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Manage your usage by watching your meter & bill



Did you stress out over your last energy bill?

Unfortunately, there has been a dramatic increase in energy prices in Australia, which is draining your household budget, especially for those who are on a fixed income or pension.

If your energy bill was much higher than expected, there are two obvious reasons in addition to the price rise:

- + Your household consumed more energy during this billing period because of the weather conditions or increase in residents.
- + Your energy provider has changed how it bills you or the way it records your energy consumption.

Energy price rises in NSW

From 1 July 2017, three major energy retailers increased their power prices by up to 20% representing an increase of

approximately \$600 a year for the average household.

In NSW, you can easily switch your plan and negotiate a better deal with your energy provider. This is explained further in Fact Sheet 2.

There may have been other reasons for the price increase that you were unaware of. These include:

- + There was a change in your billing period, which meant you had more days in the current billing cycle than the previous one.
- + There was a mistake in the reading of your meter.
- + Your bill for the same period last year was based on a lower estimate.
- + You've been charged for outstanding costs remaining from a previous bill. Check carefully to ensure the provider has not made a mistake.
- + The discounts offered with the energy plan you have signed up to have now expired.
- + Your concession/rebate has not been applied.

Whatever the reason, you need to review your bill before you call your provider.



Go To Websites

Help with your bills

www.resourcesandenergy.nsw.gov.au/energy-consumers

Energy saving advice

www.yourenergysavings.gov.au

Compare energy deals

www.youenergy.nsw.gov.au
www.energymadeeasy.gov.au

Star ratings

www.energyrating.gov.au

Government appliance offer

www.environment.nsw.gov.au/applianceoffer

Consumer rights

www.energyconsumersaustralia.com.au/powercall/
www.ewon.com.au
 or Freecall 1800 246 545.



housingplus.com.au info@housingplus.com.au 1800 603 300



bringing bright ideas to light

Understand your gas and electricity meters



Electricity

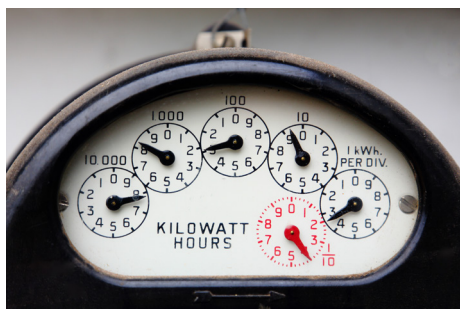
Gas

Gas and electricity meters

Electricity is measured in kilowatt hours (kWh) while natural gas is measured in cubic metres, which is converted to megajoules (MJ).

The number of kWh and MJ on these meters are read from left to right.

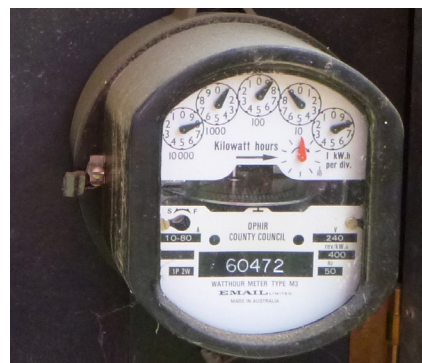
Your electricity and gas meters are usually located on the outside wall at either the front or back of your house.



Clockface electricity meters

If you live in a unit, your meter will be located with others in one central area of the complex.

The number of kWh on the clockface meter are read from left to right. If a hand is between two numbers, note the lower number, except when the hand is between 0 and 9, in which case, read 9.



Read your own meter

Most energy bills will tell you when your next meter reading will occur. If not, phone your supplier to get the dates.

On these due dates, write down or take a picture with your mobile phone of your meter reading. You can now check your kWh or MJ reading against your next bill.

Understand your bill

How energy is priced on your bill

1. By kWh or MJ units

Electricity is priced per kilowatt-hour (kWh), often called a unit. Natural gas is priced per megajoule (MJ).

2. Supply charge

Your bill will also contain a supply charge, which can vary between energy providers.

The supply charge is the cost per day for providing you with the electricity (including the maintenance of poles and wires).

3. Tariff rates

The meters installed on your rental property give you a single rate or block tariff rate on your bill.

There are three types of electricity tariffs:

1. Single rate - you pay the same rate whatever time of day.
2. Controlled load - usually for off-peak hot water systems or underfloor heating.
3. Time of use - monitored by Smart Meters.

Gas tariffs are only available with single rate tariffs.

Government rebates

If you are eligible, your bill will include an energy rebate. These rebates were recently increased to take effect on 1 July 2017 and include Gas Rebate, Family Energy Rebate, Low Income Household Rebate, Life Support Rebate and Medical Energy Rebate.

Energy Accounts Payment Assistance (EAPA) Scheme

If you are experiencing financial hardship and can't pay your energy bill, the EAPA Scheme can help you stay connected to essential energy services. This scheme is not available on an ongoing basis.

How does the EAPA scheme work?

EAPA vouchers are issued by participating EAPA providers such as St Vincent de Paul, The Salvation Army, Anglicare and many others.

The EAPA Scheme operates through a voucher system and each voucher is worth \$50.

The EAPA provider assesses your situation and determines each case based on individual circumstances. The vouchers issued to you will be sent to the retailer electronically by the EAPA provider and the vouchers will be paid into your energy account.

These vouchers cannot be used to pay for LPG gas.

Note: Before contacting an EAPA provider to make an appointment for an EAPA assessment, please contact your electricity or gas supplier to find out what payment plans and other assistance might be available.

You may be able to agree on a payment plan with your supplier to suit your financial situation.