



ActewAGL

YOUR POWER TO SAVE

Better manage your energy to lower your bills

actewagl.com.au/loweringyourbill



A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

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In collaboration with our partners we provide practical solutions and support.

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INTERPRET YOUR ENERGY BILL

Reading an energy bill can be overwhelming but there are certain sections and components that you may find especially useful to better understand your energy use.

Relevant information for your energy account, usage, charges and discounts are all displayed on your bill.

The first half of **Page 1** of your bill contains your account details including account number, amount due and due date. It also contains a summary of the main details of your current and last bill, including any adjustments.

The bottom half of **Page 1** will specify any savings you've made on the account. Be sure to check the banner at the end of **Page 1** which may be promoting new discounts or services.

Page 2 contains a summary and comparison of your average daily consumption over a period of time. It may also contain comparisons of your average daily consumption with other households in the area. To find out more visit energymadeeasy.gov.au

A breakdown of your charges along with ways to pay your bill is present below it.

Page 2 or **3** may contain any credits, rebates, discounts, adjustments and previous payments received.

If your bill is calculated based on an estimated meter read, this will be specified on **Page 1** just above the Summary box.



Are you on the best pricing plan to meet your energy needs? Check out current plans for both electricity and gas at actewagl.com.au/offers



Stay on top of your bills and better manage your budget with an ongoing Direct Debit payment option. Set up regular payments (fortnightly or monthly) at my.actewagl.com.au



Bill Helpline 13 12 93

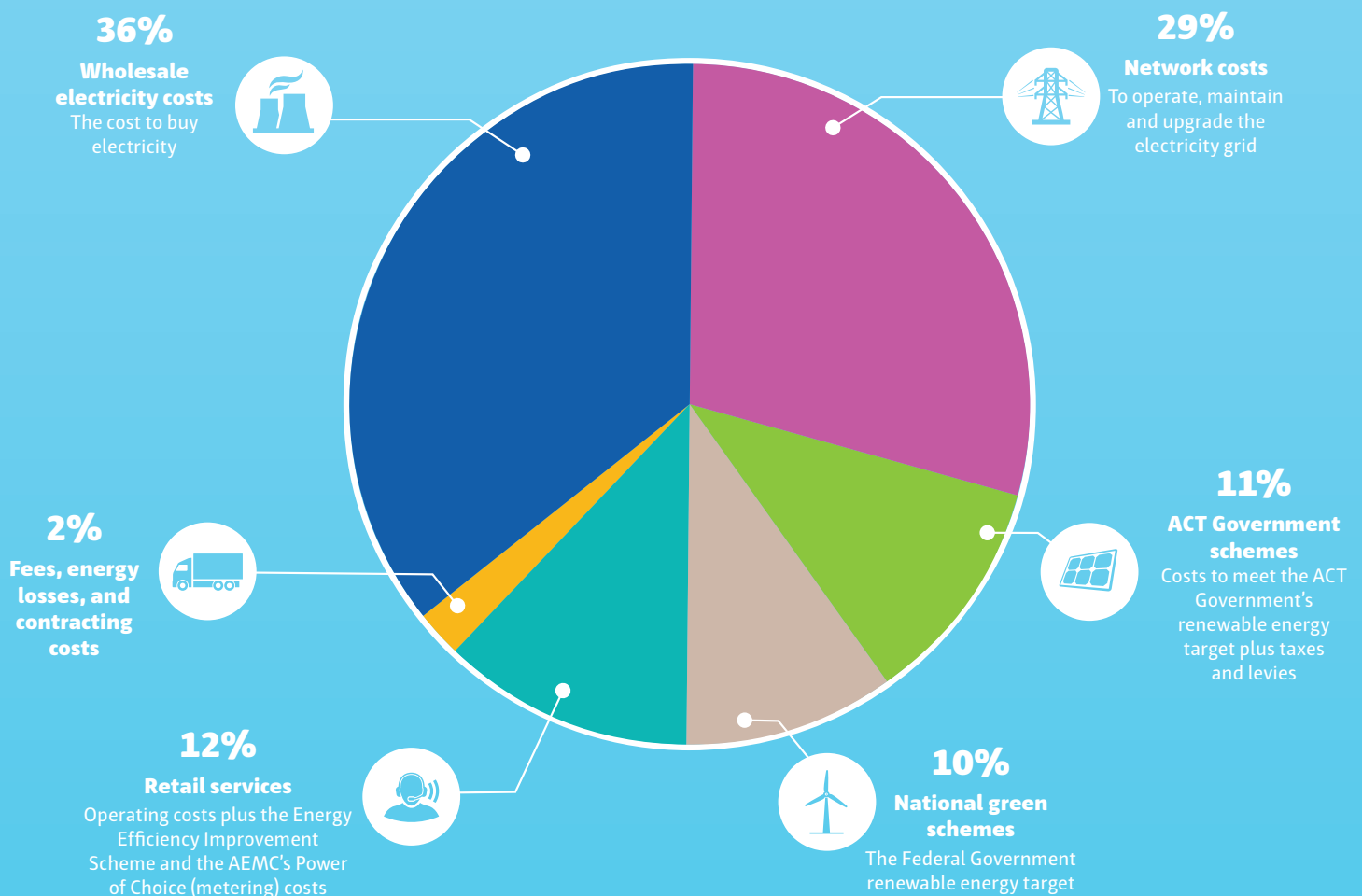
Talk direct to an energy expert.
8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday.





