



# Synergy Customer Charter



[www.synergy.net.au](http://www.synergy.net.au)

## Synergy Customer Charter

Do you need assistance in relation to this document?  
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排一位翻譯。

Avez-vous besoin d'aide par rapport à ce document?  
Téléphonez-nous au 13 13 53 pour organiser un interprète.

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cho bạn.

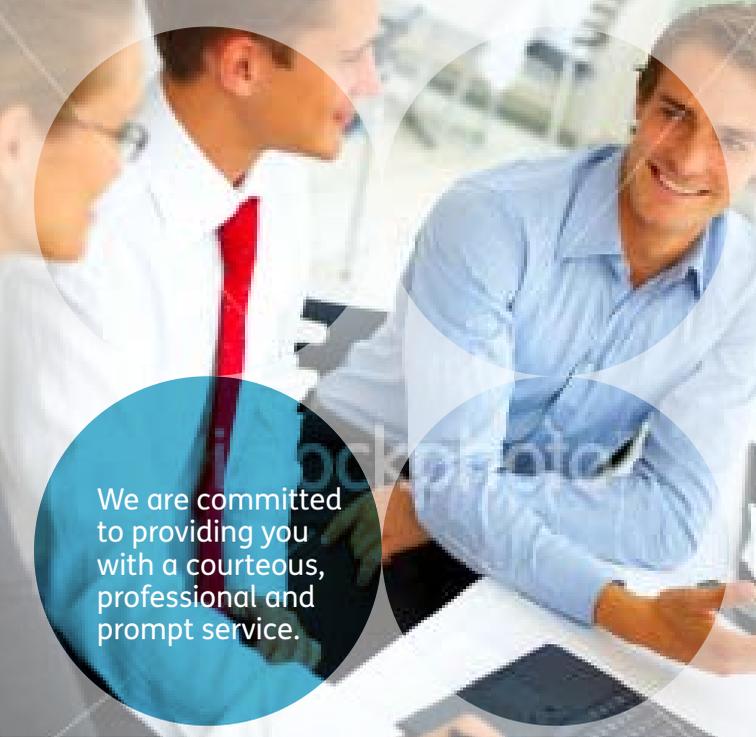
هل تحتاج الى مساعدة لترجمة وثيقة ؟ أتصل  
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على من يقدم لك خدمات الترجمة الشفوية.

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排一位翻译。

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We are committed to providing you with a courteous, professional and prompt service.

## Our service commitment to you.

Synergy is committed to providing you with courteous, professional and prompt service.

We take this promise to you seriously enough to put it in writing.

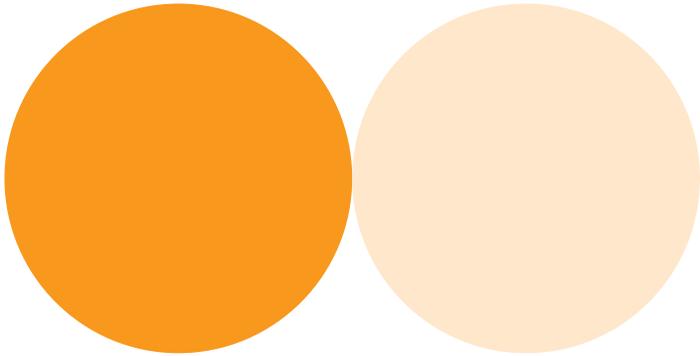
This Customer Charter outlines your rights, obligations and expectations as a valued Synergy customer.

Further details on your rights and responsibilities are outlined in The Code of Conduct (for the Supply of Electricity to Small Use Customers). All electricity retailers in Western Australia must comply with The Code when conducting business with customers who consume less than 160 megawatt hours (MWh) per year. The Code can be viewed on the Economic Regulation Authority website at [www.era.wa.gov.au](http://www.era.wa.gov.au)

## Who this Charter applies to.

Our Customer Charter relates to small-use customers located in the Western Australian South West Interconnected System (SWIS), an area that extends from Kalbarri in the north to Albany in the south and east to Kalgoorlie.

Small-use customers are those who consume less than 160MWh of electricity per year, or an average of 440 units per day. (As a guide, consumption of 160MWh per year equates to an annual electricity bill of approximately \$30,000, depending on your price.)



