

Tech Talk

Connection Standards newsletter – March 2016

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To all Registered Electrical Contractors

The aim of this Tech Talk is to provide you and your employees with information that will help us to improve service for our customers. Please read the document and pass it on to your employees or associates for their information.



CitiPower and Powercor have made changes to our Solar charges

Effective from 1 January 2016, there has been a change to the application of solar charges for CitiPower and Powercor. We will no longer apply the PV Micro Gen business hour or after hours fee and have wound up carrying out the inverter compliance test.

This decision aligns us with other Victorian distribution companies' solar processes and was based on our identification that there has been a general improvement in the reliability of installed solar inverters in the recent years.

For 2016 a remote meter reconfiguration fee is applied upon the set-up of a solar tariff. Updates regarding solar charges and current process can be found on our Solar and Other Generation webpage at www.powercor.com.au.



Introducing Online Solar Pre-Approvals with eConnect

eConnect

CitiPower and Powercor have launched **eConnect**, enabling online submission of Solar Pre-Approval assessments.

eConnect enables fast, easy, online solar pre-approval assessments. Through eConnect, customers, registered electrical contractors, licensed electrical workers, non-electricians and solar providers can submit their solar pre-approval assessments directly to CitiPower and Powercor and receive an instant pre-approval outcome. eConnect is accessible on any device, anywhere for simple on-the-go use.

Customer feedback has been very positive, with users quoting ease of navigation and real-time results as major benefits of the new system.

“The new system is a lot quicker to use and is a much more straightforward process. We love that we can get a response in a couple of minutes and are able to give our sales agents an answer on the spot.” – *Kelly Johnston, Intergra Solar*

“Very convenient, you get the response straight away. No other providers have this service. It’s all positive. The system really helps the business.” – *Karan Galhorta, Australian Solar Light*

“So much quicker doing it online, business wise it works really well for us. Instead of spending 5 minutes on paper work, it’s instant and saves lots of time. Makes the whole process a lot faster” – *Mel Kitchen, Vic Solar*

“We just want an instant answer. The best thing about the online assessment is that it is instant, you can’t fault it.” – *Steve Moriarty, Geelong Solar Energy*

What's coming next for RECs?

The online submission of Solar Pre-approval assessments is the first phase in providing a more effective service for CitiPower and Powercor customers.

RECs will benefit from further connection related process improvements which will be available in the first half of 2016. These include submission and tracking of New Connections, Alterations and enquiries.

How will eConnect benefit RECs?

eConnect, the new online Electrical Work Request (EWR) system will replace REConnect to deliver faster, simpler connection services on one user-friendly platform. New features will keep you more informed and give you more control over your connection requests.

It will streamline the entire connection request process onto one user-friendly platform in which RECS will be able to:

- Submit EWRs directly to CitiPower and Powercor
- Clone connection requests and save drafts
- Book truck appointments when submitting an EWR
- Attach photos of Certificates of Electrical Safety
- Track connections request progress in real time
- Receive email and SMS updates about the progress of your connection requests
- View estimated fees before submitting a connection request.

Further connections improvements including Abolishment requests will be unveiled throughout 2016.

