

# Affordability Report

## MEDIA RELEASE

### Large, low-income houses are most at risk of energy poverty

EWOV customers with credit issues are disproportionately from large households. Across Victoria, only 3% of households have six or more people, however these households are more than twice as common to present to EWOV with a credit issue as smaller households.

The hotspots for large household credit cases include Casey, Wyndham, Hume, Frankston and WhiteSEA. The composition of these households varies, and can include single parents with multiple dependent children, or extended families living on a single pension.

Releasing EWOV's Affordability Report today, Ombudsman Cynthia Gebert said, "While the overall case loads of large households are relatively small, they are disproportionately presenting with credit issues, with an average of \$3,650 in arrears, compared to around \$1,910 for other households".

For all EWOV customers, there is a notable 10% increase in the number of cases compared to the same period last year, with a total of 1,982 cases, this combines with a shift from providers from credit collection to disconnection/restriction activities.

"With such high levels of debt, large household credit cases face imminent or actual disconnection, at a higher incidence than smaller household credit cases. The disruption created by disconnection impacts each member of the household, with wider ramifications for those in large households".

The online version of EWOV's Affordability Report is available at [ewov.com.au](http://ewov.com.au)

***For more information or to arrange an interview with the Ombudsman, contact:***

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**EWOV is an industry-based, customer dispute resolution scheme. It has dealt with electricity cases since 1996, extending to natural gas in 1999, water in 2001, LPG in 2005 and embedded networks in 2018. The Ombudsman has the power to investigate and resolve disputes between customers and their energy and water providers, fairly and independently.**

**To 30 June 2018, EWOV had handled 654,748 Victorian electricity, gas and water cases, mostly residential.**