

# High energy bills

## Information for Victorian electricity and gas customers

→ *Have you received an unusually high electricity or gas bill? Maybe your bill has gone up and stayed up? This fact sheet will help you work out why.*

⚠ **Important:** If you need help paying a bill, call your energy retailer to set up a payment plan **before** your supply is disconnected. See our fact sheet – [‘Energy Payment Difficulties’](#) – for more information.



### Why is my bill so high?

High energy bills can happen for a number of reasons. Common causes include:

#### Outstanding charges

Did you receive your last bill? Did you pay all of it? Your new bill may include an amount you still owe.

#### Estimated bills

If your retailer could not access your meter to read it, they may issue an estimated bill. Estimations are based on your past levels of usage, and sometimes over – or under – estimate how much you’ve actually used in the current billing period.

Self-meter reads: If you have an accumulation (flat-rate) gas or electricity meter, you can submit a self-meter read before the due date of your estimated bill.

For more information see our fact sheet – [‘Estimated Bills’](#).

#### Price and benefit changes

Have your rates increased? Compare the rates on your previous bill to your new bill. Energy retailers must notify you of any price or benefit change, at least **5 business days prior** to that change taking effect.

### Energy consumption

Have you used more electricity or gas than usual?

Compare the average daily use figure on your high bill with previous bills to see if it has increased.

#### THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- Have you spent more time at home?
- Have you been running the heating/cooling more often?
- Have you used some appliances/devices more often?
- Have you had guests staying?
- Are you on a time of use tariff, and used more energy during the peak period?

#### CERTAIN APPLIANCES AND EQUIPMENT USE MORE ELECTRICITY OR GAS THAN OTHERS. FOR EXAMPLE:

- Oil column heaters or electric wall heaters
- Old, large or faulty refrigerators
- Standby mode on the TV, computer etc. (this can be reduced by shutting them down).
- Faulty hot water service or having it set at a high temperature
- Using a hot water booster or day/night switch during the peak electricity rate
- Holes in the ducts of central heating systems
- Faulty thermostats
- No blinds or curtains to insulate the house
- Gas leaks – check whether your meter is still running when all appliances are turned off or if you smell gas.



## METER CHECKS

You can use your meter to monitor your usage:

- Take a meter reading at a set time on a typical day for your household (be careful not to change your usual usage pattern).
- Take another reading at the same time the next day.
- The difference between the two will be the amount you used in the last 24 hours.
- Compare this with the 'average daily use' figure on your high bill.

## Next steps

If you have considered all of the above and think your bill is wrong, contact your energy retailer and ask them to check your bill.

If you aren't happy with their response, contact EWOV.

## How can EWOV help?

Through our investigation we will seek to determine whether your energy retailer has contributed to the cause of the high bill. We can't always find the cause of a high bill – but we can check that your meter is correctly recording your use and that your bill matches the information from your meter.

If you are experiencing unexplained high energy bills, don't hesitate to contact us – we're here to help!



## RESOURCES

- If you're thinking of changing retailers, see our factsheet – '[Switching Energy Plans](#)' – for more information.
- You can also visit the Victorian Government's Energy Compare Website at: [compare.energy.vic.gov.au](https://compare.energy.vic.gov.au)
- For energy saving tips, visit Sustainability Victoria's website at [sustainability.vic.gov.au](https://sustainability.vic.gov.au).

### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

**Online:** [ewov.com.au](https://ewov.com.au)  
**Freecall:** 1800 500 509  
**Email:** [ewovinfo@ewov.com.au](mailto:ewovinfo@ewov.com.au)

**Post:** GPO Box 469, Melbourne, Victoria 3001  
**Translating and Interpreting Service:** 131 450  
**National Relay Service:** 133 677