

A retailer will bill you for the energy that you have used. You also pay a fee each day for being connected to the network, whether you use any energy or not. This is called the 'fixed charge' or 'supply charge'.

Billing Cycle

You must be sent a bill at least once every three months for electricity and at least once every 105 days for gas, and no more than once a month unless an exception applies. You may ask for bills to be sent more or less often, but a retailer does not have to agree to this.



If you have received a reminder notice for the last three bills, the retailer can decide to send a bill more often than once a month.

Some of the things a bill must include are:

- the amount of energy that you have consumed over a set period of time;
- any concessions or rebates received;
- the amount owing;
- when the bill must be paid; and
- who to contact for billing or payment inquiries.

Estimated bills

If your retailer does not receive a meter reading from the distributor, your bill will be based on an estimate provided by the distributor. Your bill must show if it is based on an estimate.

If you receive an estimated bill, you can contact your retailer who is required to explain to you why and how the bill has been estimated.

If your retailer bases a bill upon an estimate and later receives a meter reading, an adjustment on your next bill must be made to take account of the actual meter reading.

A retailer must issue a bill based on an actual meter reading at least once every 12 months.

TIP!

To avoid estimated bills, ensure your distributor has access to your meter – or ensure that you send back your meter reading form on time.

Review of a bill

You can ask a retailer to review a bill but the retailer only has to review the bill if you pay whichever amount is less of:

- the part of the bill that is not in dispute; or
- an amount equal to your average bill for the last 12 months.

A retailer must tell you the outcome of the review as soon as practicable.

Payments

Unless agreed otherwise, a retailer must give you at least 12 business days to pay a bill and must provide a number of payment options.

Payment options include some or all of the following:

- in person at a payment outlet
- by mail
- Centrepay (for residential customers only)
- by credit card (electronically or via telephone)
- by debit card (via telephone)
- by debit facility, such as BPAY (electronically or via telephone)

You can make advance payments towards a future bill. The retailer can require these payments to be above a minimum amount.

If you have been overcharged, your retailer must ask you if you want a refund or credit towards your next bill, if the amount is more than \$100. If the amount is less than \$100, your retailer can choose whether to refund you or give you a credit towards your next bill.

If you have underpaid an account, the retailer may ask you to pay the amount owing.

IMPORTANT!

If you are having problems paying a bill, contact your retailer before the due date to request a payment arrangement.

If you underpaid because of a mistake by the retailer or distributor, the retailer can only ask for money owed for the last 12 months.

Late payment fees

Retailers can charge a late payment fee if you don't pay your bill by the due date. There are limits on when late payment fees can be charged:

- If you have made a complaint directly related to the non-payment of a bill, a late payment fee should not be charged whilst the complaint is being resolved. If the complaint is resolved in your favour, you should not be charged a late payment fee.
- If you have been assessed as being in financial hardship, a late payment fee cannot be charged.
- If you receive a concession, you cannot be charged a late payment fee for the first two reminder notices you receive each year.
- You cannot receive more than two (electricity) or three (gas) late payment fees for the same bill.
- You cannot receive more than 12 late payment fees in one year.

In addition to a late payment fee, interest may be charged on overdue bills.

Who does this fact sheet apply to?

This fact sheet applies to small use customers. You are a small use customer if you use less than 160 MWh (about \$56,000) of electricity per year or up to 1TJ of gas per year (between \$28,500 and \$43,000, depending on where you live).