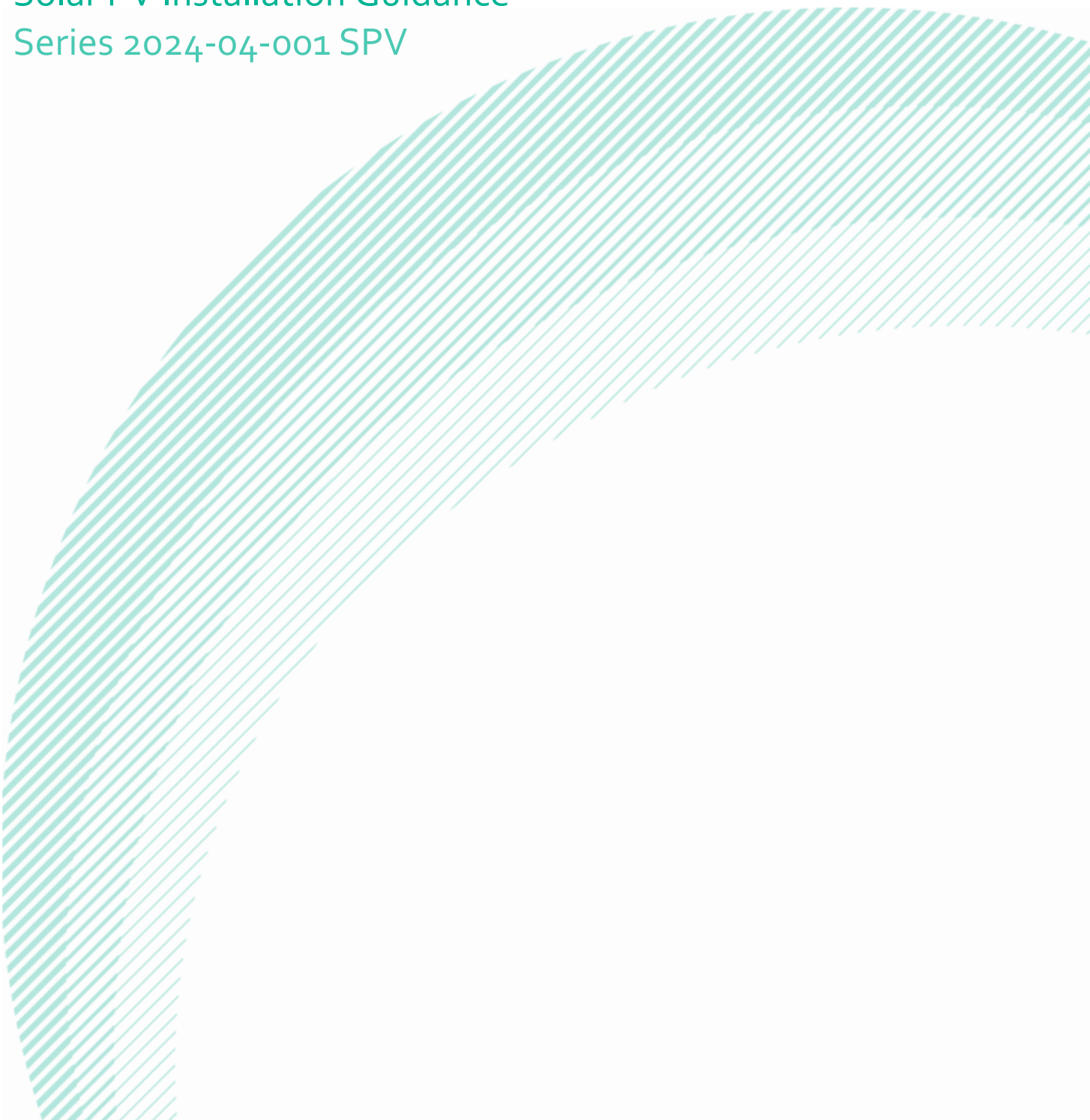
Solar PV Grants: Technical Bulletin

Solar PV Installation Guidance

Series 2024-04-001 SPV



Introduction

Microgeneration is undergoing increasing popularity with homeowners. This is a big opportunity for your business. However, if we are going to scale up together, we need to bring about improvements in the efficient management of installs.

This document describes the issues and related clarifications that commonly arise on the programme.

SEAI requires that registered companies and their installers pay close attention to the contents of this document and use it for training purposes.

