

ENERGY ASSISTANCE QUEENSLAND

Families and small businesses in Queensland are doing it tough right now, with energy prices skyrocketing under Labor. Household electricity costs have risen nearly 24 per cent, and gas costs by 13.5 per cent over the last year, with further power price rises for Queensland households of up to 28.9 per cent, or \$432 a year, expected from 1 July. Meanwhile, QLD small businesses can expect energy bills to increase by up to 26.1 per cent starting this winter.

HERE ARE THREE SIMPLE TIPS TO HELP YOU SAVE MONEY ON YOUR NEXT BILL

1 SHOP AROUND FOR A BETTER DEAL

The Australian Energy Regulator (AER) runs an independent price comparator website, Energy Made Easy, which compares all offers in the market for households and small businesses in Queensland

Upgrades to Energy Made Easy, funded under the Coalition Government, ensure that you can simply enter your meter number (NMI) or scan your bill to get a tailored assessment of the most competitive offers.

→ Visit www.energymadeeasy.gov.au for further information.

2 SPEAK TO YOUR ENERGY RETAILER

Your energy retailer is required to provide you with assistance. Contact your retailer and ask them for help. Retailers must offer residential customers the option of paying your bill with a payment plan.

If you are having a tough time paying your energy bills, you may be able to join your retailer's hardship program which offers a range of support. Your retailer is best placed to advise how they can assist.

For further advice on negotiating a payment plan or hardship arrangements, visit the AER website at www.aer.gov.au/consumers/my-energy-bill/having-trouble-paying-your-energy-bills

If you are having difficulties settling arrangements with your retailer, or are unhappy with the assistance your retailer has provided, the Energy and Water Ombudsman QLD (EWOQ) may be able to help.

→ EWOQ can be contacted on 1800 662 837 or at www.ewog.com.au.

3 ACCESS CONCESSIONS

The QLD State Government has a range of concessions and rebates that may be available to eligible consumers. This includes electricity and gas rebates for eligible Queensland pensioners and seniors.

Contact your energy retailer. They can provide further information about applying for state government concessions and rebates and relevant eligibility requirements.

The QLD Government has a full list of state government energy concessions at www.qld.gov.au/community/cost-of-living-support/concessions/energy-concessions

Further advice

For further advice on energy bills and information to help you take charge of your energy service visit the AER website at: www.aer.gov.au/consumers/my-energy-service/consumer-fact-sheets

* The Federal Government has announced energy price relief for selected households. More details to be announced over coming weeks as the package is finalised with the QLD government.