

Study: Battery Storage Far Too Costly For Practical Use

JASON HOPKINS

3:50 PM 04/16/2018



Exorbitant battery storage costs prevent rooftop solar installations from paying for themselves in the long run, making home energy storage an impractical use for average consumers in the foreseeable future, a new study determined.

As the renewable energy industry continues to draw more interest from environmentally conscious consumers, battery storage technology is becoming more sought after as a means to harness energy for future consumption. For example, solar panel batteries can store excess energy captured during the daytime and use that energy to keep the lights on after the sun goes down. Consumers are encouraged to purchase solar panels with promises that, in the long run, they will save money on monthly electrical bills.

However, a study released Monday by the Global Warming Policy Foundation revealed that battery storage is simply too costly to provide long-term financial benefit.

“The price of batteries is relatively high, but the possible savings from adding them to a rooftop solar installation are quite limited, particularly as a fraction of the typical electricity bill. When you add up the costs and benefits, it is quite clear

that they are a waste of money,” Capell Aris, a former reactor physics specialist and a fellow at the Institute of Engineering and Technology, [wrote](#) Monday. The study Aris conducted took into consideration typical solar panel installations and basic electricity consumption over the course of one day and a year in the United Kingdom. The variables he considered were comprehensive, factoring in weather patterns and the degradation of solar panel efficiency over time. The factors were repeated to cover a 20-year period.

The results: Solar rooftop installations are a far cry away from keeping pace with household energy consumption in the U.K. Their use would result in long-term savings for users if costs were to drop dramatically, but that does not appear to be happening anytime soon.

“There is no doubt that battery prices are falling, but even if we make some fairly optimistic assumptions about performance, prices would have to fall by another 50 percent just to break even. They would need to come down even further than that to give a financial return,” Aris said. “It’s hard to see this happening any time soon. Battery storage for rooftop solar is simply not an economic prospect, and will likely remain that way.”

The study follows mounting questions about the true cost of solar panel installation in the United States. Widespread residential and commercial use of solar panel technology would not be feasible without a flood of subsidies from the government.

Upon a study of their net metering program, Montana [revealed](#) earlier this month that their largest utility company was over compensating net metering customers three times the market value for their energy. An investigative report Friday by America Rising Squared [detailed](#) the billions of dollars the federal government shelled out in 2016 alone to prop up otherwise unprofitable renewable energy programs.