



# Your rights and obligations explained

Customer Charter

[unitedenergy.com.au](http://unitedenergy.com.au)

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United Energy is your electricity distributor and we currently supply more than 650,000 customers across Melbourne's south-eastern suburbs and the Mornington Peninsula. We own and manage a network of 209,000 poles and over 13,000 kilometres of wires.

# UNITED ENERGY – DELIVERING A SAFE AND RELIABLE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

Dear Customer

United Energy (UE) owns and manages the poles and wires that deliver electricity to you.

United Energy has been providing safe and reliable electricity to the people of east and south east Melbourne and the Mornington Peninsula since we were privatised in 1994.

Our objective is to make dealing with us an effortless experience and to provide you with the information you need to get the best from your electricity distribution service.

Our Customer Charter is an overview of our services, responsibilities, and customer service obligations. It also sets out important information on your connection to the network, including the numbers to call when the lights go out.

We hope you will find the information provided in this Customer Charter useful. Please keep it handy for future reference or bookmark our website:  
[www.unitedenergy.com.au](http://www.unitedenergy.com.au)

Tim Rourke  
Chief Executive Officer  
United Energy

# UNITED ENERGY YOUR ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTOR

There are four distinct parts of the electricity supply chain.

## GENERATOR

Electricity generators are the power stations that generate the electricity.

## TRANSMISSION

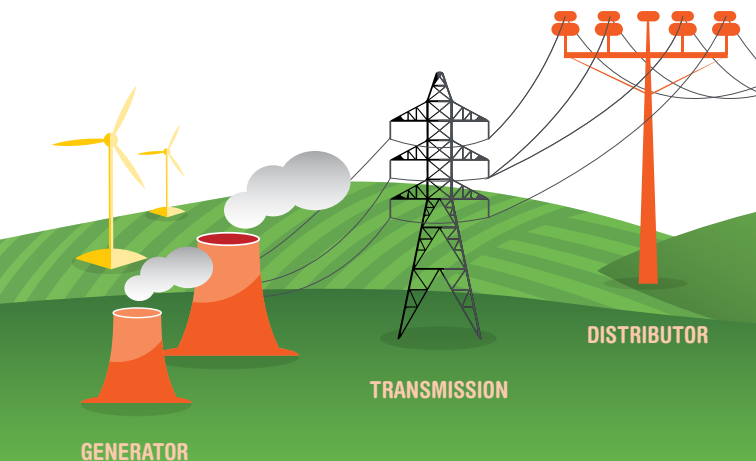
Electricity transmission is the network that transports electricity from the power stations to the major distribution points (terminal stations) in Victoria, via large tower structures.

## DISTRIBUTOR

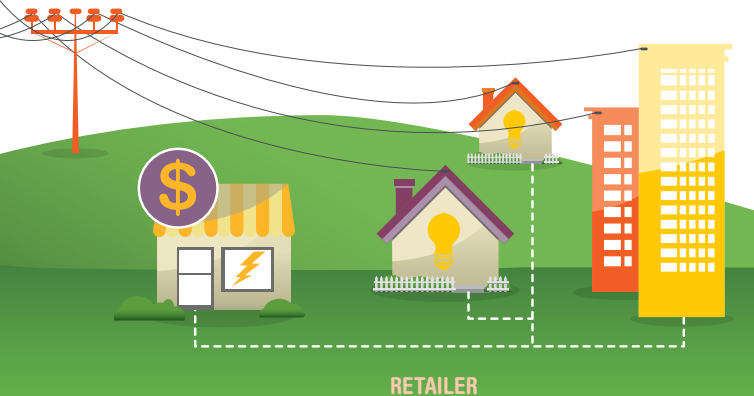
Electricity distributors are businesses like United Energy that own, operate and maintain the electricity network.

## RETAILER

Electricity retailers work with the local distributor to have electricity delivered to customers through the wires in the street. The primary relationship between a customer and the electricity network is managed by the retailer; these are the businesses that send and manage electricity bills. Customers can choose which retailer they wish to work with.



# THE UNITED ENERGY NETWORK (DIAGRAM)



# INNOVATIONS

## ENERGY EASY PORTAL

Energy Easy is a data portal for homes and businesses in the United Energy distribution area with a smart meter installed.

Registration is easy. To register, go to <https://energyeasy.ue.com.au>, where you will be asked for your Personal Details and your NMI (National Meter Identifier) which is available on your electricity bill.

