NET METERING GUIDELINES

Ocala Electric Utility (OEU) works with customers and/or contractors on Renewable Generation Systems (RGS), such as solar panels, designed for grid interconnections. Customers with a grid-interconnected RGS may be eligible to participate in OEU's Net Metering program to offset their energy usage. However, systems must not be sized larger than the service load consumption calculated by OEU based on the customer's estimated annual kilowatt hour (kWh) consumption.

Please see OEU's Interconnection Agreement for complete guidelines based on the appropriate tier.

Tier 1: 10 kW or less

Tier 2: Greater than 10 kW up to 100 kW

Tier 3: Greater than 100 kW up to 2,000 kW (2 megawatts or 2 MW)

Key Guidelines

1. Customer-owned RGS must include an inverter (or manual disconnect switch) capable of automatically isolating the customer-owned RGS equipment from OEU's electric grid in the event of an outage. *This is required to prevent back feed, which can endanger utility personnel working to restore the grid.*

   A. A customer is not required to connect their RGS to OEU's electric grid. It may be installed and operated as a stand-alone system. However, grid interconnection is required if the customer wants to participate in net metering.

   B. A customer's RGS must use a UL 1741 listed inverter and it must have a manual, visual load break disconnect switch (knife blade or fused type) to feed power to OEU.

      1) The disconnect switch should be mounted separately and no more than five (5) feet away from the electric meter.

      2) The disconnect switch must be easily accessible by OEU personnel and must be capable of being secured in an open position with an OEU padlock. It cannot be locked in a meter room.

      3) The disconnect switch must have a sign noting its location for OEU personnel to easily identify it in case of an emergency. The disconnect switch should also have a warning sign indicating that both sides of the switch may be energized.

2. The gross power rating (GPR) or alternating current (AC) rating for the RGS is 85 percent of the direct current (DC) rating. The AC rating determines the tier of the RGS for agreement purposes. Tier 1 is 10 kW or less. Tier 2 is greater than 10 kW up to 100 kW. Tier 3 is greater than 100 kW up to 2,000 kW (2 MW).

   A. The customer's RGS must adhere to National Electric Code (NEC) Article 690 – Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Systems. Interconnections with OEU's transformer(s) or inside the meter can is strictly prohibited.

   B. The customer's GPR is limited by OEU requirements.

      1) GPR must not exceed 90 percent (90%) of the customer's OEU calculated distribution service rating.

2) GPR must not be greater than required to offset the customer's annual kWh energy consumption. (Annual consumption is based on historical data or by estimated usage of similar type of service as determined by OEU)

OEU will not increase the size of the distribution equipment for an RGS designed to offset all of the customer's annual energy use.

C. Customers installing a 50 kW or greater RGS must interconnect at either 120/208V or 277/480V wye three phase. If 3-phase power is not available, the customer may decrease the size of their RGS or request 3-phase wye power distribution service at the customer's expense. OEU will provide a ball park estimate for the required utility upgrades. The customer is responsible for any upgrades required to their electrical entrance. However, OEU will not upgrade service capacity solely for the addition of an RGS.

D. Customers must pay full cost for additional equipment and/or hardware (e.g. secondary cabinet) OEU is required to install based on the customer's RGS configuration.

3. The customer (named on the OEU account) must do the following:
   - Complete an OEU Renewable Generation System application.
   - Pay the application fee if the RGS is Tier 2 or Tier 3. (No fee for Tier 1).
   - Complete an Interconnection Agreement
   - Obtain a building permit
   - Provide documentation showing proof of insurance for the appropriate RGS tier
   - Maintain the required level of insurance for as long as the RGS is connected and be prepared to provide proof of insurance to OEU on an annual basis

   Note: If the RGS is Tier 3, an RGS Study Fee is also required when the application is submitted. The RGS study fee is an estimated total cost for an interconnection feasibility study, but only actual costs will be charged to the customer and deducted from this fee. Customers are still responsible for any final study fees that are more than the estimated total cost.

4. Once construction is complete, the customer should provide a copy of the approved permit (or a screen print from the local authority's website indicating the permit has been approved). This approved permit must include the following:
   - Site address where the RGS is installed
   - Building Department Name
   - Permit Number
   - Description of work (e.g. solar panels, photovoltaic, wind turbine, etc.)
   - Electrical and mechanical inspections signed / approved by the local inspector
   - Proof that the RGS rating does not exceed OEU's maximum allowable size

NET METERING GUIDELINES

5. Operating the RGS prior to OEU installing a dual-register meter is not permitted, except for testing and during inspection. Operating the RGS without the dual-register meter may result in an inaccurate meter read, causing your electric bill to increase.

6. Three-phase net metering requires a cellular modem for continuous interval data readings. The customer is responsible for the monthly cellular service and the "special equipment" fee associated with the modem. This fee will be added to the monthly electric bill.

7. Customers interested in installing battery storage systems for personal use (i.e., behind the electric meter), please consult with an OEU Engineer. Requirements are more stringent and are subject to change based on legislative or regulatory actions as well as emerging technology.

8. OEU reserves the right to evaluate the capacity and output of a customer's RGS at any time. If it is determined that an RGS is larger than approved by OEU or the output capacity has been increased without OEU approval, the net meter will be removed and replaced with a standard OEU meter. Additionally, the customer and/or service location will be prohibited from participating in the Net Metering Program in the future.

* * * Click here to visit our *Frequently Asked Questions* * * *

NET METERING GUIDELINES

BATTERY STORAGE SYSTEMS

The policy ensures OEU protects the safety of its personnel working on the electric grid, monitors the impact of energy storage systems on the grid, and evaluates the potential economic impact of such installations to all OEU customers.

Technical Specifications

Battery storage equipment installed behind a customer's meter must be certified by a Nationally Recognized Testing Laboratory (NRTL) to the current UL 1741 standard for safety. A placard must be permanently affixed to the meter enclosure stating, **"Battery storage utilized in this facility."**

I. **Battery storage integrated with customer-owned Renewable Generation Systems (RGS).**
Energy stored by the battery is solely for the customer's use. While it may operate interconnected with OEU's electric grid, the customer must not export power from the battery to OEU.

II. **Battery storage for backup support.**
Battery storage systems installed without an RGS and intended as an emergency power source may be charged from OEU's electric grid. This battery system does not require an Interconnection Agreement.

The customer is responsible for ensuring that power from the battery system does not back feed to the electric grid to avoid a safety hazard for OEU personnel or the public. The customer is required to install a UL listed automatic transfer switch. Customers assume all liability associated with the use of such battery systems.

III. **Battery storage continuously interconnected to the electric grid.**
Currently, OEU prohibits battery systems being installed without an RGS that are designed to charge from **and** operate interconnected with OEU's electric grid. Stand-alone battery storage systems are not defined as "renewable energy" pursuant to Rule 25-6.065(2)(d), Florida Administrative Code.

Note: A battery storage system may allow a net-meter customer to operate their RGS during a grid outage. In such cases, the customer is prohibited from exporting and/or back feeding power to OEU's electric grid because this can endanger utility personnel working to restore the grid. The customer must install a disconnect switch or specialized inverter which will disengage their RGS source from the OEU grid, but not their electrical service.