



The perfect storm – self-sufficiency and sunny smiles

Dave Stevenson, Mole Energy

15 October 1987. A concerned Brit rings the BBC with reports there might be a hurricane on the way.

On the one o’ clock news, weatherman Michael Fish dismissed the idea, reassuring viewers that the worst of the storm would hit France and Spain. We all know what happened next: a cyclone so bad that 33 years later, we still remember the day the weatherman got it wrong.

Thankfully, our ability to predict and deal with the effects of extreme weather has improved since then. This includes power outages. I’ve written before about how home batteries can be used to store solar power ‘in reserve’ for emergencies. Today, the Tesla Powerwall 2.0 goes one step further, automatically protecting homeowners from storm-induced power outages. That means extra peace of mind for homeowners, even when the weatherman does get it wrong.

Tesla Powerwall’s automatic Storm Watch function

With a 13.5kWh capacity, the Tesla Powerwall 2.0 meets the needs of even the most power-hungry household, storing excess solar energy to help homeowners go ‘off-grid’ as often as possible.

To do this, the Powerwall automatically uses a range of technologies to optimise its own performance – including before and during severe weather. Using its Storm Watch function, the Powerwall communicates with the National Weather Service to detect when storms are on the horizon. When this happens, the battery charges itself to maximum capacity, providing backup power when the bad weather hits.

All of this can be monitored via the Tesla smartphone app. So far, so reassuring. But how does Storm Watch work in practice?

Somerset Solar

Louise M, a Mole Energy customer, explains:

“Our house is located at the foot of the Blackdown Hills and has no mains gas supply, oil, LPG or central heating. With a south-facing roof, installing solar panels was a priority.

Energy self-sufficiency has always been important to us and for some time we’d wanted to add a reliable home battery to our 16-panel system.

As a registered smallholding, we rear our own animals and can sometimes fill three freezers with produce. A long power cut would be costly and being able to ensure an off-grid supply is crucial for our household to function. We have an electric septic tank pump and

even our mobile phones rely on broadband Wi-Fi for signal. Domestic life ground to a halt in 2019, when our overhead cables came down in high winds and caused an eight-hour power cut.

The Tesla Powerwall 2.0’s ability to work off-grid was therefore key to our decision to engage Mole Energy.

Our site survey was done just before lockdown and our battery installed in July. The service provided by Mole Energy was faultless, with staff that were knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the benefits of the Tesla system.

Today, our battery is tucked away on the side of the house. Using the system is easy and the Tesla app is addictive. I note our battery level every morning, as we use our freezers and water heaters overnight. I also check in throughout the day to see how quickly the battery reaches 100%.

Three weeks after installation we experienced a significant power cut. The seamless automatic switch to off-grid supply meant we were oblivious of the fact until a neighbour phoned to see if we’d also lost electricity. Flicking a light switch to check, I replied that we hadn’t been affected. Then it dawned on me: we were running on Tesla power!

While the app showed the battery at 42%, we were then running off solar production and didn’t need to dip into the battery at all. Sunny smiles all round!

Western Power responded quickly and power was restored, by which time our battery level had increased to 74%. **We were 99% self-powered across the day**, as you can see from the screenshot. We hadn’t expected the battery to prove its worth so soon, certainly not before winter.

On a recent weekend away, we used the app to see how much power the empty



^ Louise M. Tesla app screenshot

house uses. It was reassuring to see how quickly the battery reaches 100% capacity, knowing important appliances would continue to function.

In July we were 81% self-powered. **This halved our monthly electricity bill.** Even on a cloudy summer day, we power the house quite easily, safe in the knowledge the battery is there if needed.

The Powerwall 2.0 has become an integral part of our household and is the best decision we’ve made for energy security and self-sufficiency.”

Self-power your home with battery storage

Tesla Powerwall 2.0 battery unit from £7,395 installed (Ex. VAT)

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