Once registered, you can access easy to understand electricity usage data with simple to read graphs showing usage for a maximum of 24 months. You can also compare your actual electricity usage under a variety of Time-of-Use tariffs, set reduction targets and request Data Files in multiple formats.

## DEMAND MANAGEMENT INITIATIVES

The energy landscape is changing rapidly and there are ways that United Energy can make use of technology and new energy sources as we move to a lower carbon future. United Energy is looking at incentives for customers including programs that support customers to reduce peak demand and therefore reducing the need to invest in capacity that is called upon for only a few days per year. We challenge ourselves to do this cost effectively, without compromising a safe and reliable electricity supply and to ensure any cost savings are passed onto customers. For further information on initiatives please visit our website.

# INDUSTRY CHANGES

## THE POWER OF CHOICE

The Power of Choice is a package of reforms introduced by the Australian Energy Market Commission (AEMC) to provide you with more options in the way you use electricity. The reforms will be implemented progressively over the next 3-4 years and will change some of the interactions we have with you. As the Power of Choice updates are enacted, we will keep you updated via our website [www.unitedenergy.com.au](http://www.unitedenergy.com.au)

## NATIONAL ENERGY CUSTOMER FRAMEWORK (NECF)

New Victorian laws will be enacted shortly in relation to the National Energy Customer Framework. These laws will apply to the customer distributor relationship. Visit our website [www.unitedenergy.com.au](http://www.unitedenergy.com.au) for more information.

## OUR ROLE IN CONNECTING YOU TO THE NETWORK

We recognise the importance of providing customers with a safe and reliable electricity supply. It is our role to install and maintain our meters and associated equipment on your property and across our network.

At all times, the equipment within your property must be accessible to our employees and field crews.

We aim to provide you with the highest standards in metering to ensure accurate billing for all energy used. These standards are achieved by using reliable, accurate equipment which is maintained by approved testing programs.

### EXISTING CONNECTION

Ensuring a safe and reliable electricity connection is the main priority for our customers.

All requests for reconnection to electricity supply at your premises are made via your selected retailer.

If you make a request to your retailer for reconnection before 3pm on a business day, we will aim to reconnect you on the same day. Any request made after 3pm but before 9pm may still be reconnected on the same day. If same day reconnection is not possible, reconnection will occur on the next business day.

Retailers equipped with facilities to remotely enable meters may reconnect your supply in shorter timeframes.

### NEW CONNECTION

Either you or your retailer on your behalf may request a new connection at a new supply address.

We will aim to connect you within 10 business days following your acceptance of our offer, or from a receipt of a valid service order from your retailer.

In Victoria, electricity safety regulations only permit suitably licensed persons to work on electrical installations. It is important to note that connections to new premises are subject to:

- an adequate supply of electricity being available at the required voltage to the premises
- a Certificate of Electrical Safety being provided for the electrical installation

- our representatives being provided with safe, convenient and unhindered access
- compliance with the reasonable technical requirements as indicated within the Victorian Service and Installation Rules.

If you have any questions or concerns about the new connection process, please contact our Service desk on 1300 131 689 during business hours.

## **DISCONNECTION**

We will disconnect your electricity supply upon your request or your retailer's request. We may also disconnect your electricity supply in the following situations:

- in an emergency, without notice
- if there is danger to the health and safety of any person or the environment (including a fire risk)
- without notice due to illegal use (this is defined as supply being used other than at your premises, being taken from another person's premises or the meter being tampered with or bypassed)
- non-compliance with the Electricity Distribution Code, Electricity Safety Act and/or other regulations, or the requirements of an energy regulator or market operator. For non-compliance we will provide you with written notice of the problem and at least five business days to rectify the issue. A further five business days' written notice will be provided prior to disconnection unless it is an emergency or otherwise required by the relevant regulations.

Other than in an emergency, or if supply is being illegally used, we will not disconnect you after 2pm (for domestic residential customers) or 3pm (for business customers) Monday to Thursday or on Fridays, weekends, public holidays, or a day before a public holiday, unless agreed by you.

Please note, other than when we disconnect remotely, we will leave documentation at the address if a customer is vacating. The documentation will clearly outline who the occupant must address any request to connect supply to, the occupant's options for entering into a retail contract and a list of retailers.



