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**EMBARGO: Immediate release**

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**Solar energy must be registered**

For most South African residents, managing regular staged blackouts due to load shedding has become a way of life. To avoid being left in the dark, many people have invested in some form of backup power solution.

Residents must keep in mind that registration of all small-scale embedded generation (SSEG) installations is mandatory, even if you are not feeding into the grid.

**Why must I register?**

* Overstrand is legally required to ensure that the electricity distributed to all its customers complies with set quality standards. To enable us to do this, we need to know where generation systems have been connected to the grid, to ensure that the system is safe and legal.
* All permanent grid-tied electricity generators in the Overstrand’s electricity supply area must be authorised in writing. **According to the Overstrand’s Electricity Supply by-law, unauthorised generators that are grid-tied can be considered as a form of tampering. Please note that o**ff-grid systems must also be registered so that they are**not mistaken**for grid-tied systems**.**
* Many systems that claim to be off-grid are not electrically separated from the home’s wiring and are thus not technically off-grid. To qualify as an off-grid system, a solar PV system must be completely separated from the property’s wiring.
* Unauthorised PV systems could interfere with Overstrand’s electricity supply, electricity demand management and future network planning.
* Connecting an unauthorised SSEG system to the grid can pose a safety risk to electricity maintenance staff and can also be a fire risk to your household if done incorrectly.
* Furthermore, your future insurance claims may be jeopardised if unauthorised systems are operated.
* NERSA requires all installations with a generation capacity smaller than 1 Mega Volt Amp (MVA), to be registered with the relevant distribution authority. This covers most off-grid solar solutions for residential homes and some small offices.

**SSEG guidelines**

The municipality has provided a set of guidelines to assist customers with registering their systems.

Overstrand’s Small Scale Embedded Generation programme gives all consumers with SSEG installations the opportunity to apply for a grid-tied or off-grid connection.

The SSEG program allows consumers to apply for municipal approval, install a bidirectional meter and then be compensated for each unit fed-back into the municipal grid at an annually approved municipal tariff.

Customers wishing to install an SSEG system, regardless of its generation capacity, need to complete an application form and request written approval from the Municipality prior to the commencement of system procurement and installation. The approval process for an SSEG installation will vary, depending on the size of the system and consumer category.

**The following systems must be registered:**

* Grid-tied with feed in (including hybrid) – where excess electricity is fed back onto the grid.
* Grid-tied with reverse power flow blocking – when the output is connected to the household wiring and is connected to the municipal grid through the meter.
* Grid-tied inverters which can operate in “islanded mode” – used during general power outages.
* Off-grid SSEG – not electrically connected to the electricity grid in any way.

**Amnesty period considered**

Council will, at the November council meeting consider a proposal for amnesty to allow the public to register current solar installations without being penalised.

**Relevant documents**

The complete guidelines, forms and by-laws are available on the Overstrand website or by using one of the following links:

Electricity documents:
[www.overstrand.co.za](http://www.overstrand.co.za) click on the Document tab and then Electricity; alternatively click here: [Electricity (overstrand.gov.za)](https://www.overstrand.gov.za/en/documents/electricity)

Electricity Supply by-law:

[www.overstrand.co.za](http://www.overstrand.co.za) click on Documents, then on the Bylaw tabs Relating to Electricity Supply; alternatively click here: [By Law Relating to Electricity Supply (overstrand.gov.za)](https://www.overstrand.gov.za/en/documents/bylaws/3798-by-law-relating-to-electricity-supply)

**Who to contact?**

Enquiries in this regard can be addressed to the Electricity Department of the municipality at tel 028 313 8000/028 384 8358/028 316 2630 or e-mail: enquiries@overstrand.gov.za

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