

Dutch roof fire warning for 650,000 solar panels

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Hundreds of thousands of solar panels are at risk of setting roofs on fire because of an electrical fault, Dutch authorities and media warned Tuesday, with 15 roof fires already reported in Europe.

Now-bankrupt Scheuten Solar Systems has reportedly sold at least 650,000 of its "Multisol" panels in Europe and 15,000 in the [Netherlands](#).

"These solar panels have a faulty electrical connection which constitutes a fire hazard," the Dutch Food and Goods Authority (NVWA) said in a statement.

"People who have these dangerous solar panels on their roofs are advised to disconnect them in a safe manner," it added.

The problem is with the connection between the panel and a junction box at the back which could cause an electrical spark, damaging the box and

causing it to smoulder.

"The sparks could jump onto the roof and cause a fire," the NVWA said.

Dutch daily De Volkskrant reported that Scheuten Solar Systems sold some 650,000 of the [solar panels](#) across Europe between August 2009 and February 2012.

Scheuten allegedly knew about the fire risk as far back as 2010, De Volkskrant said, quoting company documents, but only began taking action last year after two fires broke out in France.

Based in the southeastern city of Venlo, Scheuten Solar Systems went bankrupt last year and since then at least 1,000 damage claims have been lodged with the company's receiver, the paper said.

The [fire hazard](#) can be neutralised by repairing or replacing the junction box, the paper said. However, the NVWA warned that "at this moment there's no good way of fixing it," and urged users to have the panel disconnected by professionals.

Many Dutch households are turning to solar power in the search for green energy, according to the Dutch central statistics office, but the country lags far behind Germany and Italy, the most prolific users of [solar power](#) in Europe.

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