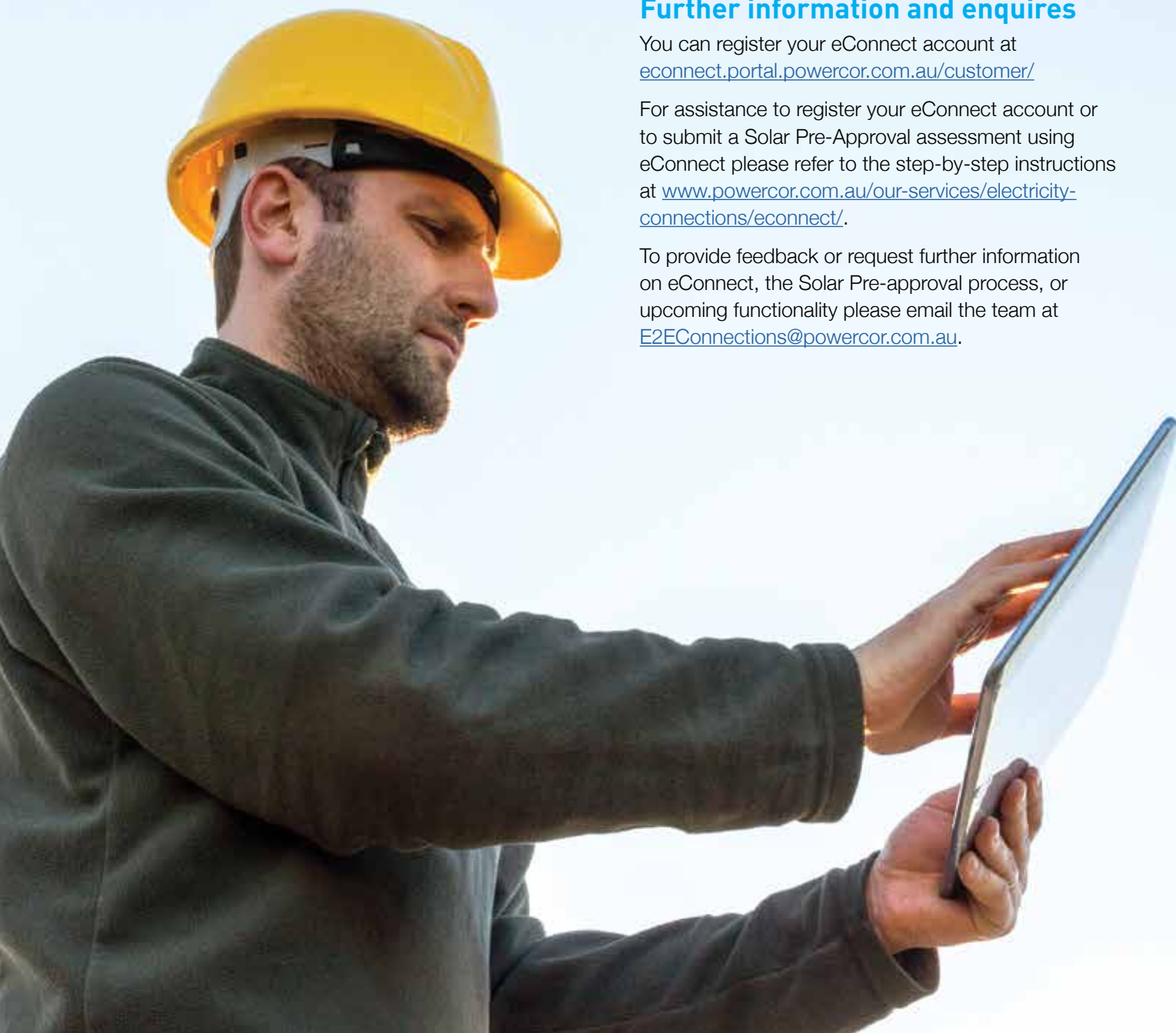
We will keep you informed on any relevant updates including when this functionality will become available to use.