## Understanding the roles of generation, distribution and retail.

Within the energy market in Western Australia, the roles of producing electricity, delivering it to your home or business, and selling it to you are not the responsibility of a single organisation. These different roles include:

- The Electricity Generator – responsible for producing electricity. Verve Energy, formerly Western Power Generation, is one of many generators of electricity in Western Australia.
- The Electricity Distributor – responsible for the delivery of electricity from generators to your premises. In Western Australia, Western Power is responsible for managing and maintaining the electricity network within the South West Interconnected System (SWIS) area, which consists of powerlines, substations, metering equipment, control centres and meters. In this Customer Charter, Western Power is referred to as the Distributor.
- The Electricity Retailer – Synergy is your specialist energy retailer. We purchase electricity from power generators and have it transported to you over Western Power's network of 'poles and wires', so you have access to the energy needed for your lifestyle or to run your business.

We can help you with connections and disconnections when you move home or premises, give advice on the best Synergy products, provide your bills, answer your account enquiries. We also offer energy solutions to help you manage your energy use, and provide options to be more environmentally friendly.

The Synergy Customer Charter outlines the roles and responsibilities for you, our customer, and us as your retailer.

## What we do for you.

### Moving in or moving out

#### What you need to do

To establish a new account or close an existing account at an established home, call us on 13 13 53, or for business premises, call 13 13 54.

- Provide Synergy with 3 business days notice in the metropolitan areas (and for areas outside of this please provide 5 business days notice) before vacating
- Provide access to the meter, so the Distributor's meter reader can obtain a final reading for Synergy to issue your bill, and
- Provide a forwarding address for your final bill.

If you are moving into premises where electricity is already connected, please keep in mind that notifying us of your move is your responsibility and not the responsibility of your estate agent, landlord or settlement agent.

Alternatively, you can open your new account online by visiting our website:

- For residential customers  
[www.synergy.net.au/homeaccount](http://www.synergy.net.au/homeaccount)
- For business customers  
[www.synergy.net.au/businessaccount](http://www.synergy.net.au/businessaccount)

If you are moving into new premises and will have life support equipment at that premises, please call us on 13 13 53. A Customer Service Representative will let you know how to apply for life support identification on your account.

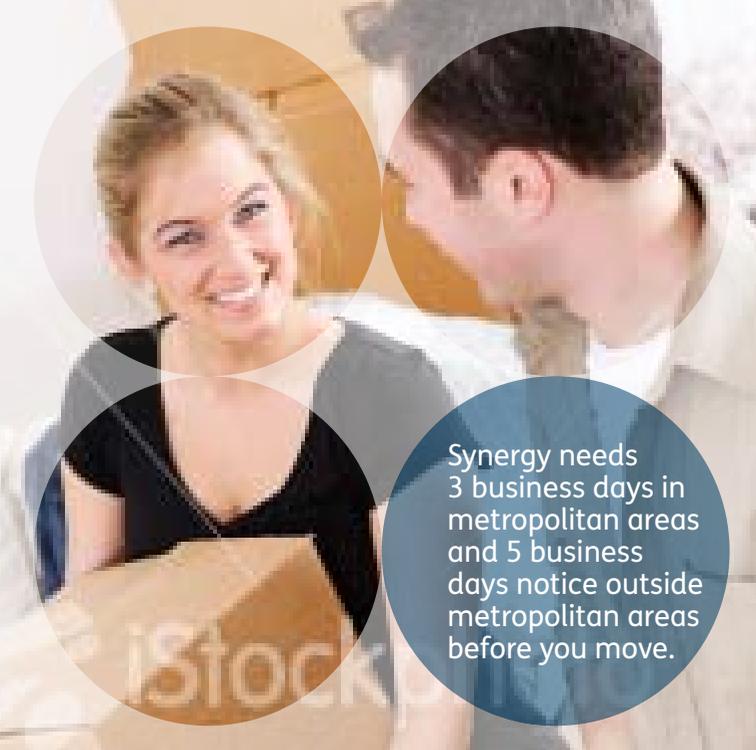
Or, if you are moving into premises that have been previously disconnected, please call us on 13 13 53 or 13 13 54 for business customers, to ensure your power is connected as soon as possible.

