

Smartwire Technology



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The world's most advanced cell
connection technology



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cell connection technology

Benefits



Automated Production Process



Superior Energy Production



Industry Leading Warranty



Remarkable Connection Durability

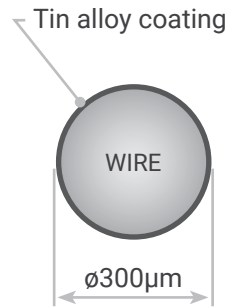


Superior Temperature Coefficient

1. INTRODUCTION.....	1.1
2. WORKING PRINCIPLE	
SmartWire Begins.....	2.1
Automated Cell Connection	2.2
Matrix & Components Layout	2.3
Lamination and Electrical Contact	2.4
3. MODULE EFFICIENCY	
Advanced Energy Collection	3.1
Redirecting Light	3.2
PERC Technology	3.3
Heterojunction Technology	3.4
4. MODULE RELIABILITY	
Cell Stress	4.1
Protection Against Micro-Cracks	4.2
Superior Encapsulation	4.3
5. CONCLUSION	5.1
6. REFERENCES	5.1

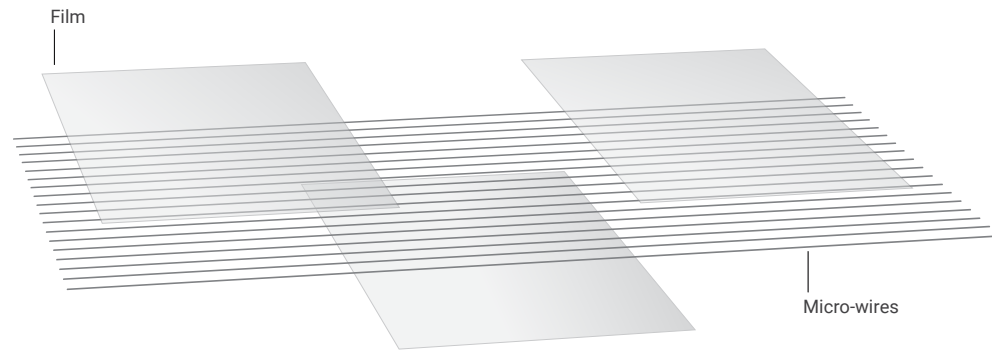
SmartWire Technology (SWT) is a revolutionary cell connection process for solar module manufacturing.

Standard busbars are replaced by **18 micro-wires** that gather energy more fluently and protect the cells. SWT's superior performance results in advanced module efficiency while negative effects are significantly reduced.^[1]



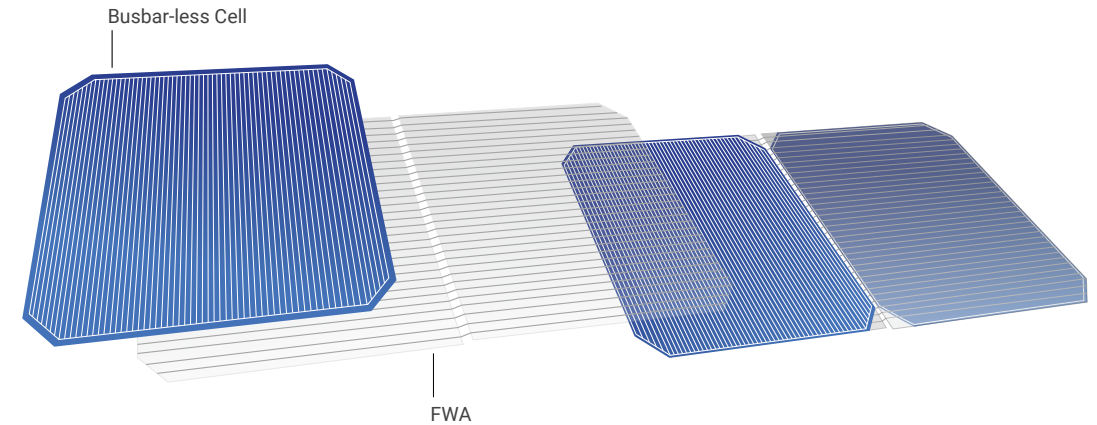
SWT is based on wire bonding, an interconnection method for semiconductors. The copper wires are coated with a low melting point alloy to be bonded with the cell, creating electrical contact points that gather the energy.^{[1][2]}

