

VDE proposes simpler rules for balcony power plants

- **VDE experts draw up position paper to make installation and operation of mini PV systems much easier**
- **Mini power generation systems should become widespread without sacrificing safety**
- **“Schuko plug” can be tolerated under certain conditions**

(Frankfurt a. M. 11.01.2023) With so-called balcony power plants and other mini energy generation plants (mini-EAA), consumers can generate a certain amount of electricity themselves, reduce their electricity costs and contribute to the energy transition. In order to significantly simplify the use of mini energy generation plants, the VDE is now presenting a position paper that has been in preparation since last year. VDE CEO Ansgar Hinz: "The basis for the electrical safety of the systems is the VDE set of regulations. With the proposals for simplification, we want to help ensure that the use of mini power generation systems can become widespread in the future without compromising on safety." In the position paper, VDE experts identify five points from which the regulatory framework can be further developed:

1. Introduction of a trivial limit of up to 800 W

At the European level, a trivial limit of up to 800 W was introduced with the Regulation for Generators (RFG). Within the framework of European standardization, the VDE proposes that this trivial limit also be adopted in Germany. As a result, systems up to 800 W would no longer be considered "grid-relevant" from the point of view of the grid operators.

Along with this, the preliminary standard for plug-in solar devices (VDE V 0126-95) is also to be adapted to the 800 W limit and expanded to become a European standard. This standard offers manufacturers the possibility to develop and sell plug-in solar devices as a complete system. For consumers, this standard makes it possible to buy a balcony power plant as a tested, ready-

to-plug-in complete system, because up to now balcony power plants have been a sometimes random combination of individual components.

2. Mini power plants may be used on any type of meter

Another requirement of the VDE is that mini power generation systems up to the trivial limit (i.e. 800 W total system power) may be used on any type of meter. Meters should also be allowed to run backwards within the de minimis limit. Consumers who want to save electricity costs with the help of such a system would thus not have to wait until the German government decides to change the electricity meter to a smart meter.

3. Simplified registration and commissioning

In order to reduce bureaucratic hurdles to a minimum, in the future it should only be necessary to register or deregister the mini-energy generation system with the Federal Network Agency or to report changes to the system.

4. Toleration of the “Schuko plug” as a plug-in device for the supply of up to 800 W

In principle, the VDE prefers installation by a professional electrician, as this is the only way to check the suitability of the installation and adapt it if necessary. In order to enable the widespread use of mini power generation systems, the VDE is in favor of tolerating a grounded plug – the so called Schuko plug – for supply up to a total system power limit of 800 W.

5. Safety requirements for mini power generation systems

Final, the VDE requires manufacturers of plug-in mini-energy generation systems to transparently demonstrate potential risks associated with their use. This concerns, among other things, the description of safe assembly and commissioning. The manufacturer should also be required to guarantee the electrical safety of the systems. The VDE recommends that mini power generation systems be tested by an independent institute so that the customer can commission a safe device at home.

About VDE

VDE, one of the largest technology organizations in Europe, has been regarded as a synonym for innovation and technological progress for more than 125 years. VDE is the only organization in the world that combines science, standardization, testing, certification, and application consulting under one umbrella. The VDE mark has been synonymous with the highest safety standards and consumer protection for more than 100 years.

Our passion is the advancement of technology, the next generation of engineers and technologists, and lifelong learning and career development “on the job”. Within the VDE network more than 2,000 employees at over 60 locations worldwide, more than 100,000 honorary experts, and around 1,500 companies are dedicated to ensuring a future worth living: networked, digital, electrical. Shaping the e-dialistic future.

The VDE (VDE Association for Electrical, Electronic & Information Technologies) is headquartered in Frankfurt am Main. For more information, visit www.vde.com

Press contact: Vanessa Rothe, Phone +49 170 7645316, presse@vde.com