

Austin Energy 2022 Base Rate Review

SOLAR AND STORAGE COALITION'S (SSC) REQUEST FOR INFORMATION TO AUSTIN ENERGY

The Solar and Storage Coalition (SSC) submits this First Request for Information to Austin Energy to provide information and answers to the included questions under Austin Energy's 2022 Base Rate Review Procedural Guidelines Section B.3(a) and Section F. Please answer these questions in the order they are listed and in sufficient detail to provide a complete and accurate answer to the questions. These questions are continuing in nature, so if there is a relevant change or update, please submit an amended answer.

We request that you provide responses via electronic communication (e.g. email or file share) to the RFIs to the following Authorized Representatives as soon as possible, but no sooner than 14 days from service.

SSC's Authorized representatives are:

Eric Goff
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Ashley Fisher
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General: Please provide specific responses to the requests. If any response or portion of a response is provided in an Excel spreadsheet, please ensure that spreadsheet has all data cells unlocked and all formulae intact.

SSC 1-1

1. What analysis was conducted to determine how the proposed increase in the customer charge from \$10 to \$25 may impact new use of the Value of Solar tariff?

SSC 1-2

2. One of the pillars for the Value of Solar rate is policy driven incentives, as noted on page 140.
 - a. Has Austin Energy conducted any analysis regarding a possible solar rebate at a different rate for low income customers? If so, please provide this analysis.
 - b. Has Austin Energy analyzed the possibility of rebates for home storage as part of this pillar?
 - c. Has Austin Energy analyzed the solar leasing options as part of this pillar?
 - d. Has Austin Energy analyzed a process for approving disconnect switches for energy storage systems installed as part of a solar installation?

SSC 1-3

3. Does Austin Energy serve any microgrids that serve more than one use, more than one customer, or more than one service address that include onsite solar or other onsite distributed generation?

SSC 1-4

4. On page 145 of the Base Rate Filing Package, it states that “the Societal Benefit value does not represent an avoided cost to the utility, so this cost will be recovered through the CBC moving forward”, therefore this cost recovery is moving from the PSA to the CBC. The footnote on this same page notes that the CBC is not proposed to be changed in this base rate review. Explain how recovering the societal benefits from the CBC (Community Benefits Charge) instead of the PSA will affect the overall CBC budget. What will no longer be funded through that charge? Will there be any impact to the weatherization budget?

SSC 1-5

5. On page 49, Cost of Services is divided into functions, one of those is Customer Service.
 - a. Please provide information on the average time, minimum time, and maximum time it takes for residential solar permits to be approved. This information should be provided by year for the last 5 years.
 - b. Please provide information on the average time, minimum time, and maximum time it takes for commercial solar permits to be approved. This information should be provided by year for the last 5 years
 - c. Please provide information about residential solar permit requests that have been canceled by the customer or rejected by Austin Energy, such as reasons for cancelation or rejection, frequency of cancelation or rejection, and other relevant details.

- d. Is there a standard offer or standard process for a distributed solar project or community solar project? If so, please provide all relevant documentation.
- e. Has Austin Energy done any capital expenditure financing in the last five years for purchasing equipment for other departments or other jurisdictions? For example, financing to coordinate the purchase of electric buses, shared infrastructure, etc? If, so please provide details?
- f. Does Austin Energy use any or plan to use any third party contractors for any inspections, including solar permit inspections? Are third party contractors prohibited for these purposes? Please provide documentation to support your response.
- g. What are the annual costs of maintaining the billing/invoicing system that Austin Energy uses to charge customers for service. How does AE receive revenues from other city departments for use of the system?

SSC 1-6

- 6. Regarding Austin Energy's Affordability Goal that is adopted as part of the Austin Energy's Resource, Generation, and Climate Protection Plan, Austin Energy lists a rate of \$90 in Figure 10-2 on page 152. How does Austin Energy calculate the \$90 rate? What other methods could be used to calculate that overall rate?

SSC 1-7

- 7. How do residential customers enroll in low-income programs? What programs exist? Is there any automatic enrollment?

SSC 1-8

- 8. As noted, vehicle expenses are one of the items that base rate revenue funds. Is there a schedule for replacement of Austin Energy vehicles that service transmission lines and/or distribution lines?

SSC 1-9

- 9. As noted on Section 5.2.3 titled Distribution Function (page 53-54), distribution revenue requirements are listed by function in Table 5-C (page 54). Please provide information on existing distribution and transmission lines that have been buried in the last 5 years? What criteria, included cost analysis, does Austin Energy use to determine when to bury lines? What additional fees are charged for burying lines, if any?

SSC 1-10

- 10. What analysis does Austin Energy have around the cost and reliability benefits of burying distribution and transmission lines, including tree trimming?