

Renewable Energy Consumer Code

Consumer Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Faulty or underperforming system issues

1) My renewable energy system is not working / is faulty / is underperforming – what should I do?

If your system is not working properly, we would advise you to follow these steps:

- a. Contact the company who installed it directly, tell them about the issue and give them a chance to resolve it, for example within 14 days.
- b. Installers have to be both MCS-certified and a member of a Consumer Code approved by the Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI) if you are to be able to access Government incentives such as Feed-In Tariff and Renewable Heat Incentive. RECC is the largest approved Consumer Code in the sector. Our responsibilities dovetail with those of MCS. The chart on this page explains which issues fall to RECC and which issues fall to MCS:
<https://www.recc.org.uk/complaint-form/important-information>.
- c. If your issue falls to MCS, according to the chart above, and if the company has failed to resolve the problem, check if they are currently MCS certified. To do this, you need to search for them on the MCS website using this link:
<http://www.microgenerationcertification.org/consumers/installer-search>. Make sure you enter the company name precisely and use the post code.
- d. If the company is still MCS certified, and you should submit a complaint through the MCS website: <http://www.microgenerationcertification.org/consumers/complaints>. Make sure you highlight the issues and faults as clearly and fully as possible and outline what resolution you are seeking. MCS will pass on your complaint to the company's MCS certification body.
- e. If the company is no longer MCS certified, you should check whether they are still trading. You can do this by consulting Companies House here: <https://www.gov.uk/get-information-about-a-company>. If the company is no longer trading, it will be marked as being 'in liquidation' or 'in administration'.
- f. If the company is still trading, the 'workmanship' warranty they gave you should still be valid depending on the period of validity (usually two, five or ten years). If the company does not agree to honour the 'workmanship' warranty and repair your system, you should consult your local Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) for advice on how to proceed. You can find information on your local CAB here: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk> (if you are in England and Wales) or here: <http://www.cas.org.uk> (if you are in Scotland).
- g. If the company is no longer trading, you should check your paperwork to see whether you have an 'insurance-backed warranty' policy. This will have been issued to you by an insurance

provider, for example one of the ones listed here: <https://www.recc.org.uk/pdf/insurance-providers.pdf>. Your installer is required to arrange an insurance-backed warranty for you. It will have the same period of validity as the original workmanship warranty.

- h. In the event that the installer is no longer trading, the insurance provider will arrange to come and inspect your system and to make any repairs to it free of charge. If the issue is with the equipment itself, rather than the workmanship, the insurance provider will arrange for the equipment to be repaired or exchanged in line with the manufacturers' warranties.
- i. If you do not have a valid insurance-backed warranty policy, and if you have not been able to contact any of the bodies listed above, you should try to contact another certified [MCS installer](#) and ask them to inspect your system. (Put your own postcode into the search box and you will find a list of the installers based closest to you.) The installer will charge you if they carry out any remedial work, but this should be a reasonable charge, and you should be provided with a quote in advance for you to agree to. You could contact the liquidator or administrator and enquire as to whether you can submit a claim to have these costs refunded.
- j. Please be advised that, if the company is still trading, you should only contact another certified installer if the company is refusing to assist you and you do not have an insurance-backed warranty policy. Otherwise, you risk rendering your warranty or insurance policy void.

2) My renewable energy system is not working / is faulty / is underperforming. There is a RECC logo is on my contract. Can RECC help me?

- a. Contact the company who installed it directly, tell them about the issue and give them a chance to resolve it, for example within 14 days.
- b. Installers have to be both MCS-certified and a member of a Consumer Code approved by the Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI) in order for you to access Government incentives such as Feed-In Tariff and Renewable Heat Incentive. RECC is the largest approved Consumer Code. Our responsibilities dovetail with those of MCS. The chart on this page explains which issues fall to RECC and which issues fall to MCS: <https://www.recc.org.uk/complaint-form/important-information>.
- c. If your issue falls to RECC, according to the chart above, and if the company has failed to resolve the problem, check whether the company is currently a RECC member. To do this you need to search for them on the RECC website using this link: <https://www.recc.org.uk/scheme/members>. Make sure you enter the company name precisely and use the post code.
- d. If the company is a RECC member, you should read RECC's dispute resolution process carefully and then submit your complaint online using this link: <https://www.recc.org.uk/complaint-form>. Make sure you highlight the issues and faults as clearly and fully as possible, and outline what resolution you are seeking.

