

Get Paid for Solar Power

On January 1, 2009 the Alberta Government implemented a new regulation that makes it easier for Albertans to get paid for solar power. Rule 024 is referred to as the Micro-Generation rule and is administered on behalf of the Government of Alberta by the Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC).

Micro-generation customers remain connected to the electrical distribution system (the grid) and receive credit for any surplus they generate. Generate a lot in the summer, use the grid as a battery, and take it back in January. If you were living in a location where power was unreliable then you might consider going “off the grid”. We can do that also, but the cost of batteries is usually more than the cost of using the grid as a battery. In Alberta, our grid is reliable. Therefore, motivational drivers to install a system usually are:

- desire to save money
- desire to lower CO² emissions

The regulation outlines the procedures for designing and sizing systems for homeowners, farmers, or commercial businesses so that they can get the power portion of their bill to zero. Under Rule 024, retailers like Direct Energy, EPCOR, Enmax, and Rural Electrification Associations are required to credit you for power at the same rate per kilowatt hour (kWh) that they charge you based on a yearly average.

Micro-Generation Defined

For the purposes of Rule 024, power generating plants or units are defined as those using renewable, environmentally-friendly technologies such as the following:

- Solar Photovoltaic Arrays (PV)
- small-scale hydro
- wind
- biomass
- micro-cogeneration plants
- fuel cells



The maximum generating capacity allowed under the regulations is one megawatt (1MW). To put that in perspective a typical homeowner would require about 5 kilowatts (kW) to meet their annual needs. 5 kW or 5,000 watts is 5% of the maximum allowed.

For more information on micro-generation please visit the Alberta Utilities Commission website at the following website by clicking on the link below:

<http://www.auc.ab.ca/rule-development/micro-generation/Pages/default.aspx>

