

NOTIFYING CUSTOMERS BEFORE THEIR ENERGY PRICES CHANGE

Advance notice of price changes final determination 27 September 2018

Under this final rule, retailers must notify customers before their energy prices change. This helps prompt customers to take control of their electricity and gas bills.

WHAT RETAILERS HAVE TO DO

Under the final rule retailers must:

Give customers at least five business days notice of price changes. The notice must set out the energy tariffs and charges that apply before and after the change, and the date of the price change.

Tell customers they can request their historical billing and energy usage data.

Deliver the notice by the customer's preferred method of communication, such as email, SMS or mail.

At least **5** business days notice

BENEFITS

Customers:

Can switch earlier to a new plan or new retailer that better serves their needs, before price changes take effect.

Have more timely information to do other things that may help them save money, such as accessing their billing and usage data to work out how they can best manage the change in price.

Can more confidently participate in the energy market by being prompted to secure the best offer available or investigate energy efficiency tools and distributed generation like solar.

Advance notice gives customers time to change their budgeting plans or electricity usage if they want. They can also contact their existing retailer and negotiate a new retail plan to start right away.



NEW CIVIL PENALTIES

The final determination includes a joint AEMC/AER recommendation for new civil penalties, such as fines, to protect customers if retailers fail to comply with the new obligations.



WHERE THE NEW RULE APPLIES

The changes will be part of the National Energy Customer Framework (NECF) which applies in the ACT, Tasmania, South Australia, New South Wales and Queensland. The changes will not apply in Victoria as it has its own Energy Retail Code.

Queensland has a state law that requires retailers to notify customers on market offers at least ten business days in advance of price changes, which would still apply.

Also, the changes will not apply to customers in Tasmania, regional Queensland or the ACT who are on regulated electricity prices which are set by governments or regulators.



NEXT STEPS

The rule will commence on 1 February 2019 to give retailers time to make changes to their systems.