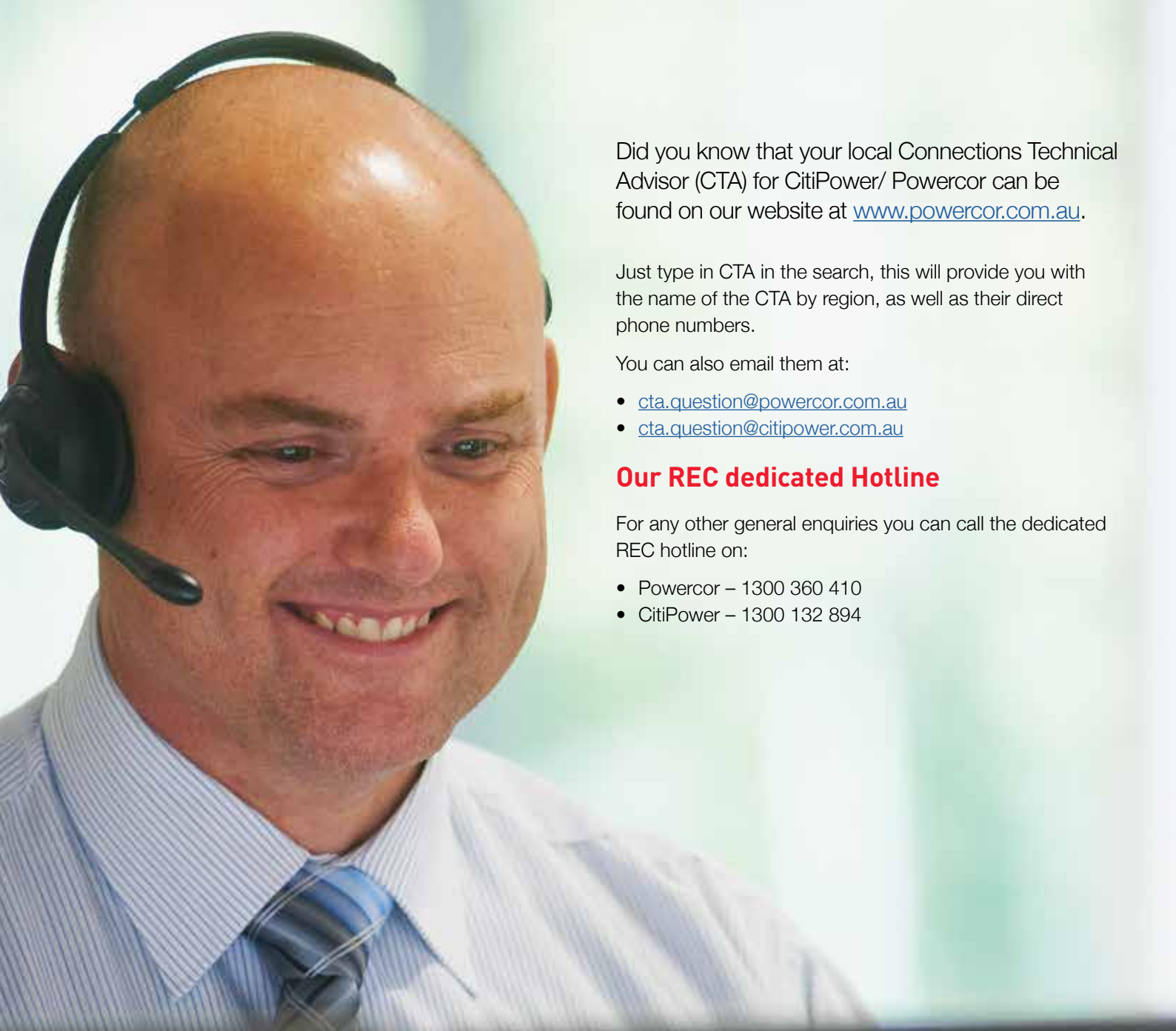
Further information and enquires

You can register your eConnect account at econnect.portal.powercor.com.au/customer/

For assistance to register your eConnect account or to submit a Solar Pre-Approval assessment using eConnect please refer to the step-by-step instructions at www.powercor.com.au/our-services/electricity-connections/econnect/.

To provide feedback or request further information on eConnect, the Solar Pre-approval process, or upcoming functionality please email the team at E2EConnections@powercor.com.au.





Did you know that your local Connections Technical Advisor (CTA) for CitiPower/ Powercor can be found on our website at www.powercor.com.au.

Just type in CTA in the search, this will provide you with the name of the CTA by region, as well as their direct phone numbers.