Foil-Wire Assembly (FWA)



The 18 micro-wires are robotically positioned in parallel and held in place by a transparent foil in an over/under pattern. This foil-wire assembly (FWA) forms the electrical conductor, designed with surgical precision, to interconnect the solar cells and eliminate the need of busbars^[2].

Working Principle

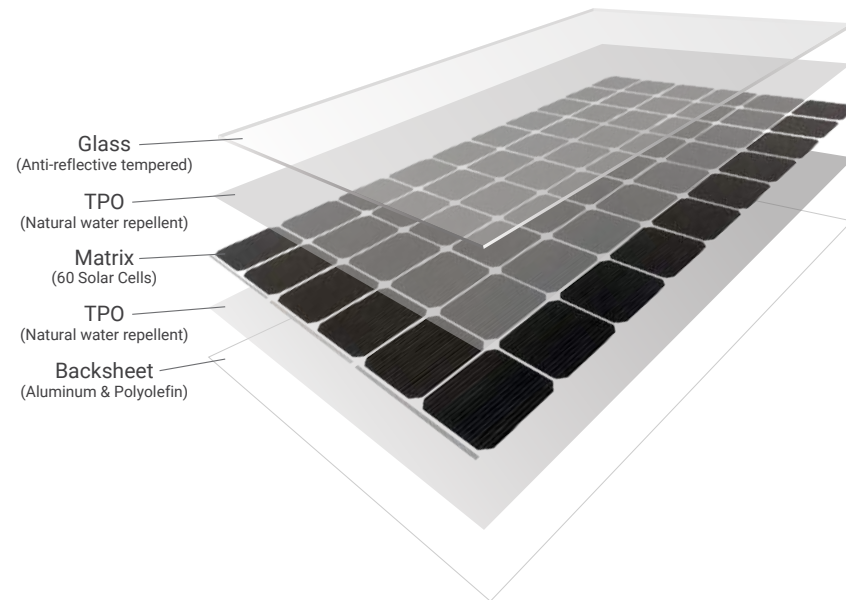


The solar cells are linked robotically with the FWA to form a cell string, eradicating the busbar to cell soldering process. The FWA interconnects the front side of a cell to the back side of the next cell, ensuring the proper connection from cell to cell.^[2]



2.3 Components Layout

A 60 cell solar matrix is created by alternating 6 strings of 10 cells. The matrix is covered with encapsulant then placed between a sheet of glass and a backsheets.



GLASS: full tempered, AR coated, impact resistant, industry leading 94% transmittance.

ENCAPSULANT: thermoplastic polyolefin (TPO) is a water repellent material that significantly reduces the effects of module corrosion.

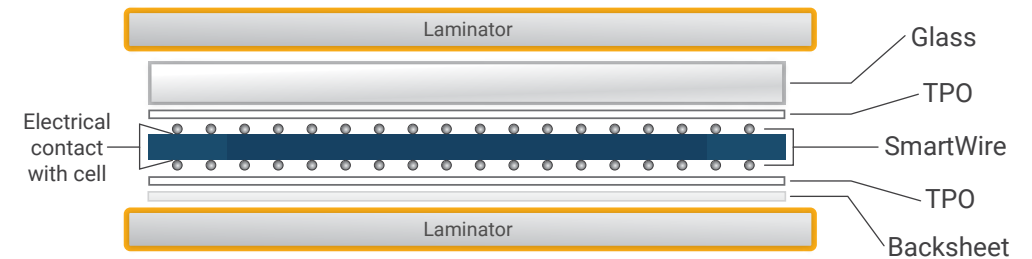
CELL: SWT is compatible with multiple high-efficiency cell types, like mono-crystalline PERC and Heterojunction (bi-facial) cells.^[1]

BACKSHEET: laminate consists of PET, aluminum, and polyolefin, allowing for protection against moisture and UV absorption.