THE COMPONENTS OF YOUR 2019–20 ACT ELECTRICITY PRICE*

This chart explains the elements that make up your ACT residential electricity price.



*Based on cost elements from the ICRC's final decision on 2019–20 prices

UNDERSTAND YOUR ENERGY USE

If your energy bill seems high, there may be a sound reason that's worth investigating. Follow the checklist to identify which factor/s may attribute to an increase.



Which of your energy accounts is billed higher than usual—electricity or gas?

IS IT SEASONAL?

- ☐ A really hot summer, our region's typically cold winters or above average rainy days could contribute to an increase in your air conditioning, heating, hot water and clothes dryer use.
- ☐ Compare your energy to the same period last year? Check by logging into your account at my.actewagl.com.au

ARE THERE OTHER FACTORS?

- ☐ Are more people home more often? Visitors, working from home, or a new baby can cause a spike in energy consumption.
- ☐ Were you away on holiday during the previous billing period? The new bill may appear higher.

APPLIANCES: NEW, OLD AND FAULTY

- ☐ Are your appliances dated—age may be affecting their energy consumption? Old appliances can have low energy ratings, requiring more power to run.
- ☐ Have you noticed household appliances running inconsistently or making strange noises?

- ☐ Have you checked your appliances for obvious issues, such as a leaking hot water system or fridge doors not sealing?
- ☐ Have you recently purchased additional appliances that now add to your consumption?

OUTSTANDING CHARGES

- ☐ Did you pay your previous bill in full? If not, the remaining amount will be added to your current bill. You will see this on your bill as an extra charge on Page 1.

DID YOUR ENERGY PLAN CHANGE?

- ☐ You may have been receiving a promotional discount that has expired. If it has concluded, now's the time to choose a new energy plan to meet your needs at actewagl.com.au/offers

ARE YOU ELIGIBLE FOR A CONCESSION REBATE?

- ☐ Check that your card information is up-to-date and advise us of any changes.



IS YOUR METER READING CORRECT?

- ☐ Is it time to replace a dated meter? A new smart meter will record your usage accurately.
- ☐ If the meter read on your bill is estimated, the estimation is based on the usage history. To ensure that you are billed on an accurate meter read, you can provide a photo of your meter to us to record and adjust your bill accordingly by visiting actewagl.com.au/meterselfread
- ☐ Estimate your bill by logging into your account at my.actewagl.com.au. Click on 'view more info' for the account that you want to estimate.

MONITOR YOUR USAGE IN FOUR SIMPLE STEPS



- 1 Take a reading of your meter at the same time each day for at least a week.
- 2 Record which appliances you used each day.
- 3 At the end of the week, analyse your findings to understand which appliances may be using most the energy in your house.
- 4 Borrow a 'do-it-yourself' Actsmart Home Energy Action Kit from an ACT library which includes the equipment, instructions and worksheets you need to conduct an audit of your energy consumption.

MANAGING YOUR ELECTRICITY USE

HAVE YOU CONSIDERED UPGRADING TO A SMART METER?

Install a smart meter to view your daily electricity usage online. Accurate and regular data puts you in control—make informed choices regarding when and how you use electricity.

Currently there are no upfront charges for new smart meter installations. If additional work is required onsite to ensure the installation is compliant you will be notified first, and of any charges.



Find out more about smart meters at actewagl.com.au/smartmeters

BE SMART WITH YOUR SMART METER

A smart meter means you can regularly check your consumption data and peak demand patterns. Accurate data is recorded in 30 minute intervals and is viewable online the next day. You can better understand when and how you use electricity by logging into your account at my.actewagl.com.au and click on 'view more info'.

Installation of a smart meter may mean you are placed on a new electricity pricing plan resulting in different charges, called a demand pricing plan. It is designed so that households pay according to how much or how little demand they put on the electricity network during the peak demand period.