#### What Synergy does

On your behalf, we organise for the Distributor to:

- Conduct a final reading of the meter at the premises you are vacating, and
- Energise the meter at your new premises.

We can also establish a new account for your new address and provide you with a final bill for the premises you are vacating.



Synergy needs 3 business days in metropolitan areas and 5 business days notice outside metropolitan areas before you move.

## Building a new home or business premises

### What you need to do

Contact Synergy before your home or business plans are finalised and establish an account for your new property.

### What Synergy does

We will send you information confirming your connection details.

### What the Distributor does

The Distributor will connect power to your new premises once a final notice of completion from your electrical contractor has been received.

## Disconnection

### What you should know

Under any of the circumstances listed below, it may be necessary for us to arrange disconnection of the power supply to your property:

- If you receive a disconnection warning, and we have still not received payment of the amount owing on your account by the date specified in the warning, or
- If you have obtained electricity illegally, or
- If you have denied the Distributor access to the meter at your premises for more than 12 consecutive months.

Full details are in the standard contract, available at [www.synergy.net.au/standardcontract](http://www.synergy.net.au/standardcontract)

### What Synergy does

In the event that disconnection of electricity may be necessary:

- We will firstly send you a disconnection warning letter;
- We may be able to provide alternative payment arrangements and, where appropriate, concessions if you are experiencing difficulty paying your bill. Please call us on 13 13 53 if you are experiencing payment difficulties.

We will not arrange for disconnection to your supply:

- After 3pm Monday to Thursday, after 12 noon on a Friday, and on a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday or on a business day prior to a public holiday, or
- When a customer has made a complaint directly related to the reason for the disconnection.

If we do not follow required procedures (prescribed in The Code) prior to disconnecting you for failure to pay your bill, you may be eligible to apply for a service standard payment.

A payment of \$50 per day would apply for the period that your electricity remains disconnected (up to a maximum of \$250). You must submit your request for payment within six months of the disconnection.

## Reconnection

### What you need to do

If your electricity supply has been disconnected and the reason for disconnection no longer exists (for example: if full payment has been received) please contact Synergy on 13 13 53 or 13 13 54 for business customers to reconnect your supply. In this instance you are required to pay a reconnection fee and this will be itemised on your next bill.

### What Synergy does

When your reason for disconnection no longer exists, and you have contacted us to organise reconnection, we will arrange for the Distributor to reconnect your electricity:

- If your supply address is located in the Perth metropolitan area or the major centres of Bunbury, Albany, Kalgoorlie or Geraldton, any application for reconnection received by Synergy before 3 pm will be forwarded to the Distributor that same day. However, reconnection the next business day will only occur if your application is received by Synergy before 2 pm. If we receive your application after 3 pm, reconnection by the Distributor will occur within two business days.
- If your supply address is located outside of the above centres, any application for reconnection received by Synergy before 3 pm will be forwarded to the Distributor that same day. However, reconnection within five business days will only occur if your application is received by Synergy before 2 pm. If we receive your application after 3 pm, reconnection by the Distributor will occur within six business days.

You may be eligible to apply for a service standard payment if we are unable to arrange reconnection of your supply within the above timeframes.

A payment of \$50 per day would apply for the period that your electricity remains disconnected beyond the standard number of service days stated above (up to a maximum of \$250).

If you wish to submit a request for payment, you can do so by contacting us within six months of your request for reconnection.

## Your electricity bill

### What you need to do

To enable the Distributor to obtain a reading, it is your responsibility to provide access to the electricity meter. If the meter reader is unable to obtain a meter reading, you will receive an estimated bill.

Bills need to be paid by the due date specified on your bill. If, at any stage, you are having difficulty paying your bill by the due date, please call us on 13 13 53 or 13 13 54 for business customers to discuss how we can help you.

If paying your electricity bill affects your ability to meet basic living expenses, you may be deemed to be in financial hardship and could be eligible for our Keeping Connected program. Please call us as soon as possible to find out your options.

### What Synergy does

We request the Distributor to read your meter at prescribed intervals so that we can produce your bill.