You can also email them at:

- cta.question@powercor.com.au
- cta.question@citipower.com.au

Our REC dedicated Hotline

For any other general enquiries you can call the dedicated REC hotline on:

- Powercor – 1300 360 410
- CitiPower – 1300 132 894

Need help? How to contact a **Connections Technical Advisor**

Pricing changes to our **Services Charges**

Every year CitiPower and Powercor perform a review of our pricing charges. These charges are required to be submitted to the Australian Energy Regulator (AER) who review any proposed changes and provides feedback on them. Once finalised and approved by the AER, we then publish our complete list of charges on our website in January every year.

It is recommended that all RECs check our website when quoting work to ensure that they are basing their quotes on the correct pricing.

Changes to some **common charges**

There have been a number of key pricing changes in our Services Charges for this year that you need to be aware of. These changes came into effect from 1 January 2016.

You may download and view the full list charges on our website: <https://www.powercor.com.au/our-services/electricity-connections/connection-and-disconnection-of-electricity-supplies/#charges>

Service Truck Fees / Charges

What is a Service Truck Visit?

Service truck visit charges apply when a service crew is requested for up to an hour in a number of circumstances including:

- Disconnection of complex site
- Reconnection of complex site
- Metering additions or alterations and
- Shutdowns

Larger scale works will be charged through a quoted service charge.

In the instance where a service truck visit is requested and the truck arrives to find the site is not ready for work to be carried out then a wasted attendance charge will apply.

How is the charge built up?

Our methodology for developing the Service Truck Visit fee involves applying a bottom up build, multiplying labour rates and times taken to perform the service. An average time to perform this service has been developed by identifying tasks involved by skill type and quantifying the time that each task will take.

Why has the Service Truck Visit fee increased in 2016?

The Service Truck Visit fee has increased in 2016 as a result of a review of the labour rates last year by the AER. A review of labour rates was last completed in 2011

The Service Truck visit fee is regulated and approved by the Australian Energy Regulator (AER).

	CitiPower		Powercor	
	Bus. Hours	After Hours	Bus. Hours	After Hours
Service Truck Visit	\$577.39	\$696.30	\$668.37	\$803.24
Wasted Attendance	\$361.90	\$418.09	\$367.64	\$424.79

Permanent removal (abolishment)

An abolishment is if you are seeking to have the electricity connection and metering permanently removed and do not intend to reconnect

Abolishment Fees

No charge for abolishment's under 100 amps where works require a removal of an overhead service or disconnection within a service pit. Complex abolishment's will still require scoping and associated charges will apply.

Solar Update

There are various changes occurring in the Solar Tariff space at this time, and below is some background on those situations.

NSW SOLAR BONUS TARIFF AND CONVERSION FROM GROSS METERING

REC's, Solar installers and customers in Victoria will likely become aware in the media of the pending closure of the NSW Solar Bonus Tariff – (the NSW 60c Premium Feed in Tariff) on 31 December 2016 at the end of this year.

As the NSW Government established that tariff as a Gross Metered PFIT Tariff in the order of 150,000 customers will need to have their metering converted to Net Metering in preparation for moving to the Market Feed in Tariff, and there are media concerns over the workforce and costs to customers associated with that situation.

However Victorian Customers are un-affected by that situation as Victorian Feed in Tariffs have been Nett Metered as part of the Smart Meter Rollout, and there is no need to change the CitiPower or Powercor Smart Meter to move from existing Solar Tariffs.

VICTORIAN TFIT AND SFIT SOLAR CUSTOMERS

There are however changes occurring to some Victorian Solar Tariffs, and on 31 December 2016 solar customers on the Victorian Transitional Feed in Tariff (TFIT), and the Victorian Standard Feeding in Tariff (SFIT) will have those tariffs end in line with the Government programs that established them, and those customers will need to contact their relevant Retailers to transfer onto the Market Feed in Tariff.

Both of these Victorian Feed in Tariffs closed to new customers back in 2012 and expire on 31 December 2016 at the end of this year.