## ABOLISHMENT

A supply abolishment is the permanent removal of the electricity meter and supply at your property, usually due to the premises being demolished. Supply abolishment must only be carried out by United Energy, this is in line with Section 2.13 of the Service and Installation Rules.

In order to arrange your supply abolishment you may contact your retailer who will arrange the abolishment on your behalf. If you do not have an open contract with a retailer you may contact UE directly on 1300 131 689 or complete the Abolishment form on our website [www.unitedenergy.com.au](http://www.unitedenergy.com.au).

We will endeavour to complete your supply abolishment within 20 business days of receiving your request.

A supply abolishment must occur prior to any demolition works taking place, as demolishing a property with live electricity is extremely dangerous.

## ADDITIONS AND ALTERATIONS

If you wish to make an addition or alteration to your electricity supply, you will need to appoint a registered electrical contractor (REC). Your REC may engage United Energy on your behalf to enable them to carry out the required works. In order for this to occur, United Energy must receive an Electrical Works Request and service order from your electricity retailer. All charges will be applied on your next electricity bill.

Visit our website [www.unitedenergy.com.au](http://www.unitedenergy.com.au) for further information about Connections.



## **INTERRUPTIONS**

There are instances where we must interrupt your electricity supply.

### **PLANNED INTERRUPTIONS**

In order to maintain a high quality electricity distribution network, it is necessary at times to interrupt your electricity supply for planned maintenance or improvement work. We commit to providing you with a minimum of four business days' notice of any planned interruptions.

Important note: we recommend customers who require continuous supply to refer to their emergency plans or make alternative arrangements.

### **UNPLANNED INTERRUPTIONS**

Interruptions resulting in a loss of electricity supply will occur due to causes beyond our control, such as storms, lightning strikes, animal interferences and/or motor vehicle accidents.

In the case of an unplanned interruption or emergency, you should contact our Faults and Emergencies helpdesk on 132 099 (24 hours).

To gain updates on a major situation, please visit our website – [www.unitedenergy.com.au](http://www.unitedenergy.com.au) – or SMS the postcode of your supply address to 0447 100 333 for an automated response.

### **DIRECTION BY A REGULATORY AUTHORITY**

The Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) may direct us to interrupt the supply of electricity to customers where it is necessary to do so for reasons of public safety and/or the security of the electricity system (known as load shedding).

## WHAT ARE YOUR OBLIGATIONS?

As an electricity customer, you play an important role in ensuring the network delivers efficient and safe electricity to all customers within our region. We have summarised your obligations set out in the Electricity Distribution Code below.

You must always use your best endeavours to ensure that:

- your electrical installation, and any equipment within it, is maintained in a safe condition
- the equipment and wiring within your premises is at all times effectively coordinated with the electrical characteristics of the distribution system.

You are also obliged to follow these key principles:

- ensure that the distribution system and the reliability and quality of supply to other customers are not adversely affected by your actions or equipment
- use electricity legally:
  - your supply of electricity may not be used anywhere other than at your premises and you may not supply electricity to any other person except in accordance with the Electricity Industry Act 2000 (Vic)
  - you must not take electricity supplied to another address for your own purposes
  - you must not allow electricity supplied to you to bypass the meter at your premises
  - you must not tamper with or permit tampering with the meter or associated equipment
- keep all structures and vehicles at your premises clear of powerlines
- keep all vegetation at your premises clear of powerlines. We recommend only appropriate tree species be planted near powerlines. More information can be obtained from our planting guide, visit [www.unitedenergy.com.au](http://www.unitedenergy.com.au).

It is also important that you:

- provide and maintain on your premises any reasonable or agreed facility required to protect our equipment
- do not exceed defined levels for reactive power or harmonic currents as set out in the Electricity Distribution Code (these requirements are usually relevant only for large commercial and industrial customers).

You must also inform us (or request that your retailer informs us) as soon as practicable, if you plan to:

- change wiring or equipment in your electrical installation which may affect the quality of the supply of electricity to any other person
- change the major purpose for which the electricity is used at your address
- change access arrangements to metering and associated equipment
- significantly increase the amount of electricity likely to be used at your supply address
- install any embedded generation associated with your connection.

If we become aware you have breached the Electricity Distribution Code, we will request that you remedy the situation within a specific timeframe. If you do not comply with this notice, we may elect to disconnect your premises.

If you are a tenant, then you must use your best endeavours to have the owner (or other persons responsible for the property) remedy the situation. On our request, you must provide evidence that you have undertaken reasonable steps to contact the relevant person and to have the non-compliance addressed.