Working Principle

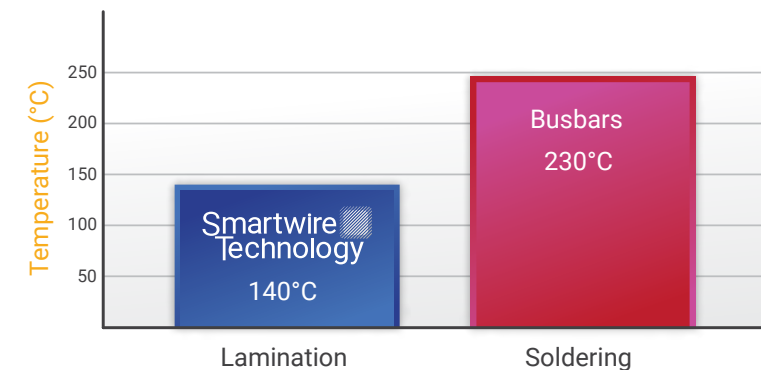
Lamination & Electrical Contact 2.4

In order to protect the cell matrix from environmental influences, the individual layers are bonded together by vacuum pressure and heat, to form an ultra durable solar laminate. This lamination process also forms the electrical connections between the wires and the cell.^[6]

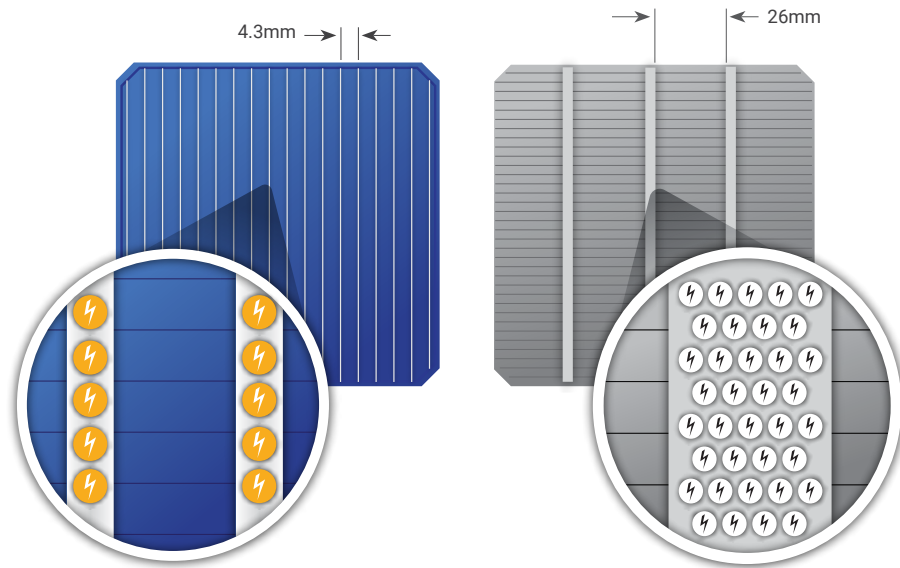


Electrical Connections

The SmartWire to cell connection points are bonded at a lower temperature than the busbar soldering process. As a result, SWT induces less thermo-mechanical stress on the solar cell, significantly reducing the cell brittleness associated in busbar technology.^[2]



The superior efficiency of SWT is driven by 18 micro-wires that form a dense grid of up to 2,660 contact points on the solar cell. This structure allows electrons to travel a shorter distance in order to be collected, thus reducing resistive losses. [1]