Unlike the situation in NSW, there is NO need for any metering work to occur at Powercor and CitiPower customers with a compliant bi-directional Smart Meter as these are already installed as Net Metering.

www.energyandresources.vic.gov.au/energy/environment-and-community/victorian-feed-in-tariff/closed-schemes

Victorian Solar customers on the Victorian Premium Feed in Tariff (PFIT) are unaffected by any of these changes and retain access to it as long as they retain eligibility, and until it expires on 1 November 2024.



BATTERIES AND SOLAR

CitiPower Customers on the Victorian regulated Feed in Tariffs (PFIT and TFIT) should be aware that the installation of a battery, and use of it to store and then export under the subsidised tariff is not in accordance with the Government requirements of those tariffs and would cause the customer to become in-eligible, in a similar way to installing additional panels.

In addition Battery installations are required to comply the technical requirements detailed in relevant Australian Standards such as AS 2676-1992, Guide to the installation, maintenance, testing and replacement of secondary batteries in buildings; AS 3011-1992, Electrical installations — secondary batteries installed in buildings.

However batteries are being deployed under other Feed in Tariff arrangements such as the Market Feed in Tariff and Powercor can provide further advice and support on the installation of such systems.

www.powercor.com.au/our-services/solar-and-battery-sales/battery-storage/

We are investing in technologies and solutions that help us build a smarter, more responsive network that can accommodate the two-way flow of electricity and information, particularly as energy flows and quality of supply becomes more complex. Given the popularity of solar technology and the increasing affordability of energy storage systems we believe there is significant potential for the energy storage market in Australia.

We have commenced works to install a 2 megawatt energy storage system in Ballarat South, along one of the main power lines that services 6,400 customers in the area. When installed, the project will be the largest of its kind in Australia.

We are also embarking on a residential energy storage trial that will see us test 20 residential batteries in our metropolitan Melbourne network.

www.powercor.com.au/future-thinking/harnessing-new-technologies/

SOLAR SYSTEMS AND BATTERIES AND THE VICTORIAN SERVICE AND INSTALLATION RULES

Solar Systems with or without Batteries or UPS capabilities must be installed in conformance with section 6.9 “Sources of Alternative Supply” of the VSIRs, and in particular the clauses under 6.9.2 dealing with 6.9.2 “Inverter Connected Embedded Generation compliant with AS4777” from 6.9.2.1 to 6.9.2.6 inclusive.

www.victoriansir.org.au/

METER BOARD WIRING DIAGRAMS FOR SOLAR

Solar Systems are required to be installed in the General Power and Light “metered” circuits of a customer installation and are not permitted to be installed on the Dedicated Circuits of a Controlled load metered tariff.

The Meter Board wiring diagrams for installing residential solar systems in an existing CitiPower or Powercor residential customer can be found under the Network Specific Requirements area on the relevant Network website via the “working with us” and “Service Installation Rules” menu path.

www.citipower.com.au/working-with-us/suppliers/service-installation-rules/

www.powercor.com.au/working-with-us/suppliers/service-installation-rules/

Want to pull a fuse? **Text Us!**

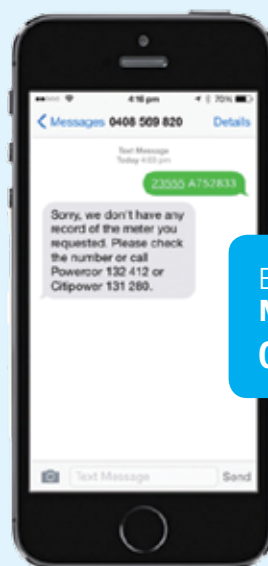


TEXT – 0408 569 820

Previously REC's had to call CitiPower/Powercor to advise when pulling fuses. To make it easier we have recently introduced a process where you can submit a SMS through your smartphone which will instantly let us know when you are pulling a fuse.