Installation must be carried out in accordance with the relevant:

- SEAI Domestic Technical Specifications and Standards (DTSS) and
- SPV Contractor's Code of Practice (COP)

In Appendix 2 of the Quality Assurance and Development Programme (QADP) there is a full list of checks, used by SEAI Inspectors. Use these checks as part of your own Quality Management System before signing and submitting a Declaration of Works Form (DOW) to SEAI.
https://www.seai.ie/publications/Solar-PV-QADP.pdf

Contents

1. Safe Electric - Electrical Test Equipment

Safe Electric has set out new criteria which **must** be followed by all PV Installers.

Please refer to see Clause 1.2.20 (Page 68) of the Criteria Document which outlines the requirement for Registered Electrical Contractors to have the necessary electrical test equipment for the range of electrical work being carried out.

Installers of PV systems will be required to have suitable equipment to test the DC side of the system. This equipment can be either a dedicated instrument or separate standalone test equipment such as a clamp on current meter or a multimeter capable of measuring DC current and voltage etc. As with the current system, Safe Electric inspectors will log the serial numbers of this equipment to ensure all Registered Contractors have their own equipment.

In situations where Safe Electric inspectors identify that installers do not have in their ownership the required test equipment and are not carrying out the required tests, a Non-Conformance with rule 712.6.101 will be issued and the installer will be required to retrospectively carry out the tests and provide proof of this to Safe Electric.

2. Bonding/Earth Electrode (I.S.10101 2020, Rule 6.4.1.5)

May we remind you of Rule 6.4.1.5 from I.S. 10101 2020 (see extract below).

This rule clearly requires that the installer of any addition to an existing electrical installation must ensure that the safety of the new work is not impaired by any pre-existing non-conformances in the existing installation. For the sake of clarity, this means that if the existing installation did not have the correct earthing and bonding in place, including a "visible for inspection" earth electrode (Rule 542.3.4 I.S. 10101 2020), this should be rectified prior to proceeding with the new works.

> **6.4.1.5** It shall be verified that an extension, addition or alteration to an existing installation complies with I.S. 10101 and does not impair the safety of that installation, and that the safety of the new installation is not impaired by the existing installation.

3. Solar PV Scheme Application Guide (For Homeowners) V4.0

The *Solar PV Scheme Application Guide (For Homeowners*) has been redesigned to make it easier to understand for those customers wishing to make a grant application on the Domestic Solar PV Scheme. It is available on the solar electricity page of the SEAI website: https://www.seai.ie/grants/home-energy-grants/individual-grants/solar-electricity-grant/Solar-PV-Scheme-Guide-1.pdf

In addition we wish to highlight some issues that have arisen in relation to the solar PV grant scheme in recent months. We hope the following will provide some further clarification

A Change of Company by the Homeowner

- This will require the cancellation of the solar PV grant application and the creation of a new solar PV grant application, essentially selecting/nominating a new company

- Where the grant amounts have changed in the meantime, a homeowner will be eligible only for the grant amount in effect at the time of creating this new application. (Please refer to further explanation below in '**Grant Amount'**).

Grant Offer

- The Solar PV grant offer once accepted is only payable in respect of the measure(s) contained in the application and referenced in the Letter/email of Offer

- Any scope changes in terms of the size, type of installation and/or selected company, **must** receive prior approval from the SEAI

- Scope changes not notified and approved by SEAI will not be eligible for payment.

Grant Amount

- Applicants are eligible for the solar PV grant amounts that are in effect at the time of their application

- If a homeowner/customer cancels their initial/original application and creates a *new application and, in the meantime, the value of solar PV grant amount changes then They will be eligible for: -

- The value of the grant amount at the time of creating the *second/new application

- They will not be eligible for the value of the grant amount at the time of their original (now cancelled) application.

  (Please note that the maximum grant value for a solar PV installation in December 2023 was €2,400 and this changed in January 2024 to €2,100).

4. Meter Tails

Meter Tails may need to be replaced when worn or undersized. When new electrical appliances are installed in your home, and increased electrical demand is required, it's recommended that the main conductor (meter tail) is sized to accommodate the new increased demand.

When meter tails are undersized and you install, for example, an electric home charger, solar array or a heat pump, there is a safety risk due to under-sized meter tails. Please refer to the following document for more details on meter tails sizing

https://www.seai.ie/blog/meter-tails-domestic/

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