SmartWire

Lower Resistance = More Electricity

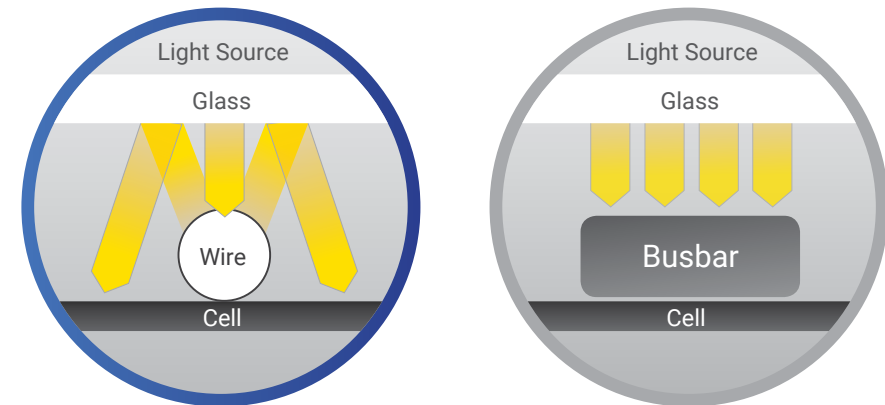
Busbar

Higher Resistance = Less Electricity

The lower resistance enables the extraction of more power from each individual finger, thereby increasing the power density when compared to traditional busbar panels. [1]

Finger: horizontal printed pathway that collects the current generated in the solar cell.
Finger length: distance between two vertical collection pathways

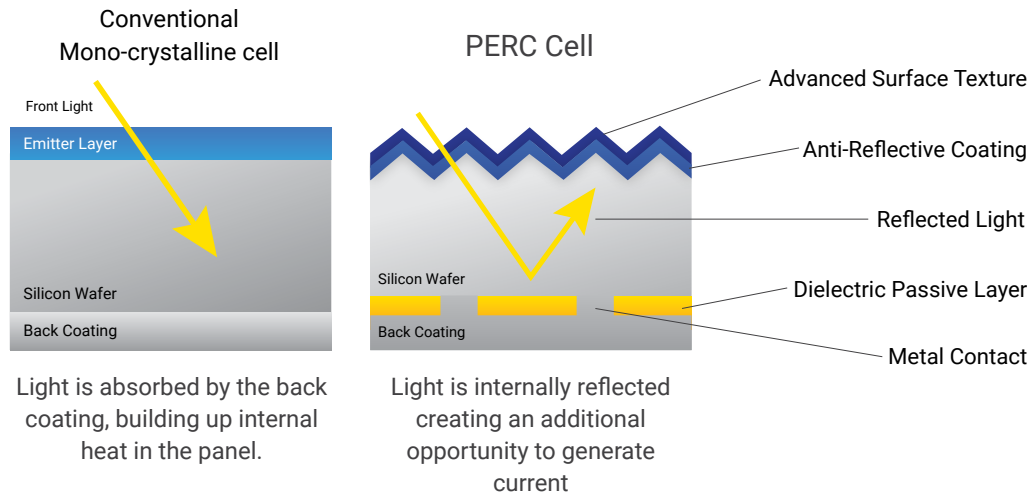
The round shape of the micro-wire introduces a light trapping effect which reduces the shading by 25% compared to busbar technology. [1][3]



Optical shading is calculated as the ratio of the width of the wire or busbar to the cell length. Comparison of the dimensions of SWT and busbar. [1]

