

From: Carol Revelt
To:
Date: 11/5/2008 8:17 AM
Subject: Please add this e-mail to Docket 08-035-78 on net metering

>>> Edwin Firmage 11/03/08 11:19 AM >>>
Dear Ms. Revelt,

I understand that you are presently collecting public comment on several Interconnection issues now before the PSC, and I wanted to offer my input on these as a concerned Salt Lake resident and business owner.

First, I support removing the requirement for a manual disconnect switch in PV systems less than 10kW in size. Such switches are unnecessary, as inverters already include such functionality, and represent an additional financial burden to those citizens public-spirited enough to undertake the expense of solar power at this point in time.

Second, I urge the PSC to change Utah's highly regressive Net Metering law to mandate that excess power be bought at the retail rather than the wholesale rate. Utah, according to a recent IREC study, garnered an F for its out-of-date policies regarding Net Metering. In the opinion of many, including myself, the way out of our present economic as well as environmental crises is through investment in renewable energy. Utah's Net Metering laws as they stand are an impediment as much to our economic growth as to energy independence and environmental health. It's time this changed.

Third, I urge the PSC to significantly increase the cap on the amount of Net-metered power. In any realistic scenario, it is in fact hard to see how Utah at present could generate enough such power to make a cap even worth talking about. Would that the problems of distributed power generation were a present rather than a VERY distant concern!

Several years ago, my wife and I set out on a several-year project to transform our home and business into something resembling a sustainable way of life. In the process, we have discovered how extraordinarily difficult this is because everything in our society today seems designed to make sustainability impossible. It's easy, for example, to get banks to finance gas-guzzling automobiles and virtually impossible to get similarly easy loans for installing solar power or geothermal heating and air conditioning systems, despite the fact that cars begin to depreciate the moment you drive off the lot while power systems represent a permanent increase in value to your home. Our water rates make it easy to waste water, but present laws forbid the installation of rainwater harvesting systems. And so on and on. Among the most glaring and backwards of our present policies is the way we effectively and actually subsidize dirty power while putting up barriers for those trying to do the responsible thing and adopt solar power. My wife and I would very much like to install solar power on our home and business but find that the payback on our investment is still too far out to be justifiable. Meantime, our utilities struggle to find ways to supply the still increasing power needs of our community. I urge the PSC to start being part of the solution to this problem by doing EVERYTHING it can to make solar power attractive and feasible NOW.

Ed Firmage, Jr.