It's a bit like booking flight tickets. If you book flights over the busy Christmas period, you can expect to pay more than if you were to book a flight in September—because of the higher demand.

WHICH APPLIANCES DO YOU USE BETWEEN 5–8PM?

If you run many appliances at once in your household during the key time period of 5–8pm, your demand charge is likely higher. If you run fewer appliances at once, or use them at other times of the day, your demand charge is likely lower.

By simply time-shifting, which is changing the time of day you use certain appliances, your household could have lower bills than you had on your previous pricing plan. Think about appliances like your clothes dryer, dishwasher or washing machine and aim to use them outside the daily peak demand period.

To get the most out of your demand pricing plan go for a set-and-forget strategy. Ensure your appliances turn on at low peak times only. Use the appliance's built-in timer or plug-in timers at the power points.



Find out more about demand pricing plans at actewagl.com.au/demand

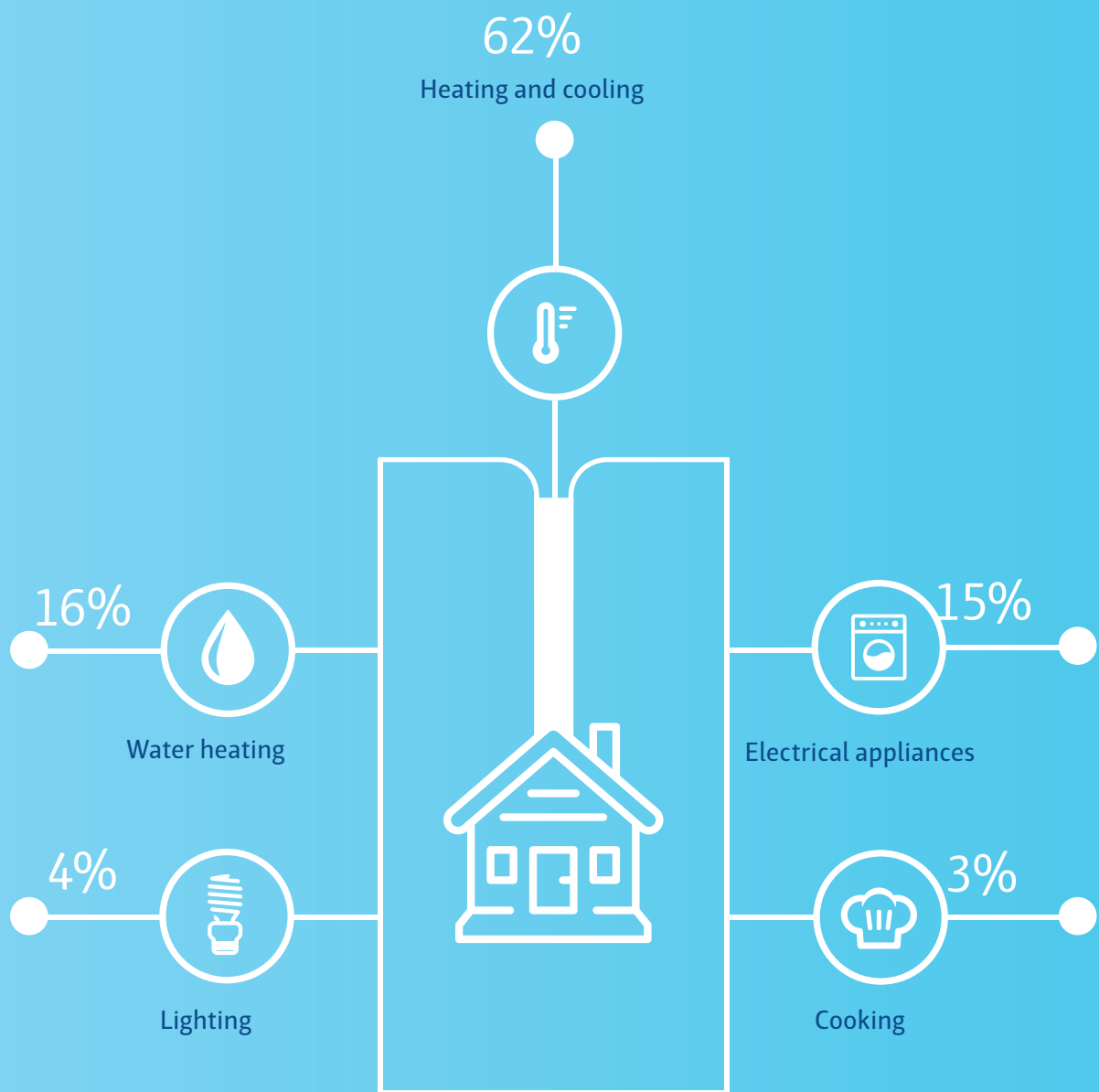


Apply for a smart meter upgrade at
actewagl.com.au/smartmeterupgrade
or call 1300 815 815





WHERE A HOUSEHOLD USES ITS ENERGY



Based on an ACT household's average energy use. Adapted from Energy Use in the *Australian Residential Sector 1986-2020*.