We offer a range of bill payment options for your convenience. These options are shown on your bill and can also be viewed on our website at [www.synergy.net.au/billing](http://www.synergy.net.au/billing)

If for any reason the amount of your account is not what you may have expected, simply call 13 13 53 or 13 13 54 for business customers and we will review your bill for you.

If you are experiencing financial hardship, we will do all we can to assist you, so please call us. One option may include establishing an installment plan for you.

We also have a hardship policy for customers who need help meeting their financial obligations. To find out more about our Keeping Connected Program and the Western Australian State Government's Hardship utilities scheme, visit [www.synergy.net.au/hardship](http://www.synergy.net.au/hardship) or call us on 13 13 53.

## Special needs for life support

### What you need to do

If you or someone living at your premises relies on life support equipment that runs on electricity, you must provide us with a letter from a qualified medical practitioner certifying your life support requirements. Or simply complete and return an 'Application for Life Support Identification' form signed by your doctor.

For more information about life support, please visit [www.synergy.net.au/lifesupport](http://www.synergy.net.au/lifesupport)



If you have a valid concession card, you can apply for a rebate.

### Sensitive load

#### What you need to do

In addition to life support notification requirements, please notify us if your premises (typically business) also requires electricity to sustain life or health, such as aged care and health facilities.

#### What Synergy does

We register your nominated home or business premises as a life support equipment address. This information will be provided to the Distributor indicating that a person residing at the premises relies on life support equipment (subject to us receiving verification about such equipment).

### Billing concessions and rebates

#### What you need to do

If you have a residential account and you hold a valid concession card, you may be eligible for a rebate off your bill. Centrelink, the Department of Veterans' Affairs and the Western Australian Office for Seniors Interests and Carers issue eligible concession cards.

The rebates available depend on which concession card you hold. Please see the table below for the rebates you maybe entitled to.

| Rebate                            | Eligibility  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Account Establishment Fee Rebate  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Centrelink Health Care Card and Pensioners Concession Card</li> <li>Veterans' Affairs Gold Card (War Widow, Dependent, Totally and Permanently Incapacitated) and Pensioner Concession Cards</li> </ul>   |
| Supply Charge Rebate              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Centrelink Health Care Card, Pensioners Concession Card or Commonwealth Seniors Health Card</li> <li>Veterans' Affairs Gold Card (War Widow, Dependent, Totally and Permanently Incapacitated) and Pensioner Concession Cards</li> <li>WA Seniors Card</li> </ul>                           |
| Dependent Child Rebate            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Centrelink Health Care Card</li> <li>Veterans' Affairs Gold Cards (War Widow, Dependent, Totally and Permanently Incapacitated)</li> <li>Pensioner Concession Card (issued either by Centrelink or the Department of Veteran's Affairs)</li> </ul>  |
| Reduced Meter Test Fee            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Centrelink Health Care Card</li> <li>Commonwealth Seniors Health Card</li> <li>Veterans' Affairs Gold Card (War Widow, Dependent, Totally and Permanently Incapacitated)</li> <li>Pensioner Concession Card (issued either by Centrelink or the Department of Veteran's Affairs)</li> </ul> |
| Air Conditioning Rebate           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WA Seniors Card</li> <li>Centrelink Pensioners Concession Card</li> <li>Commonwealth Seniors Health Card</li> <li>Concession Card with dependent children listed</li> </ul>   |
| Merchant Service Fee (MSF) Rebate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Veterans' Affairs Gold Cards (War Widow, Dependent, Totally and Permanently Incapacitated)</li> </ul>   |

To apply for a rebate off your electricity bill, please call us on 13 13 53 and we will take your application over the phone. If your circumstances have changed and you are no longer the holder of a valid card, you are obliged to notify us.

#### What Synergy does

If you are eligible for a rebate, once you have called us with your concession card details, we will activate the rebate on your account.



We are committed to handling your complaints in a courteous and efficient manner.

## Questions and answers.

**How often will you send me a bill?**

Our residential customers and small-use business customers are sent a bill approximately once every two months. Some business customers receive a bill every month.

**Will the Distributor need to access my property?**

There may be times when the Distributor will need to enter your property, like when the meter is read. Should this be necessary, they will respect the use of your property and will be there for the minimum time necessary.

In such situations, the Distributor needs your assistance to have safe, convenient and unhindered access to your premises and electrical installation.