## **ELECTRICAL SAFETY**

The safety of our people, customers and the general public is our highest priority. Energy Safe Victoria (ESV) regulates electrical safety in Victoria, including the licensing of electricians.

An electric shock, a fuse blowing repeatedly, a circuit breaker operating repeatedly, or appliances sparking or overheating are indications of faulty equipment or wiring on your premises.

We recommend that you have any defects at your premises checked and rectified by a Registered Electrical Contractor.

## ACCESS TO YOUR PROPERTY

Our employees and contractors are clearly marked with our logo and are more than happy to supply official identification on request.

To help our qualified crew do their job, we request that you provide safe, convenient and unhindered access to your premises to allow them to:

- read or inspect the meter
- connect or disconnect the electricity supply
- inspect and/or test the electrical installation
- prune or clear vegetation from electricity lines
- undertake repairs or maintenance, including replacing aged meters.

We also request that you take action to minimise any potentially dangerous situations for our crew, such as an unleashed dog or removing or repairing any trip hazards.



# OUR OBLIGATIONS

## GUARANTEED SERVICE LEVELS

As your electricity distributor, we are committed to providing our customers with a safe and reliable electricity supply in accordance with the Electricity Distribution Code.

If we are unable to meet our reliability of supply commitments, you may be eligible for a Guaranteed Service Level (GSL) payment.

These payments are made to your retailer and will appear as a credit on your electricity bill (your retailer is responsible for the timing of this credit to your account).



<b>GSL</b>	<b>Payment</b>
If we are more than 15 minutes late for a scheduled appointment	\$35
If we do not connect your new electricity supply by the mutually agreed date	\$80 per day Capped at \$400
If you are the first to report a faulty streetlight immediately neighbouring your residence, or if you are the proprietor of an immediately neighbouring business, and we do not repair the fault within two business days	\$25
If in a calendar year you experience unplanned interruptions of greater than three minutes	
• more than 8 interruptions	\$130
• more than 12 interruptions	\$190
• more than 20 interruption	\$380
If in a calendar year you experience momentary interruptions of up to three minutes	
• more than 24 interruptions	\$40
• more than 36 interruptions	\$50
If in a calendar year you experience unplanned sustained interruptions	
• more than 18 hours	\$130
• more than 30 hours	\$190
• more than 60 hours	\$380
More than 12 hours unplanned sustained interruption on a Major Event Day*	\$90

\* A Major Event Day is an industry term used to indicate abnormal performance in supply reliability due to events outside our control such as extreme weather and storms

## **WE COMMIT TO TIMELY AND ACCURATE INFORMATION**

We are committed to providing you with timely and accurate information on issues related to the supply of electricity to your property, via both distribution of printed materials to your address and/or up to date news and information on our website [www.unitedenergy.com.au](http://www.unitedenergy.com.au)

## **WE ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR RIGHTS TO CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY**

We are committed to maintaining the confidentiality of your personal information in accordance with the National Privacy Principles under the Privacy Act 1988. We therefore will not use or disclose your personal information unless you have given your consent or the disclosure of use is permitted by energy regulations or otherwise required or permitted by law. Our Privacy Policy can be viewed at [www.unitedenergy.com.au](http://www.unitedenergy.com.au).

## **WE ACKNOWLEDGE SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS**

If you have special requirements for electricity supply (such as life support needs), you must contact your retailer and provide the relevant documentation requested. Your retailer will then notify us of your requirements and we will endeavour to ensure your electricity supply is not disconnected. Alternatively you can advise us directly of the requirement for life support with confirmation from your doctor or medical adviser.

At times, interruptions to supply cannot be avoided. We recommend, if you have special requirements, that you have an electricity supply interruption emergency plan in place and activate that plan if your electricity supply is lost. If you do not have an electricity supply interruption emergency plan, we can, with the assistance of your medical adviser and your retailer, help you in preparing one.

We commit to providing you with at least four business days' written notice of any planned electricity interruption.

As part of our responsibility to customers with special requirements, we can provide language interpreting services on request. If you or a family member require an interpreter, simply call 131 450. This is a free service.



## **WE WILL OFFER A RELIABLE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY**

We hold in the highest regard our commitment to provide every customer in our region with an electricity supply that is safe, reliable and of a quality which meets required distribution standards.