- e. If the company is not listed as a member on the RECC website you can contact us to check for sure: <https://www.recc.org.uk/contact>. If the company is not a RECC member, you should check whether it is a member of one of the two other approved consumer codes You can contact the Home Insulation and Energy Systems Contractors Ltd (HIES) here: https://hiesold.jobreg.org.uk/hies_member_index; and the Glass & Glazing Federation (GGF) here: <http://www.ggf.org.uk/contact>. If you have checked and found that the company is not a member of any of the approved Consumer Codes then you should check to see whether it is still trading.
- f. You can check to see whether a company is still trading by consulting Companies House here: <https://www.gov.uk/get-information-about-a-company>. Once you have found the company you are looking for, click on its name and then on *Filing History* at the top (below the company name). In this section, find an entry regarding the appointment of a liquidator and view the PDF file attached with it in the column on the right. This page should contain contact details of the liquidator. Alternatively, click on *Insolvency* at the top and you will find details of the liquidator appointed. If the company is no longer trading, it will be marked as being 'in liquidation' or 'in administration'.
- g. If the company is in liquidation or administration you should contact the liquidator or administrator, whose details are listed on Companies House, and see whether you can submit your claim to them.
- h. If the company is still trading, you should contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) for advice on how to proceed. You can find information on your local CAB here: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk> (if you are in England and Wales) or here: <http://www.cas.org.uk> (if you are in Scotland).

3) My renewable energy system isn't working / is faulty / is underperforming. The company who installed it is no longer trading. What can I do?

- a. You should check to see whether the company is in fact still trading. You can do this by consulting Companies House here: <https://www.gov.uk/get-information-about-a-company>. Once you have found the company you are looking for, click on its name and then on *Filing History* at the top (below the company name). In this section, find an entry regarding the appointment of a liquidator and view the PDF file attached with it in the column on the right. This page should contain contact details of the liquidator. Alternatively, click on *Insolvency* at the top and you will find details of the liquidator appointed. If the company is no longer trading, it will be marked as being 'in liquidation', 'in administration' or 'dissolved', 'in dissolution' or 'non-trading'.
- b. If the company is no longer trading, you should check your paperwork to see whether you have an 'insurance-backed warranty' policy. This will have been issued to you by an insurance provider, for example one of the ones listed here: <https://www.recc.org.uk/pdf/insurance-providers.pdf>. Your installer is required to arrange an insurance-backed warranty for you. It will have the same period of validity as the original workmanship warranty.

- c. In the event that the installer is no longer trading, the insurance provider will arrange to come and inspect your system and to make any repairs to it free of charge. If the issue is with the equipment itself, rather than the workmanship, the insurance provider will arrange for the equipment to be repaired or exchanged in line with the manufacturers' warranties.
- d. If you do not have a valid insurance-backed warranty policy, and if you have not been able to contact any of the bodies listed above, you should try to contact another certified [MCS installer](#) and ask them to inspect your system. (Put your own postcode into the search box and you will find a list of the installers based closest to you.) The installer will charge you if they carry out any remedial work, but this should be a reasonable charge, and you should be provided with a quote in advance for you to agree to. You could contact the liquidator or administrator and enquire as to whether you can submit a claim to have these costs refunded.

4) My renewable energy system isn't working / is faulty / is underperforming. I paid for it on finance. What can I do?

- a. If you paid for your system by signing a finance agreement or by credit card, under Section 75 of the Consumer Credit Act 1974, the finance provider is jointly and severally liable for any breach of contract or misrepresentation by the installer. Depending on the nature of your complaint, you may wish to consider contacting the finance provider to ask them to investigate it.
- b. If the finance provider fails to resolve the complaint within 8 weeks, you are within your rights to then contact the Financial Ombudsman using these details:
Enquiries and consumer helpline:
0800 023 4 567 (calls to this number are now free on mobile phones and landlines)
0300 123 9 123 (calls to this number cost no more than calls to 01 and 02 numbers)
- c. If the directors of the company in liquidation have set up another company or alternative business you could consider contacting them and asking them to honour the previous company's contractual obligations.

RECC membership issues

1) I have been approached by a company offering to sell me a renewable energy system. The company is claiming to be a member of RECC. How can I tell if it is?

- a. You can check whether a company is currently a RECC member. To do this you need to search for them on the RECC website using this link:
<https://www.recc.org.uk/scheme/members>. Make sure you enter the company name precisely and use the post code. If the company is not listed as a member on the RECC website can contact us to check for sure: <https://www.recc.org.uk/contact>.

