



Negotiating your energy contract

In NSW you have the option to choose which electricity and gas retailer you want to connect to. You can also choose from a range of price plans offered by each retailer.

Find the best energy deal

Before you agree to enter any energy contract, you should be given an Energy Price Fact Sheet that provides key details about the contract, including:

- ✓ Name of the contract and the retailer selling the contract
- ✓ Tariff rates - including the unit price you will pay in cents per kWh for electricity and cents per MJ for gas and any fixed or standing charge in cents per day.
- ✓ All fees - including any account establishment fees, exit fees, late payment fees, disconnection fees, reconnection fees and payment processing fees.
- ✓ All discounts and rebates - including conditional discounts, for example only if you pay on time, and non-conditional discounts that apply to the contract.
- ✓ Other key information including:
 - length of contract
 - cooling off period
 - where you can access the full terms and conditions
 - GreenPower options
 - options for solar customers.

Types of energy contract in NSW

There are three types of energy contract available in NSW:

- ✓ Regulated contract
- ✓ Standard retail contract
- ✓ Market retail contract.

If you are unsure which type of energy contract you are on, check with your energy retailer.

Useful websites

- **Energy Accounts Payment Assistance (EAPA)**
<http://www.resourcesandenergy.nsw.gov.au/energy-consumers/financial-assistance/stay-connected-through-financial-crisis>
- **Help with energy bills**
<http://www.resourcesandenergy.nsw.gov.au/energy-consumers/financial-assistance/protection>
- **Energy and Water Ombudsman NSW**
<http://www.ewon.com.au/index.cfm/suppliers/>
- **Information on regulated contracts**
<http://www.resourcesandenergy.nsw.gov.au/energy-consumers/energy-providers/choosing-providers/licence-endorsements-standard>
- **IPART**
www.ipart.nsw.gov.au

Regulated contract

All customers in NSW are entitled to have their energy supplied at regulated prices. There are regulated offer retailers for both electricity and gas.

Regulated offer retailers are allocated specific districts across NSW. Regulated offer retailers only offer regulated prices in their allocated districts. For example, if your home is located in Origin Energy's regulated district, you will not be able to access a regulated offer from Energy Australia.

The terms and conditions of the regulated offer contract are set out in legislation and cannot be changed by retailers. Regulated prices are determined by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART), generally on 1 July each year.

Standard retail contract

Standard retail contracts are offered by all electricity and gas retailers and have model terms and conditions set by law. If you have not signed up to a market contract, your energy will be supplied under a standard retail contract. This contract has no exit fees and you can change to a different contract at any time.

The prices under standard retail contracts are set by the retailers themselves, but can only be changed once every 6 months.

Market retail contract

All energy retailers can offer to supply your energy at market prices under a market offer contract. Even a regulated offer retailer can offer a market offer contract. Market retail contracts are negotiated between the retailer and the customer.

Before you sign

Energy contracts are legally enforceable so make sure you understand the terms and conditions. If you don't understand something, ask your energy retailer or get independent advice on what it means.

Be aware that fees may be imposed if you move or end your contract early.

There are strict requirements around the marketing behaviour of retailers to ensure that energy retailers treat customers fairly.

Financial difficulty

Energy retailers have programs to assist customers in financial difficulty to manage their bills more effectively. Speak to your retailer for information on financial assistance programs.

In addition, the NSW Government provides energy rebates to eligible customers who are electricity account holders. The NSW Government also provides assistance to customers experiencing financial difficulty through the Energy Accounts Payment Assistance (EAPA) Scheme. See help with energy bills below for more information.

Complaints

If you want to make a complaint about an electricity or gas retailer or their marketing agent (including door-to-door sales people) contact your retailer first. Have a look at some tips for dealing with your retailer on the Energy and Water Ombudsman (EWON) NSW website.

If your complaint can't be resolved directly with your retailer, you can make a complaint to the EWON. The NSW Government has approved EWON as an independent body to assist you. EWON can be contacted on Freecall 1800 246 545.