



Solar during a power outage.

September 07, 2017

As hurricane Irma becomes a daily concern, ARRES, Inc. phones are ringing more than usual and the emails are pouring in. Our customers want to know if they will be immune from power outages if they have gone solar. The answer is most likely no, but it also depends upon what type of solar system they purchased.

If you have purchased solar panels installed on your roof or property, they will continue to generate electricity during power outages as they do every day because the panels still absorb sunlight and solar energy. However, you will not be able to use that energy to run your home during a power outage unless (bold 'unless'??) you also have a transfer switch installed, or a battery back-up system connected to your array.

The majority of solar powered homes do not have a battery back-up system or a transfer switch, and are still connected to the power grid, which is how net metering works. When solar panels produce electricity, it flows into the grid (your local electrical provider), and the production is monitored and credited to a homeowner's account (this is when your meter will roll backward). This is how excess electricity is stored, and it is how a home that may not be 100% powered by solar panels maintains power. Being connected to the grid means that the power supplied by the solar panels on your home flows back into the electrical grid. Thus, creating an issue for power company employees who are working to restore electricity to your neighborhood. ARRES, Inc. consistently uses the best material that has automatic safety mechanisms in place to stop electrical flow back to the grid. This also protects power company

employees from injury of working on a power line that may be activated by a solar array. When the power is restored to your neighborhood, your solar array will automatically start to produce again.

Power outages are usually due to a disruption somewhere between the electricity supplier and homeowners. The power plant may still be fully capable of producing electricity, but there is a breach in the system (such as a broken power line) that prevents the supply from reaching the consumer in that service area. Solar powered homes that are connected to the grid contribute to the production of electricity, but are not immune to blackouts that affect the entire community.

In conclusion, it is the policy of ARRES, Inc. to advise all homeowners to follow the direction of your local, state and federal government along with your local energy provider's suggested emergency plans. As a courtesy, we have attached the emergency plan for the Red Cross while facing an impending hurricane.

We hope this message finds you and your family safe and we look forward to continuing to serve you.

Warm Regards,

Benjamin Egan, CEO