TIPS TO REDUCE YOUR ENERGY BILLS

ActewAGL has been in the local energy arena for 100+ years. We understand the region's energy needs and usage patterns better than most.

HEATING

- Space heating accounts for more than half of your annual energy costs. This is a key appliance where small adjustments can really add up to help you save.
- Every degree you lower the thermostat will save up to 10% on your heating bill. Aim to keep the temperature set between 18°–20°.
- Check the auto timers on your heater. By reducing your heating time by one hour a day, you'll save up to 90 hours of heating costs over winter.
- Minimise the space you heat—only heat the rooms you're using and close all doors and windows to contain the heat.
- Instead of heating your bedroom, consider an electric blanket or hot water bottle.
- Efficient gas space heaters and reverse-cycle air conditioners are cheaper to run than standard electric heaters. Portable electric heaters might be inexpensive to buy, but they can be very expensive to run.
- Reduce heat loss by sealing any gaps and cracks around windows and doors and ensure the insulation in your roof and walls is adequate. Ceiling batts should be about 20cm thick or R4.1 (or above).
- Don't place furniture in front of heaters as this will reduce its output.

COOLING

- Avoid setting your air conditioner lower than 24°C. Every degree lower can add 10% to your electricity bill.
- The most effective way to keep your home cool during the day is to prevent the sun's rays from hitting windows and walls. Blinds, curtains and reflective window tints all help reduce the air conditioning load.
- At night, place a fan near an open window—it will blow hot air out of the room, replacing it with cold air from outside. Open another window elsewhere to encourage a cross breeze.

WATER HEATING

- Reduce the temperature setting of your hot water system to 60° (instead of 70°–80°) to save up to 10% on water heating. If you have an instantaneous system, check that your thermostat is set no higher than 50°.
- Insulate hot water tanks and pipes to limit heat loss.
- Ensure there are no leaks in your hot water system.
- If your hot water system is 10+ years old there may be a more efficient replacement to consider. A hot water heat pump suitable for Canberra winters is an excellent alternative to an electric element system.
- Wash your clothes in cold water. Washing with hot water can increase your energy costs by up to 90%.
- A typical family uses about 75% of hot water for showers. Switch to a water efficient shower head and make short showers a habit.

ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES

Check the star rating when buying appliances to compare energy efficiency. More stars means less running costs.

Clothes dryers are the fourth-biggest energy users in the home. *Aim to time-shift this appliance.*

- Dry washing outside or position under ducted heating vents to make considerable savings.
- Dry washing in quick, consecutive loads to benefit from the warmth from the previous load.
- Add a small dry towel to your load to reduce drying time by up to 25%.

Refrigerator/freezer

- Check the temperature settings are not too low. Fridges should be between 3°–5° and freezers between -15°– -18°. Every degree lower uses 5% more energy.
- Ensure that the fridge seals are tight. You can check this with the paper test. Put a piece of paper between the door and the fridge, close the door and then pull. If the paper slips out easily, it's time to replace the seals.
- Getting rid of a second fridge could save around \$170 a year in electricity costs.

Dishwasher

Only run your dishwasher when it's full load and use the economy cycle. *Aim to time-shift this appliance.*

Pool pumps and filters

Set a timer so it only runs as required—this appliance is a significant energy user! *Aim to time-shift this appliance.*

Screens and charging

- Switch off TVs and gaming consoles at the wall when not in use.
- Don't leave laptops and phones attached to chargers.
- Ensure the 'sleep' feature is enabled to power down such devices.

COOKING

- Use a microwave when possible as it will use about 80% less energy than a stove or oven.
- When stove-top cooking, you can reduce energy use by up to 70% by simmering with pot lids on.
- Use appropriately-sized pots with flat bottoms and tight fitting lids.
- Make sure oven doors close tightly and seals are in good condition.

