Avoiding Cheap Solar Companies

When considering installing solar, fine print and quality count

In 2018, Consumer Choice surveyed 1000 solar owners. 30% reported they had a problem with their solar panels and install company. This fact sheet explains how to avoid being stranded with a faulty solar PV system that should still be under warranty, but the solar company has been wound up. Since 2011, there are currently 697 companies in liquidation or deregistration with 'solar' in their name. An unsuspecting consumer may have just paid and installed a cheap system that has to be replaced at more cost, or lead to wiring faults and fire, resulting in property damage.

How to avoid a dodgy solar company

• Search reviews, articles, comments and recommendations about the company, the panels and the inverter on https://www.solarquotes.com.au/

• Avoid ads pushing very cheap systems with “offer ends soon” lines. Industry sources and engineers suggest when costs are cut so severely that you’ll likely end up with an inferior quality system installed in a rush, leading to problems within the first few years.

• Ensure the panels and inverter models are good quality and specified in the contract, and check that the fine print doesn’t allow for them to be swapped. Quality parameters can be checked here: https://www.choice.com.au/home-improvement/energy-saving/solar/review-and-compare/solar-panels

• Be wary if the company asks for a large deposit (more than 10% or 20%), or if they ask for full payment before the installation is completed and functioning properly.

• Don’t be baited by discounted prices. Check current average solar system prices at solar choice here: https://www.solarchoice.net.au/blog/solar-power-system-prices

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