

Moving off grid

Hunter local Damien Griffith has done it himself and is now helping others on their journey off the grid.



Living off the grid in the vineyards of the Hunter Valley

After purchasing their dream Watagan Mountains acreage in 2005, power supply was just one of many items Damien Griffith and his wife Charly had to consider. "Why should we hand over so much money, only for the network to own the infrastructure, with the added bonus of us having to pay them for power. That was the obvious question. And going off grid was the obvious answer" says Damien.

At the time, finding a quality and knowledgeable installer was difficult, but after a lot of legwork and research, they installed a robust little system. Other new things were happening too, with their first daughter almost sharing a birthday with the off-grid power system. With a growing family, Damien and Charly tested the limits of their system. "I learned a lot and realized that there were issues with the energy load profiling. Nobody had ever told me how crucial that is," Damien says.

In 2011, with the off grid market still in its infancy, he decided to share his expertise and joined Off Grid Energy Australia. He had experienced the lack of market expertise first hand and saw the void that needed to be filled. "I have tried really hard to not let my customers make the same mistakes I made. Going off-grid can be so easy and seamless if you get it

right, but really stressful if you make the wrong choices."

Since then, the company has grown into one of Australia's largest, most skilled and trusted off-grid system providers. "We have installed over 700 hundred systems right around Australia, and I personally have dozens of happy customers throughout the Hunter region and NSW. I have had the privilege of being an advisor on some of the largest, most interesting off-grid power systems in the country," Damien says with pride.

These days, the sky is the limit. Off-grid technology is mature and reliable. Scalability isn't an issue and many of Damien's customers transition into an off-grid lifestyle without any compromise. "We can do anything from little bush shacks to full mine sites and anything in between. Systems can be fully self sufficient or maintain a grid connection," he says. Going off-grid isn't just for households either. More and more industries are starting to shift their thinking.

Damien and Charly are born and bred Hunter locals, and they cherish everything the region has to offer. "We really are grateful to live and work in such a great place. We would never go back to being on grid now that we have lived this way for so long; it just becomes part of who you are."



Reliable and mature technology: off grid installations have come a long way.



DAMIEN'S EXPERT TIPS

- 1 Calculate your energy demand accurately:** Be realistic, check your appliances and when you run them in summer and winter.
- 2 Consider the efficiency of your home build at design stage:** But don't worry if you have an existing house. There are solutions for that too.
- 3 Consider your location and the orientation of your house carefully:** It will save you money and increase your solar production.
- 4 Work with the pros and compare apples with apples:** Ask lots of questions, check accreditations and previous work.
- 5 Install a back up generator that's as good as your off grid system:** A cheap generator might save money up front but can cost you dearly in the long run.

Thinking of going off grid?

Call Damien Griffith 0403 532 499



www.offgridenergy.com.au