

Electricity information for tenants



Managing your electricity bills can be a challenge.
If you share accommodation, here are some tips.

Are you the account holder?

The electricity account might be in your name, someone else's name or multiple names.

If you are the account holder, you are liable for any money owing on the account. This means you are responsible for making sure the bills are paid. You can be held liable if the account goes into debt.

If you are not listed as an account holder on the bill, you will need permission from the account holder if you need to speak to the retailer about the account.



Who pays for what?

When you move into a property, talk about the electricity bill and how costs will be divided in the household.

Many retailers will let you pay in fortnightly or monthly instalments. This can help to avoid being left with a large bill at the end of the quarter.



Moving in and out

Because there is a time lag between when you use electricity and when the bill arrives, there can be problems when people move in and out.

If you are the account holder make sure you transfer the account into someone else's name before you move out.

If you don't change the account, you are still legally responsible for the bill even after you leave. If the bill is still in your name and doesn't get paid you may be pursued by debt collectors or be credit listed.

Most retailers will issue a final bill under the old name. Keep this as evidence that you are no longer responsible for the account.

If someone else is moving out, you can read your electricity meter to work out how much has been used since the last bill or contact your retailer for an estimate of how much is owing on your account.

Choosing an energy plan

If you live in South East Queensland you have a choice of energy companies and plans. Some of these plans are fixed-term contracts for 12 or 24 months. If the account holder moves out before the end of the contract, an early termination fee may apply to cancel the account.

You might prefer to choose a plan that doesn't have a fixed term so you can cancel the plan or change names on the account without any penalty.

Accessing concessions

If you live in a sharehouse, you must be the account holder before you can apply for a concession. There are also some restrictions about which concessions you can get.

You can only receive the Electricity Rebate or Reticulated Natural Gas Rebate if you live alone or with either:

- your spouse
- other people who are also eligible for the concession
- other people who are wholly dependent on you
- other people who receive an income support payment from Centrelink and do not pay rent other people who live with you to provide care or assistance and who do not pay rent.

You may be eligible for the Home Energy Emergency Assistance Scheme (HEEAS).

Energy efficiency advice

It can be hard to reduce your usage when you are a tenant because you need approval from the property owner to make energy efficiency improvements to the home or fixed appliances.

However there are some ways you can minimise your usage to save money. Visit **energymadeeasy.gov.au** for some handy tips.



More advice and information

If you have a dispute which you can't resolve with your energy retailer, you can lodge a complaint with the Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland. For more information call **1800 662 837** or visit **ewoq.com.au**

For information related to your tenancy, contact the Residential Tenancy Authority (RTA). The RTA provides free dispute resolution service to assist parties to exchange information and resolve tenancy disputes. Call **1300 366 311** or visit **rta.qld.gov.au**

For advice, support or individual advocacy on a tenancy issue call Tenants Queensland on **1300 744 263** or visit **tenantsqld.org.au**

Useful links

Community Door communitydoor.org.au/energy

Queensland Government qld.org.au

Energy and Water Ombudsman..... ewoq.com.au