2) I have been approached by a company offering to sell me a renewable energy system. The company is claiming to be a member of RECC but I can't find them on your website.

- a. If the company is not listed as a member on the RECC website can contact us to check for sure:
<https://www.recc.org.uk/contact>.
- b. If the company is not a RECC member, you should check whether it is a member of one of the two other approved consumer codes, here for HIES:
https://hiesold.jobreg.org.uk/hies_member_index or here for Glass & Glazing Federation:
<http://www.ggf.org.uk/contact>.

Offers of 'add on' goods or services

1) The company that installed my solar PV system has ceased trading, but another company contacted me out of the blue and said they want to service and maintain my solar PV panels. What should I do?

- a. You should first ask how the company got your telephone number. If you are not satisfied with their response you should have nothing further to do with the company. You should definitely not agree to any offer of 'add on' services without having the chance to think about them carefully first. Do not feel pressured into signing a contract for any 'add on' services while a sales representative is present in your home.
- b. Your solar PV system may not need additional servicing and maintenance. You should refer to the Handover Pack you received after your installation. It should contain information about any maintenance & cleaning your system needs.

2) The company that installed my solar PV system has ceased trading, but another company has contacted me offering to sell me a voltage optimiser / immersion boost / battery storage system. They say that it will result in more efficient use of electricity and an increase in my Feed-in Tariff income. What should I do?

- a. You should first ask how the company got your telephone number. If you are not satisfied with their response you should have nothing further to do with the company. You should definitely not agree to any offer of 'add on' goods or equipment without having the chance to think about them carefully first. Do not feel pressured into signing a contract for any 'add on' goods or equipment while a sales representative is present in your home.
- b. Before you agree to purchase any 'add on' goods or equipment you need to work out carefully whether it is likely to benefit you. RECC has prepared guidance to help you with this which you can find here (for voltage optimisers, immersion boost systems, LEDs and battery storage systems): www.recc.org.uk/pdf/guidance-on-supplementary-solar-pv-equipment.pdf .

- c. Before you agree to purchase a battery storage system you should also read our more detailed guidance very carefully. Be sure to ask the company the 20 questions set out at the end of the guidance before you sign a contract or pay any money. You can find the guidance here: www.bre.co.uk/filelibrary/nsc/Documents%20Library/NSC%20Publications/88031-BRE_Solar-Consumer-Guide-A4-12pp.pdf.

Damage caused by animals or pigeons

- 1) **Pigeons/squirrels have been nesting under my solar PV panels and are damaging them. The company that installed them did not advise me that this could be a problem. What should I do?**
 - a. If you own your solar PV system outright, you should contact a local pest control company for advice on installing pest control measures. Make sure that the company is a member of the British Pest Control Association. Please be aware that you will be charged for this. You can search for companies by visiting the British Pest Control Association website using this link: http://www.bpca.org.uk/pages/find_a_pest_controller.cfm.
 - b. Once any pest control measures have been installed, you should contact your installer to ask them to rectify the damage caused to the solar PV panels. It is unlikely that damage caused by pigeons or squirrels (or other birds or animals) will be covered by your workmanship warranty, but you should check the terms and conditions of your warranty to make sure. If it is not covered you should be aware that the installer may charge you for repairing the damage. This should be a reasonable charge, bearing in mind the extent of any damage.
 - c. If the company that installed your solar PV panels is no longer trading you should contact another locally-based RECC member installer and ask them to carry out the repairs for you. You can find such an installer by searching on the RECC website using this link: <https://www.recc.org.uk/scheme/members>. You should put your own postcode into the box and click 'Search'. A list of RECC members will appear in order of proximity to you. you should be aware that the installer may charge you for repairing the damage. This should be a reasonable charge, bearing in mind the extent of any damage.
 - d. If you do not own the system, for example if you have had 'free solar PV' installed, or if you are part of a 'rent-a- roof' scheme, you should contact the company who you signed your lease with or the company who is responsible for maintaining your system (if this is different).

Independent arbitration

- 1) **I have had an arbitration award made in my favour. The company has failed to comply with the award and now the deadline has passed. How do I ensure that the company complies with the award?**
 - a. If the arbitration award was in your favour the other party should have honoured it within 14 days. If it has not, and if it is at least 28 days since the date of the award, then you should contact RECC and we will send you details about how to enforce it. Please contact RECC's dispute resolution team here: disputeresolution@recc.org.uk.