The Distributor's staff and representatives carry official identification and will show it to you on request. You can advise the Distributor of any special arrangements or requirements you may have concerning access to your premises or property (regarding safety or security). They will endeavour to accommodate your needs wherever possible.

If something at your premises (for example: an unleashed dog) represents a potential danger to the Distributor's staff and representatives, you are required to inform them and make alternative and appropriate arrangements for a meter reading at your property.

**How is my electricity bill calculated?**

The amount we bill you is based on a reading of the electricity meter at your premises. The meter records how much electricity you have used. Readings are taken every two months for most customers and monthly for some business customers.

If your premises are located outside a meter reading area, the Distributor may send you a self-read card to record the amount of electricity you have used. This consumption data is then shown on the bill you receive from us. At least once a year, the Distributor will need to access your property to check your meter.

If a meter cannot be read, or if your self-read card has not been received, we will provide an estimate of your electricity consumption to determine the amount on your bill. We will notify you on your bill if this has occurred. You can also contact us if you would like to obtain information about how and why your bill has been estimated.

For information about different types of meters or estimated bills, including the reason for the estimate, please call us on 13 13 53 or 13 13 54 for business customers.

**Does Synergy protect my privacy?**

We respect your personal information and are committed to keeping your personal information confidential.

The information may be disclosed to third parties who form part of our product/service delivery, such as billers, network operators and financial institutions.

Our Privacy Policy can be viewed at [www.synergy.net.au/privacypolicy](http://www.synergy.net.au/privacypolicy)

**What if I have a complaint?**

We are committed to handling your complaints and enquiries in a courteous and efficient manner.

We have a detailed complaints handling process which includes guidelines to ensure that all complaints are handled professionally. You can view our detailed policy and procedures at [www.synergy.net.au/complaints](http://www.synergy.net.au/complaints)

Our Customer Service Representatives are available to help you with any general questions or concerns that you may have and can be contacted on Freecall 1800 208 987.\*

You may be eligible to apply for a service standard payment of \$20, on request, if we fail to acknowledge your written query or complaint within 10 business days or fail to respond to a written query or complaint within 20 business days.

Request for payment must be submitted within six months of your initial query or complaint.

\*STD/pay phone and mobiles charged at applicable rates.



One of the best sources of information about Synergy is our website.



If you believe that we have been unable to resolve your complaint satisfactorily, you may want to contact the Energy Ombudsman of Western Australia on:

- Phone: (08) 9220 7588, or Freecall 1800 754 004\*
- Email: [energy@ombudsman.wa.gov.au](mailto:energy@ombudsman.wa.gov.au) or
- Visit the Ombudsman website at: [www.ombudsman.wa.gov.au/energy](http://www.ombudsman.wa.gov.au/energy)

Where can I get more information about my electricity supply?

Relevant information regarding the supply of electricity to your home or premises is contained in the following:

#### Contracts

As part of ongoing reform of the WA electricity market, the supply of electricity is now governed by individual contracts with customers, making it easy to find the terms and conditions of your supply in one place.

There are two main contract types – Standard and Non Standard.

#### Standard Contract

The terms of a standard contract are governed by regulations and must be approved by the Economic Regulation Authority.

This contract outlines the standard terms and conditions for all customers who pay standard prices for their electricity.

You can find out more about our standard prices and those that apply to you at [www.synergy.net.au/prices](http://www.synergy.net.au/prices)

\*STD/pay phone and mobiles charged at applicable rates.

You can make an application for an account (standard contract) over the phone, email or by fax. If you are making an application for electricity on behalf of a third party, you will need to complete a Consent Form, signed by the account holder, before we can accept the request. Please visit [www.synergy.net.au/forms](http://www.synergy.net.au/forms) to download a consent form.

To view a copy of the standard contract, visit [www.synergy.net.au/standardcontract](http://www.synergy.net.au/standardcontract) or call 13 13 53 for a copy.

#### Non Standard Contract

A non standard contract relates to special products and offers. These contracts contain different terms and conditions to a standard contract, and may include variations in price, contract length, payment options, and early termination or exit fees.

Non standard contracts are negotiated directly with you and require your consent before they can take effect.

