

Last updated: 09 Mar 2023

Energy marketing

Your rights and the rules about door-to-door and telephone energy marketing.

Rules about marketing

There are codes and laws setting out the rules energy retailers and their sales representatives must follow:

- Australian Consumer Law: consumerlaw.gov.au/australian-consumer-law/legislation
- The Australian Communications and Media (ACMA) Do Not Call Register: donotcall.gov.au
- Telecommunications (Do Not Call) (Telemarketing and Research Calls) Industry Standard 2017: legislation.gov.au/Details/F2017L00323

Contact by phone or door-to-door must be within certain hours only:

- Monday to Friday: 9am—6pm (door-to-door)
- Monday to Friday: 9am—8pm (by phone)
- Saturday: 9am—5pm
- Sunday and public holidays: not allowed

A number of provisions in the Australian Consumer Law (consumerlaw.gov.au/australian-consumer-law/legislation) ensure that you are given clear, truthful and easy-to-understand information. Companies must be honest about selling to you. They must not let you think they're from your current energy company, your energy distributor or the government. They must not pressure you to make a decision.

You must receive certain information before signing the contract. If you say yes to a sales representative at your door, they must give you the contract terms and conditions straight away. If you say yes over the phone, the terms and conditions must be sent to you as soon as possible.

You have a cooling-off period of 10 business days starting from the day after you agreed to and signed the contract or received the contract information. Within this time, you can cancel the contract without penalty.

Your consent to transfer your account to another energy company must be explicit (your conscious decision) and informed (you know what you're agreeing to). It must also be shown by your signature on a contract (door-to-door sales) or a voice recording (phone sales) and kept by the energy company.

If you sign up for an energy offer via door-to-door marketing, the energy company may also complete a verbal verification call with another representative from the company over the phone with you.

Need help?

1800 500 509 (Freecall)

Monday to Friday between 8:30 am and 5:00 pm

Email & Web

Email us at ewovinfo@ewov.com.au
or visit ewov.com.au

Post

GPO Box 469, Melbourne, Victoria 3001

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Changes to marketing rules

From 1 September 2021, door-to-door sales for solar businesses were banned under the Solar Homes Program.

From 31 December 2021, electricity and gas companies were banned from using high pressure sales tactics such as door-to-door sales or cold-calling.

Reasons things go wrong

In any sales process, there can be selling and after-sales problems.

Customers complaining about energy marketing or account transfers often talk about:

- being provided with misleading sales information or no supporting information on the offer made
- feeling pressured into saying yes to an offer or to signing a contract
- not being told they had a cooling-off period
- finding their account had been transferred to another energy company when they didn't agree to switch
- not being transferred to their new company after they did agree to switch
- finding an account previously in their name switched to someone else's name and, for privacy reasons, not being able to find out why
- suddenly receiving a bill from a different company.

Check the details carefully

When energy marketing is received, discounts can sometimes be offered. Be careful to check how these discounts apply. They may apply to the usage component of the bill or to the total of the bill (including Service to Property (STP) charges).

It is also important to check the STP charge when changing company because the rates may be different with each energy retailer. An STP charge is a flat fee for each property and is calculated as a daily charge. It is charged for accessing and maintaining the electricity and gas network. It is not based on how much electricity or gas is used at the property and will be separately shown on the bill.

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More information

You can read more information about energy marketing on our website here: ewov.com.au/common-complaints/other-issues#sales-and-marketing.

To register your phone number/s on the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA)'s Do Not Call Register, visit: donotcall.gov.au or call 1300 792 958.

To register your Victorian property on the Do Not Knock Register or to receive a Do Not Knock sticker visit: donotknock.consumeraction.org.au.

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC)'s website has more information on telemarketing and door-to-door sales: acc.gov.au/consumers/sales-delivery/telemarketing-door-to-door-sales

Need further help? If you have a complaint, contact the company first. If you're not happy with its response, contact EWOV – we're here to help!

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