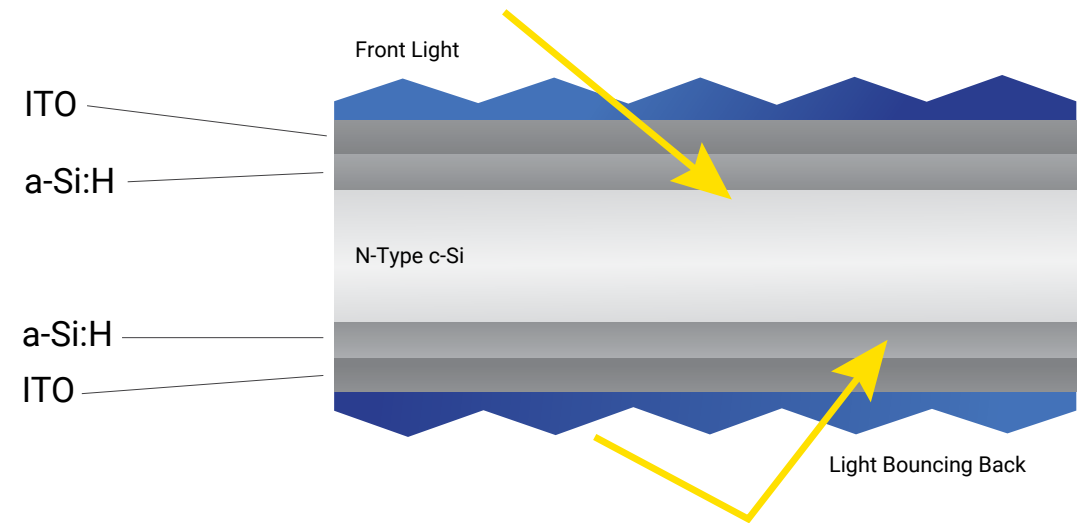
Contacting scheme	Wire Diameter [mm]	Width [mm]	Cross-section [mm ²]	Finger Length [mm]	Optical shading [%]
3 busbars		4.5	0.68	26.0	2.9%
5 busbars		5	0.75	15.6	3.2%
12 wires	0.2	2.4	0.38	6.5	1.2%
18 wires	0.2	3.6	0.57	4.3	1.7%
22 wires	0.2	4	0.69	3.5	1.9%
30 wires	0.2	6	0.94	2.6	2.9%
38 wires	0.2	7.6	1.19	2.1	3.7%
18 wires	0.3	5.4	1.27	4.3	2.6%

Passivated Emitter Rear Contact (PERC) is an advanced mono-crystalline cell that captures more energy by adding an extra layer between the silicon and the back coating. This special layer creates an efficient internal reflectivity, while preventing electrons from recombining and blocking the free flow of energy.^[7]



PERC's additional layer reflects light back through the silicon which reduces the amount of absorption by the back surface, helping the cell to operate at a cooler temperature and produce a positive effect on energy yield.^[7]

Heterojunction (HJT) technology is a superior solar cell that generates energy from both sides. This bi-facial cell combines the advantages of N-type crystalline silicon (c-Si) with the excellent absorption and passivation characteristics of amorphous silicon (a-Si:H).^[5]

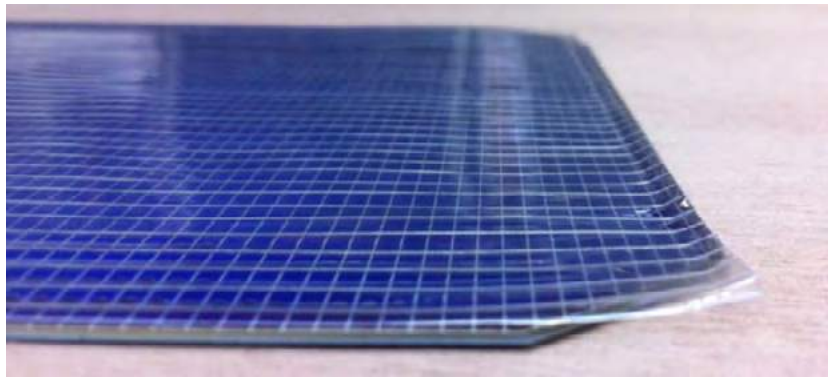


The N-type c-Si makes HJT cells immune to (LID) while the ITO coating protects the cell from (PID) on both sides of the cell.^[6] As a result, HJT cells generate a higher energy yield while exhibiting a lower temperature coefficient than conventional solar cells.^[5]

ITO: Transparent Conducting Film,
LID: Light Induced Degradation, PID: Potential Induced Degradation