We acknowledge that no electricity distribution system is 100% reliable and there may be interruptions from time to time. In maintaining your supply, we observe a number of industry codes and rules approved by the Australian Energy Regulator (AER). We continually monitor the performance of our distribution network and look to implement improvements.

We publish our annual reliability targets on our website and in The Age newspaper.

At your request, we will provide you with:

- a copy of these targets
- an explanation for any interruption to your supply (including an explanation in writing within 20 business days if you require it)
- an explanation within 10 business days of your request for information about any change in the quality of your supply, or if this is not possible, of the steps we are taking to provide you with this information.

## **VOLTAGE VARIATIONS AND CLAIMS**

The voltage of your power supply can be affected by a number of factors outside our control. Interruptions and fluctuations may cause damage to your electrical equipment.

If your appliances or equipment do suffer damage as a result of a voltage variation, you may be entitled to submit a claim. Claim forms are available from [www.unitedenergy.com.au](http://www.unitedenergy.com.au) or by calling us on 1300 131 689 or calling your retailer.

We will assess all claims submitted to us relating to a voltage variation event in accordance with the Electricity Industry Guideline No. 11- Voltage Variation Compensation issued by the Essential Services Commission (ESC).

If you are a business customer, it is important that you are aware of your obligations to minimise the risk of loss or damage to your business in the event of fluctuations in electricity supply by taking precautions.

For more information on voltage variations, including industry guidelines, visit [www.unitedenergy.com.au](http://www.unitedenergy.com.au)

Please contact us directly if you have any concerns about the quality of your electricity supply.

## DISPUTE RESOLUTION

We strive to provide you with outstanding customer service every time you contact us. However, if you should ever feel the service we provide is less than satisfactory, a complaint can be lodged by contacting either your retailer or United Energy via [www.unitedenergy.com.au](http://www.unitedenergy.com.au) and we will do our best to resolve it satisfactorily.

If you are not completely satisfied with our response, you are entitled to a review of your complaint by senior management within our company. If we are still not able to resolve the issue to your satisfaction, you may contact the Energy and Water Ombudsman of Victoria (EWOV).

EWOV is an independent service which receives, investigates and resolves enquiries and complaints against electricity companies.

## THE ENVIRONMENT

At United Energy, we are committed to reducing the impact of our business operations on the environment. Our vision is to responsibly manage our network and their environmental impacts while delivering the community's energy needs.

One of our guiding environmental principles is to ensure management, employees and sub-contractors have the necessary skills, training, knowledge and resources to meet their environmental obligations and responsibilities while complying with all applicable environmental legislation.

# TREES

Trees that are not maintained can cause significant damage to the network, and may cause a fire.

## OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

Please never attempt to clear or trim trees within the vicinity of powerlines. The pruning or removal of trees on your property, or on road reserves in rural areas near the powerlines, is our responsibility (except in relation to the overhead service line between a pole and your premises). If you are concerned about vegetation near powerlines, please contact us on 1300 131 689.

Trees on the road reserves in urban areas are the responsibility of your local council. Please contact your council first if you have any concerns about these trees, however, if you are not given a satisfactory response, please contact us on 1300 131 689.

## YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

It is your responsibility to keep trees and branches on your property away from the overhead service line that runs from the pole to your premises.

Where trees or other vegetation pose a danger we may provide you with written notice to clear the vegetation from the service line. We recommend that you engage only Registered Electrical Contractors or authorised vegetation control companies to undertake this work.

If the line remains uncleared after a reasonable period following our notice, and therefore unsafe, we may instruct our contractor to perform the work and bill you. If you are a tenant, you are responsible for contacting your property owner about clearing trees and vegetation from the service line. If your neighbours' trees are affecting your service line, please contact us on 1300 131 689.

