee to cover costs such as processing, project review, on-site inspection, and review of the lines and transformers. If the project requires upgrades to Idaho Power equipment, the applicant also must pay those costs.

**What if I want to start small and increase my system size over time?**

You may install your system a little at a time; however, each expansion will require an application and a \$100 feasibility review and inspection fee.

**Is there a limit to how many Idaho Power customers can participate in net metering?**

No, there is currently no cap on Idaho Power's net metering service.

**Does Idaho Power sell and/or install net metering systems?**

No. There are a number of qualified dealers that provide sales and installation services within Idaho Power's service area.

**What if I don't want to be on the net metering tariff?**

Idaho Power offers three options for interconnecting renewable generation. Net metering is one of these options, providing customers with the ability to interconnect generation systems with the intent of offsetting their own consumption. Idaho Power also offers two other avenues for interconnection through which generators are compensated for each kWh produced at avoided cost rates. For more information regarding the three options for interconnecting renewable generation to Idaho Power's system, please see the document "Renewable Generation at Your Home or Business" at <http://www.idahopower.com/pdfs/BusinessToBusiness/RenewableFAQ's.pdf>.

**What happens if I don't comply with Idaho Power's interconnection tariffs?**

Onsite renewable generation interconnected to Idaho Power's electrical grid must comply with the rules for interconnection. These requirements ensure the safety of Idaho Power crews working in the area and protect the reliability of the electric system. Customers with generation systems found to be interconnected without completing the net metering application process will be asked to bring their systems into compliance or risk being permanently disconnected from the electric grid.

**Where can I learn more?**

To learn more about net metering, interconnection rules and the application process:

- Visit: [www.idahopower.com/netmetering](http://www.idahopower.com/netmetering).
- Call: 208-388-2323 or 800-488-6151 outside the Treasure Valley.
- Email: [netmetering@idahopower.com](mailto:netmetering@idahopower.com).

**Other Links:**

[www.energy.idaho.gov/renewableenergy](http://www.energy.idaho.gov/renewableenergy) - Idaho Office of Energy Resources:

Information on renewable resources in Idaho including technologies, financing options and resources.

[www.oregon.gov/ENERGY/index.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/ENERGY/index.shtml) - Oregon Department of Energy:

Information on renewable resources in Oregon including technologies and financing options.