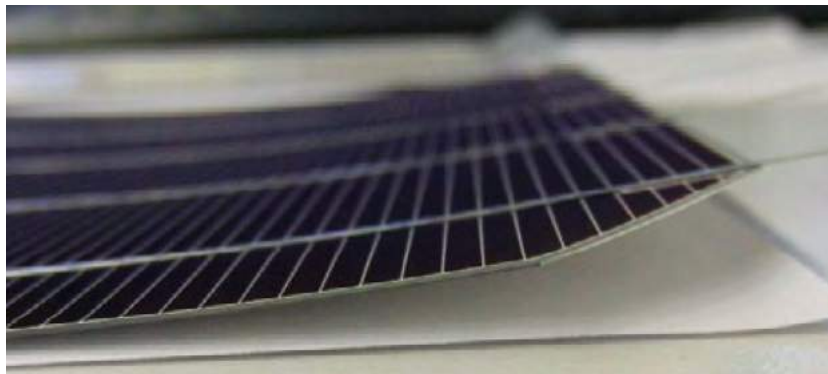
SWT exerts less stress on the cells than standard soldering technologies thanks to the reduced temperature process and the flexibility of thin wires as opposed to the stiffer busbars.^[1]

SmartWire

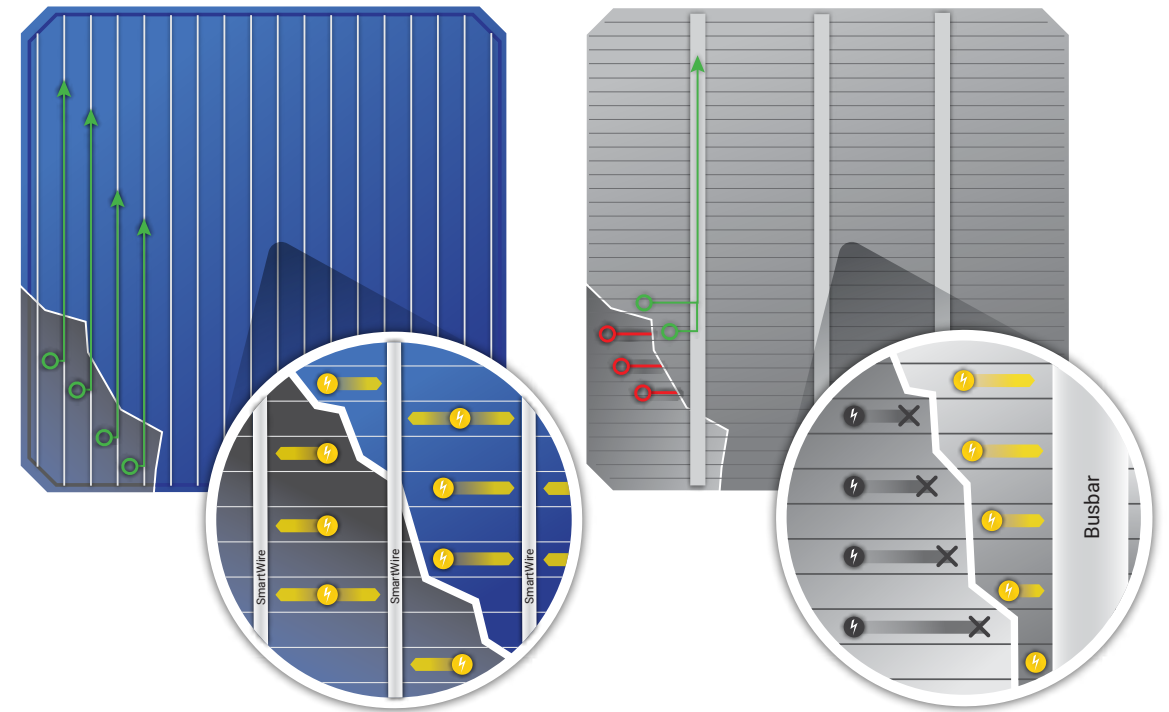


The bow of the cell after interconnection is an excellent signature of the stress applied by the busbar soldering process.^[1]