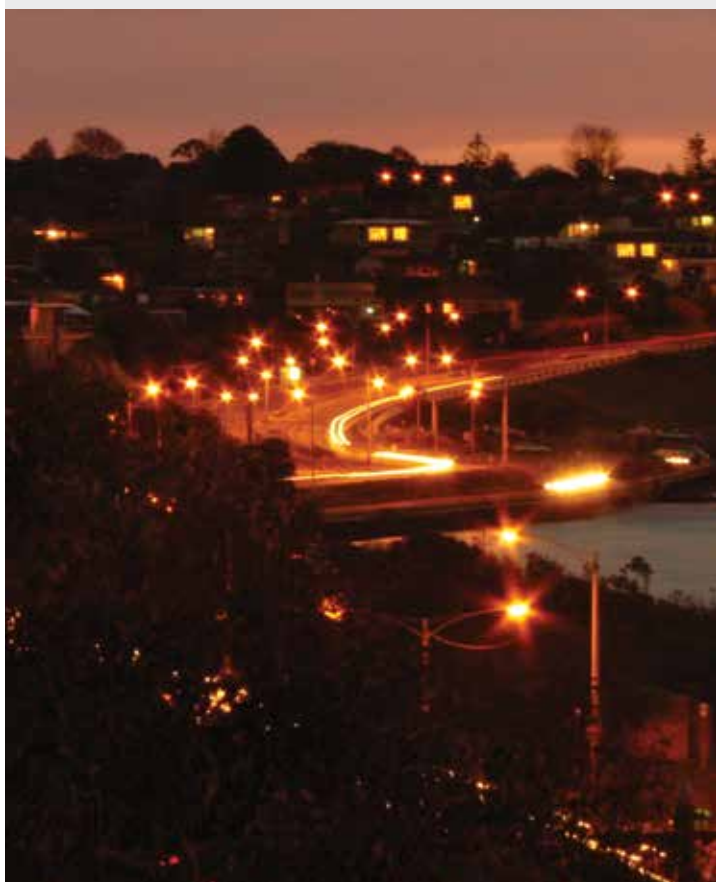
The Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations set out the clearances required and who is responsible for carrying out the pruning. You may request a copy of these regulations from Energy Safe Victoria (ESV), or they can be located at [www.esv.vic.gov.au](http://www.esv.vic.gov.au)

## STREET LIGHTING

We provide public lighting services to local government and VicRoads in your area. However, on some of the major roads, VicRoads owns and maintains the street lighting assets. If you notice a faulty streetlight or have any questions, please call us on 132 099 (24 hours).

If the faulty streetlight is on a pole displaying a VicRoads label, please call VicRoads on 131 171.

We have regular patrols to identify and repair faulty lights on main roads, however, we encourage public support to identify any lights that may be missed.



# CONTACT US

## CUSTOMER SERVICE DESK

Monday to Friday 8am–6pm  
1300 131 689

## EMERGENCY/FAULTS 24 HOURS

132 099

## TELEPHONE INTERPRETING SERVICE

131 450

## POSTAL ADDRESS

PO Box 449  
Mt Waverley VIC 3149

## EMAIL ADDRESS

[info@ue.com.au](mailto:info@ue.com.au)

## WEBSITE

[www.unitedenergy.com.au](http://www.unitedenergy.com.au)



# DIRECTORY

## ENERGY SAFE VICTORIA (ESV)

4 Riverside Quay  
Southbank VIC 3006

### Postal address

PO Box 262  
Collins Street West  
Melbourne VIC 8007

### Telephone

(03) 9203 9700

### Website

[www.esv.vic.gov.au](http://www.esv.vic.gov.au)

## ESSENTIAL SERVICES COMMISSION (ESC)

Lvl 37, 2 Lonsdale St  
Melbourne VIC 3000

### Telephone

1300 664 969

### Website

[www.esc.vic.gov.au](http://www.esc.vic.gov.au)

## ENERGY AND WATER OMBUDSMAN OF VICTORIA (EWOV)

GPO Box 469D  
Melbourne VIC 3001

### Telephone

1800 500 509

### Website

[www.ewov.com.au](http://www.ewov.com.au)

## AUSTRALIAN ENERGY MARKET OPERATOR (AEMO)

### Postal address

GPO Box 2008  
Melbourne VIC 3001

### Telephone

1300 858 724

### Website

[www.aemo.com.au](http://www.aemo.com.au)

## AUSTRALIAN ENERGY REGULATOR (AER)

### Postal address

GPO Box 520  
Melbourne VIC 3001

### Telephone

1300 302 502

### Website

[www.aer.gov.au](http://www.aer.gov.au)



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## UPDATE

We will advise you of any material updates to your rights and responsibilities via [www.unitedenergy.com.au](http://www.unitedenergy.com.au).

Please keep this Customer Charter in a safe place for future reference.

Your National Meter Identifier (NMI) is a unique meter number that identifies your metering installation in the National Electricity Market (you can obtain this from your electricity bill). You should record this NMI here for easy reference.

NMI:

