

# Bush Fire Recovery Information

## Solar Panels

### **Are fire damaged solar panels dangerous to my health?**

Solar Photovoltaic (PV), or solar panels, are manufactured using hazardous materials, such as toxic metals, sulfuric acid and phosphine gas.

They should be handled and disposed of with appropriate precautions and protective equipment for the hazardous material.

While the sun is out, your solar PV system is generating electricity. Always treat the system and associated wires as live.

### **Can my solar panels be recycled?**

No. There is no current recycling process available for fire damaged solar panels.

### **Can I just dispose of the damaged panels on my property?**

No. They cannot be dumped on property or stored in landfills without protections against contamination. The toxic metals and chemicals that are in the panels can leak out into soil and ground water supplies.

### **What should I do when I return to my property?**

If you followed the shutdown procedure prior to departing your property DO NOT attempt to turn the system back on until checked by an electrician and determined as safe.

If you did not turn off the system prior to departing the property take care with PV equipment or structures which may have fire damage. Even if

the network supply is disrupted or switched off the equipment and associated wiring may still be live.

- Stay away from the solar panels and wiring until assessed as safe;
- Contact a licensed electrician to check the system and declare it safe;
- If the system has a battery bank disconnect the battery cells following the providers disconnection advice. Only do this if it is safe to do so.

### **Can I clean up around the solar panels prior to them being declared safe?**

It is recommended that any clean-up work around solar panels is not done until it has been declared safe by a licensed electrician.

Even if the network supply is turned off, PV systems and associated wiring may still be live; systems will continue to produce voltage during the day.

### **For further information:**

Check your local council's website for more information on recovery and the collection and disposal of waste on your property.