Start a SMS and in the message body enter your **REC ID** and the Meter ID and send to: **0408 569 820**. Within a few seconds you will receive a response. A successful confirmation message will notify you that we have processed your notification and we're ready for you to pull the fuse. If there was a problem you will receive a message to contact CitiPower / Powercor for further instructions.

These two screenshots demonstrate the two scenarios.



Enter your **REC ID** and the **Meter ID** and SMS to:
0408 569 820



Dedicated circuit controlled load tariffs are being re-opened from 1 July 2016

In December 2015, the Australian Energy Regulator (AER) approved the 2016 network tariffs for CitiPower and Powercor which included the re-opening on 1 July 2016 of a number of dedicated circuit controlled load tariffs for use by single phase customers (residential and small commercial) within each network area.

Controlled load tariffs are an effective way for existing customers to access an off-peak boost for an electric boosted solar hot water service during winter, or to replace an aging gas hot water unit with an off-peak electric hot water unit or electric boosted solar hot water unit.

What is a controlled load tariff?

A primary tariff is the charge for general power and light loads. There are different types of primary tariffs including flat rate and flexible time of use (TOU) tariffs.

A controlled load tariff is a sub-tariff to a primary tariff.

For example, for a single phase electric hot water service with a total load of less than 30 amperes, the switching times will occur between 11:00pm and 7:00am (times may vary depending on localised demand management activities).

For slab heating, typically switching times may vary depending on localised demand management activities

but will generally occur between the 12:00am – 7:00am controlled load window with an afternoon boost between 1:00pm and 4:00pm which may occur during winter.

From 1 July 2016, new single phase customers will be given the opportunity to select a dedicated circuit controlled load tariff for connecting an approved off-peak storage hot water service or the electric boost of a solar hot water system. The access to the controlled load tariff is dependent on the installation of a two element meter.

How is the controlled load tariff metered?

The controlled load is separately metered and the approved load is controlled on its own circuit which is separate, and in addition, to the general power and lighting loads.

As part of the smart meter rollout, single phase meters with two measuring elements able to separately measure the controlled load circuit rated at 30 amperes (resistive load) have been deployed to customers with both a general power and light load and controlled load.

There is no equivalent two element meter for two or three phase loads. However, customers who are on some form of time of use tariff are able to obtain a 'switching service' whereby their hot water is only switched on during off-peak times.

NEW CUSTOMERS

From 1 July 2016, new customers with single phase supply will have the opportunity to select a dedicated circuit controlled load tariff with the open flat rate general power and light tariff.

If a dedicated circuit controlled load tariff is selected, a single phase two element meter will be installed.

New customers selecting the controlled load tariff option at time of connection will receive the two element meter as part of the connection truck visit costs.

Note: New customers (single and multiphase) can still select the flexi-tariff and request a single element meter with contactor installed to provide a 30 amperes 'switching service' in the narrow overnight off-peak window but any boost will be at the prevailing rate.

The following table provides an overview of the single phase primary and controlled load tariffs:

Connection status (single phase residential and small commercial customers only)	Segment	CitiPower		Powercor		Tariff type
		Primary tariff	Load control tariff	Primary tariff	Load control tariff	
New connection & addition / alteration (access open tariffs)	Residential	C1R	CDS	D1	DD1	Flat Rate and controlled load
		C1RB	CDSB			
		C13R	Not available	P13R	Not available	Flexi-tariff (3 part ToU) *Use switching service
		C13RB				
	Small Commercial	C1GB	CDSB	ND1	DD1	Flat Rate and controlled load
		C1G	CDS			
Existing customers addition / alteration (on existing primary tariffs)	Residential	C1R	CDS	D1	DD1	Flat Rate and controlled load
		C1RB	CDSB			
		C2R	OP	D2	OP	2 part ToU and controlled load
		C2RB	OP	D3	HW	
		C13R	Not available	P13R	Not available	Flexi-tariff (3 part ToU) *Use switching service
		C13RB				
	Small Commercial	C1GB	CDSB	ND1	DD1	Flat Rate and controlled load
		C1G	CDS			

Note: Solar Customers can access these arrangements (other than customers on the Premium Feed in Tariff (PFIT) or Transitional Feed in Tariff (TFIT) which are subject to limitations requiring single element net metering.