LIGHTING

- Replace halogen with LED bulbs, especially where lights are on for long periods. Quality LED bulbs last 5–10 times longer than halogen bulbs and you can save up to 88% off your lighting costs.
- Also choose fluorescent tubes, they use a quarter of the electricity consumed by ordinary bulbs and last around eight times longer.
- Reduce bulb wattage—choose the lowest wattage bulb required to meet the room's lighting needs.
- Install motion detectors to control lighting in frequently unoccupied areas e.g. security or garage lights.
- Clean lamps and fittings regularly—over time, dirt build up reduces light output.
- Light switch dimmers save energy and can extend the life of bulbs.
- When installing lighting in a large open-plan space, install multiple zones switches to cover different areas. That way you can restrict your lighting to only the area you are using.



ENERGY EFFICIENT APPLIANCE UPGRADES

**ENERGY
SAVING
SOLUTIONS**

ActewAGL

ActewAGL Energy Saving Solutions enables you to upgrade appliances and implement energy efficient solutions. Access significant rebates and free services to see ongoing bill savings.

DUCTED REVERSE-CYCLE UPGRADE

Replace your old ducted gas heater with a highly efficient ducted reverse-cycle system to ensure year round comfort. You can save up to \$2000* off the purchase price and continue to save up to \$3000* off your electricity bills over the next two years.

REVERSE-CYCLE AIR CONDITIONING

An all-in-one solution for your heating and cooling needs to service you all year round. You can save up to \$1000* off the purchase price and continue to save up to \$1520* off your electricity bills over the next two years.

HOT WATER HEAT PUMP

Heat pumps use the available heat in the air to heat water—even if it's freezing outside! They can be two to three times more efficient than conventional water heaters. Upgrade your water heater to an innovative Stiebel hot water heat pump suitable for Canberra winters, and get up to \$1200* off the purchase price with a rebate.

FRIDGE BUYBACK

We'll pick up your old fridge for FREE, ensure it is responsibly recycled and give you \$30 credit* on your next electricity bill!

BIG BUSINESS LIGHT SWITCH

Upgrade your commercial lights and save up to 88% off your lighting costs! Our expert team will seamlessly swap your existing lights for energy efficient LED alternatives, for FREE*.



Get your next energy-efficiency upgrade at actewagl.com.au/energysavingsolutions

* ACT only, T&Cs apply – see website.

ACCESS SUPPORT

In collaboration with government and local community organisations, ActewAGL have various initiatives in place to support you to manage your energy usage, reduce costs and pay your bills.

REBATES AND CONCESSIONS

ActewAGL manages various rebates and concessions on behalf of the ACT and NSW Governments including concessions on your energy account, medical and life support rebates. We work towards identifying priority households and ensuring that they can benefit from various government schemes.

If you're a concession card holder, check if you may be eligible for a rebate or concession by visiting actewagl.com.au/rebates

STAYING CONNECTED

Our Staying Connected program provides personalised support to help you get back on track with your electricity, gas and water bills. It offers individualised payment plans and incentives for consistent payments. For more information visit actewagl.com.au/stayingconnected

VULNERABILITY ACTION PLAN

ActewAGL recognises that energy is an essential need. Our Vulnerability Action Plan (VAP) underpins our commitment to support financial inclusivity for the community.

Download the plan at actewagl.com.au/VAP

POSITIVE PARTNERSHIPS

We draw on the skills and experience of Care Financial, Salvation Army Moneycare, St Vincent De Paul, the Actsmart program, Lifeline, LegalAid, DVCS and our partners in business to provide ongoing training and feedback to all staff.



MORE INFORMATION


ACTSMART

Your one-stop-shop for ACT Government programs and assistance that help Canberrans to save energy and water, reduce waste and cut greenhouse gas emissions.

 02 6234 7408 or 13 22 81

ENERGY SAVER NSW

Rebates and discounts for energy efficiency programs available to NSW residents to help cut back on energy use and save on power bills.

 resourcesandenergy.nsw.gov.au/energy-consumers/financial-assistance


AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY

Practical advice for households and businesses to reduce your energy bills and learn about the government's priorities.

 energy.gov.au

ENERGY RATING

Information about the Equipment Energy Efficiency Program to standardise energy efficiency ratings for appliances.

 energyrating.gov.au

CARE INC

A community organisation that ensures low income consumers are treated fairly and have support to overcome debt.

 02 6257 1788 or 1800 007 007

THE SALVATION ARMY MONEYCARE

Qualified financial counsellors provide free and confidential information and support to help individuals, couples and families through a range of financial situations, from helping to set up a budget to assisting with debt collectors and repayment plans.

 13 72 58

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY

An organisation that's been providing assistance to people going through tough times in the Canberra/Goulburn region for 166 years.

 02 6282 2722 or 13 18 12

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CRISIS SERVICE (DVCS)

DVCS provides support and advice to victims of domestic violence, including emotional, psychological, financial, sexual or other types of abuse.

 02 6280 0900 or 1800 RESPECT

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