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Time-of-use electricity pricing solar energy storage



Overview

Explore how time-of-use (TOU) rates impact electricity costs, peak and off-peak hours, and energy usage — and see how solar and battery storage can help you save.

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The illustration below shows how California's Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) utility varies the cost of energy based on time of day and cumulative consumption. A sample PG&E time of use rates. Source: There are quite a few terms that are critical to understanding time-of-use (TOU).

In the evolving landscape of energy consumption, Time-of-Use (TOU) rates have emerged as a revolutionary approach to electricity pricing. These dynamic rates vary based on the time of day and current demand levels, offering a sophisticated method for managing electrical grid resources and. Does time of use rates affect solar savings?

For solar customers in areas with time of use rates, understanding these rates is particularly important because they affect solar savings. Time of use rates, like the prices of movie tickets, vary based on the time when electricity is used. Modeling software can help contractors provide accurate savings estimates for customers.

Why should you consider TOU rates in your solar proposal?

For solar customers in Time of Use (TOU) areas, understanding TOU rates is particularly important because they affect solar savings. Contractors can use modeling software to provide accurate savings estimates for customers. Considering TOU rates in your solar proposals helps you craft proposals with more exciting solar savings in mind.

Why does electricity cost so much a day?

Traditionally, as demand for electricity increases throughout the day, so too does the cost of generating that electricity. Without a time-varying electricity rate, residential consumers have no window into how electricity costs rise and fall each day.

How often do utilities update their electricity rates?

Currently, most utilities update their residential electricity rates once or twice a year. That rate, expressed in dollars or cents per kilowatt-hour (\$/kWh), is intended to cover the entire cost of generating the electricity consumers use. However, a utility's cost of electricity changes throughout the day for various reasons.

How can time-of-use rates help you lower your electricity bill?

This is where time-of-use rates can add transparency: By adjusting the rate across the course of the day, week, or month, you can better understand the true cost of the electricity you use. Knowing when costs are higher and lower, you can begin to lower your overall electric bill by adjusting when you use electricity.

Could PG&E's time-of-use rate change save you money?

Even slight changes could produce visible savings for customers who take the initiative to shift consumption habits. In fact, for residential customers on PG&E's time-of-use rate, running your washing machine three times a week at 9:00 PM instead of 6:00 PM could save almost \$12 annually on electricity costs.

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