EXISTING CUSTOMERS

Existing single phase customers can select to move to the relevant open flat rate tariff and the dedicated circuit controlled load tariff.

If an existing residential customer is already on a closed two rate time of use tariff, the residential customer can have access to the relevant dedicated circuit controlled load tariffs 'OP' or 'HW'. A single phase two element meter will be required to be installed.

Note:

Access to controlled load tariff 'OP' is limited to existing single phase residential customers already on 'C2R' & 'C2RB' tariffs in the CitiPower network area.

Access to controlled load tariff 'OP' and 'HW' is limited to existing single phase residential customers already on 'D2' & 'D3' tariffs in Powercor network area.

SOLAR CUSTOMERS

Many solar customers are considering the installation of an electric solar boosted hot water service to replace an existing LPG, gas or electric unit.

Single phase solar customers on the PFIT or TFIT tariffs cannot access the dedicated circuit load control tariffs without surrendering those existing feed in tariffs as those are single element net metering tariffs as defined by the relevant government regulations.

Existing single phase residential solar customers on Standard Feed in Tariff (**SFIT**) or the retail market Feed in Tariff (**FIT**) can select the relevant tariffs as detailed in the summary table on the previous page.

Single and multiphase PFIT and TFIT customers can move to the relevant flexi-tariff with a single element contacting meter without surrendering their feed in tariffs if they wish to install an off-peak electric hot water service or an electric boosted solar hot water service.

Note: existing customers requesting a tariff change requiring a physical metering change will have a truck visit charge apply.

APPROVED HOT WATER SERVICES

The dedicated circuit controlled load tariff and switching times are designed around the heating requirements of an 8 hour hot water storage unit, limited to a 30 amperes resistive current rating and turned off and on in accordance with the applicable CitiPower and Powercor load control strategy.

Smaller storage hot water services (i.e. less than 8 hour heating times) will switch-off via their thermostats (as will an electric boosted solar hot water service) and, therefore, will operate satisfactorily on a two element meters and tariffs.

These controlled load tariffs are not suitable, nor available, for use with heat pump technology hot water services or slab heating / heat bank equipment requiring an afternoon boost.

SINGLE PHASE TWO ELEMENT METERING

The single phase two element meter offers the ability for a twin element hot water service to access an automatic re-heat capability of the top heating element at the dedicated circuit controlled load tariff rate (i.e. off-peak) and, for customers with single element hot water services, the same outcome can be achieved via the bottom element through pressing the boost button on the front of the meter.


METER BOARD WIRING DIAGRAMS

The meter board wiring diagrams for a single phase two element meter providing a dedicated circuit load control tariff are identical to those for a single phase single element meter with contactor MWD-2 and can be found on the CitiPower and Powercor websites via the 'WORKING WITH US > suppliers > Service installation rules' menu path.

<https://www.citipower.com.au/working-with-us/suppliers/service-installation-rules/>

<https://www.powercor.com.au/working-with-us/suppliers/service-installation-rules/>





Introduction of Chapter 5A of the **National Electricity Rules**

The Victorian Government is introducing Chapter 5A of the National Electricity Rules (NER) in Victoria on 1 July 2016.

NER Chapter 5A provides a framework for governing the process for connecting small customers, including small-scale renewable energy generation customers, to the electricity distribution network.

This national electricity connections framework will provide greater clarity regarding the information that must be exchanged between an electricity distributor and customer to enable a connection to occur. Electricity distributors will be required to respond to and process requests for connection in a more timely manner. Standard terms and conditions for connections must be published by each electricity distributor and these terms and conditions must be approved by the Australian Energy Regulator (AER).

More details about what the introduction of Chapter 5A means to REC's will be provided during the lead up to 1 July 2016.