Busbar

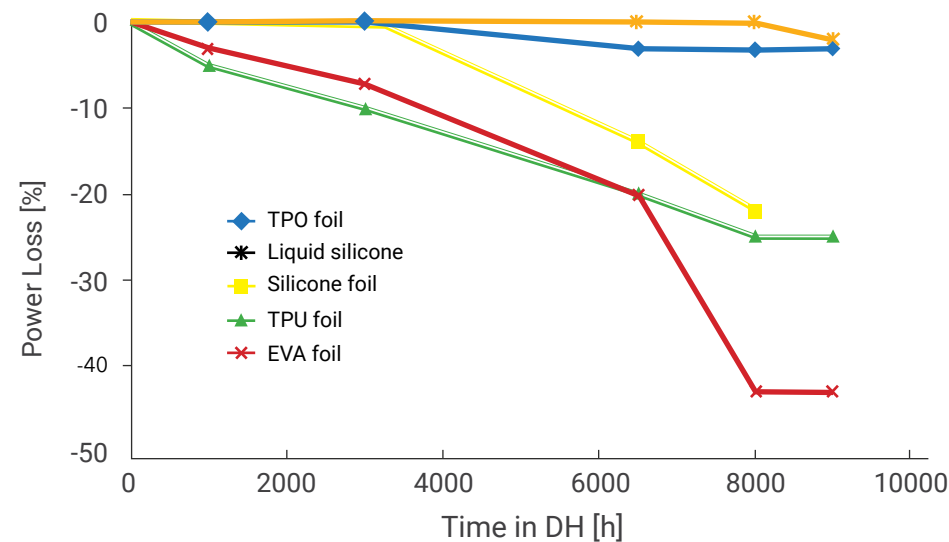


Micro-cracks have a minimum effect on modules with SmartWire, since the FWA acts as a protective layer for the solar cell with the dense grid of up to 2,660 contact points.^[4]



Even a micro-cracked cell remains contacted, maintaining the energy collection at high levels.^[4]

TPO encapsulant has been chosen as the current solution for SWT, as it provides a more reliable performance. Standard module lamination utilizes an EVA encapsulation layer which is the main cause for module degradation when exposed to moisture.^[1]



The superior performance of TPO compared with EVA has been proven under testing. TPO offers better protection against potential induced degradation (PID) by absorbing less moisture than EVA.^[1]

SmartWire Technology (SWT) is a breakthrough that outperforms busbar technology by collecting the electric current more efficiently and providing protection against micro-crack effects. SWT is especially attractive for high-efficiency solar cells because of the lower temperature cell connection and the superior energy extraction obtained with the micro-wires' properties.

References

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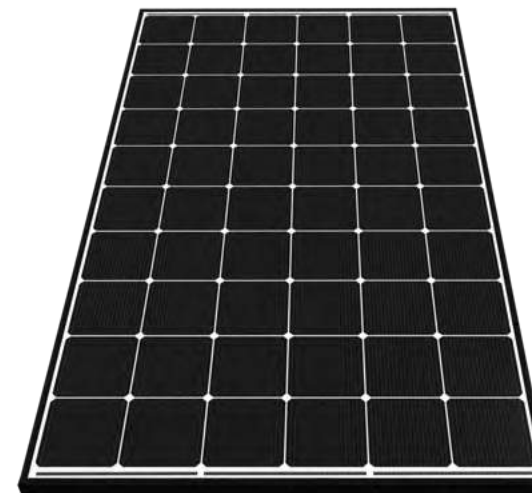
EPIQ PV modules are backed by our industry leading 15-year craftsmanship and 30-year performance warranties. By combining the most advanced materials and the automated SmartWire manufacturing process; SolarTech Universal delivers premium panels of unrivaled performance.

Certifications



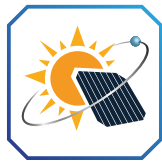
up to **315W** 60 CELL MONO-CRYSTALLINE PERC SOLAR PANEL

19.3 Module Efficiency	18 Micro-wires Collection Pathways	-0+5W Power Sorting
5400 PA 112.8 Psf Front Load (Snow)	3800 PA 79.4 Psf Rear Load (Wind)	



up to **325W** 60 CELL HETEROJUNCTION SOLAR PANEL

19.9 Module Efficiency	18 Micro-wires Collection Pathways	-0+5W Power Sorting
5400 PA 112.8 Psf Front Load (Snow)	3800 PA 79.4 Psf Rear Load (Wind)	



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