#### Electricity Industry (Customer Contract) Regulations 2005

The minimum standards that must be applied to customer contracts within the electricity industry are outlined within these regulations. A copy is available at [www.slp.wa.gov.au](http://www.slp.wa.gov.au)

#### The Code of Conduct for the Supply of Electricity to Small Use Customers

This is available on the Economic Regulation Authority website at [www.era.wa.gov.au](http://www.era.wa.gov.au). The Code regulates the conduct of people who market, sell or transport electricity. It specifies what is acceptable behaviour when dealing with customers.

#### The Economic Regulation Authority

Write to GPO Box 8469, Perth Business Centre, Western Australia 6849, or telephone (08) 9213 1900.

#### The Director of Energy Safety

Visit their website [www.commerce.wa.gov.au/EnergySafety](http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/EnergySafety) or call (08) 9422 5200.

## Our Website

As your electricity retailer, we have information regarding your electricity supply and our products and services. One of the best sources of information about Synergy is our website, where you can find advice and information about the following:

|                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Electricity connection         | <a href="http://www.synergy.net.au/connection">www.synergy.net.au/connection</a>   |
| Billing information            | <a href="http://www.synergy.net.au/billing">www.synergy.net.au/billing</a>         |
| Prices, charges and fees       | <a href="http://www.synergy.net.au/prices">www.synergy.net.au/prices</a>           |
| Energy efficiency advice       | <a href="http://www.synergy.net.au/smartways">www.synergy.net.au/smartways</a>     |
| Electricity safety information | <a href="http://www.synergy.net.au/safety">www.synergy.net.au/safety</a>           |
| Helping the environment        | <a href="http://www.synergy.net.au/environment">www.synergy.net.au/environment</a> |
| Making an enquiry or complaint | <a href="http://www.synergy.net.au/complaints">www.synergy.net.au/complaints</a>   |

Our Customer Service Consultants are happy to answer your questions and can be contacted on 13 13 53 (or 13 13 54 for business customers).

### Who should I call if there is an electrical emergency?

Please call 13 13 51 if there is an emergency involving your electricity supply. This is the Distributor's 24-hour emergency fault line.

If there are fallen power lines in your area, or you have any concerns regarding safety in relation to your power supply, please ring immediately. Remember: it is important to ensure people are kept at a safe distance from any live wires.

For more information about safety and electrical faults visit [www.westernpower.com.au](http://www.westernpower.com.au)

### What should I do if I have a faulty appliance?

Sometimes a faulty connection or a faulty appliance can result in the loss of power to premises. Two of the more common indicators that there is a faulty connection or faulty appliance at your premises are:

- A fuse at your premises is failing repeatedly, or
- A circuit breaker or safety switch is 'tripping off' the power.

If you receive an electrical shock from your taps, including "tingles", this may indicate a faulty connection and you should telephone the Distributor immediately on 13 13 51, and seek medical advice.

## How to contact us.

We would like to assure you that you will receive our highest standard of service when we are responding to your enquiries.

There are a number of ways you can contact us:

### By Phone

Monday to Friday between 7am and 7pm.

- Residential customers 13 13 53 (within WA)
- Business customers 13 13 54 (within WA)
- For calls outside Western Australia (08) 6212 2222
- TTY (if you have hearing or speech difficulties) (08) 9221 8608.
-  If you don't speak English call the telephone interpreter service (TIS National) on 13 14 50.

### By Mail

Synergy, GPO Box K851, Perth WA 6842

### By Email

Our email address is: [info@synergy.net.au](mailto:info@synergy.net.au)

### By Fax

(08) 9221 4628

### Internet

[www.synergy.net.au](http://www.synergy.net.au)

### Other Useful Numbers

For emergency or supply faults/interruptions call the Distributor on 13 13 51 (24-hour number).

To report faulty streetlights call the Distributor on the 24-hour number 1800 622 008 (Freecall) or you can visit [www.westernpower.com.au](http://www.westernpower.com.au)

## Thank you.

Thank you for reading through the Synergy Customer Charter. We trust it provides you with all the information you need with regard to your rights, obligations and expectations as a valued Synergy customer.

In keeping with the spirit of our Charter, please be assured of our commitment to provide you with the highest standard of customer service at all times.

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