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Essential News

Latest news from the Essential Services Commission
June 2024

Welcome to Essential News, our regular update on key decisions, releases and events from the Essential Services Commission.

Reviewing the Energy Retail Code of Practice

We are seeking feedback on our review of the [Energy Retail Code of Practice](#) with the focus on improving protections for Victorian energy consumers.

We released our issues paper which outlines areas for review based on market trends and stakeholder insights. The consultation on our issues paper is open until 19 July 2024.

[Find out more via Engage Victoria →](#)



Water price review 2024

We have approved the maximum prices Goulburn-Murray Water and Greater Western Water may charge customers from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2028.

[Find out more →](#)



2024-25 prices for Victorian water businesses

We have confirmed the prices to apply in 2024–25 for Victoria's 16 water businesses.

Typical water bills will generally rise in line with inflation over 2024–25. Average bills for owner-occupier households are set to rise, after inflation, by around \$33 (three per cent) in Melbourne and by around \$50

2024 taxi review: unbooked taxi fares and non-cash payment surcharge

We released our draft decision on the 2024 taxi review, proposing an increase to maximum fares payable when a taxi is hailed from the street or at a taxi rank.

We are also proposing to retain the current caps on non-cash payment surcharges.

Consultation on our draft decision is open until 12 July 2024.

[Find out more via Engage Victoria →](#)



Our 2024-25 compliance and enforcement priorities

Our 2024–25 compliance and enforcement priorities address key strategic areas of focus identified in the Victorian energy market and Victorian Energy Upgrades (VEU) program. We have an enduring priority to protect consumers experiencing vulnerability and will continue to engage with businesses to help them understand and meet their obligations.

- [View our compliance and enforcement priorities for energy →](#)
- [View our compliance and enforcement priorities for the Victorian Energy Upgrades program →](#)



(four per cent) in regional Victoria.

- [Find out more →](#)
- [Read our media release →](#)



The importance of considerate leadership: community sector roundtable

On 20 June 2024, we held our 16th Community Sector Roundtable with key consumer and community representatives coming together to participate in an online forum.

We were fortunate to have Rodney Carter, the CEO of DJAARA and Damian Wells, Managing Director at Coliban Water, share their learnings in considerate leadership and the role this plays in appropriately acknowledging and helping to come to terms with our history.

[Read the full summary of our roundtable →](#)



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Victorian Energy Market Report - June 2024

We released the latest Victorian Energy Market Report (VEMR) covering the period from 1 January to 31 March 2024.



New commissioner appointed to the Essential Services Commission

Jess Young has been appointed as a commissioner. Her term commenced on 24 June 2024.

An expert in regulatory economics, Jess is excited to join the commission at a time when the twin challenges of cost of living and the energy transition mean economic regulation of essential services has never been more important. She is looking forward to broadening her regulatory focus again to water utilities, ports, transport and local government, while continuing to engage in and help drive the energy transition to ensure consumer interests are protected.

[Read our news update on Jess Young's appointment →](#)



From left to right: Commissioner Jess Young standing with Commissioner Rebecca Billings and Chief Executive Officer Sarah Sheppard.

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Avoid bill shock this winter: check your meter and your plan

Check your own meter reading

You can compare an estimated bill against your meter reading and request an adjustment from your energy retailer.

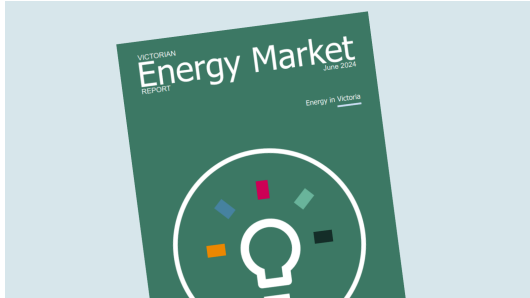
Check if you are on the best deal

Your energy company must tell you at least once every 4 months how much you

The report highlighted our strong action against non-compliance with energy rules. Retailers paid penalty notices totalling over \$730,000 for alleged contraventions of Victorian energy rules relating to debt recovery, family violence and Guaranteed Service Level payments.

The report also found an increase in gas and electricity customers accessing tailored assistance for payment difficulty.

[Read the Victorian Energy Market Report for June 2024 →](#)



could save by switching to the best energy plan they offer.

Even if you are on the best deal from your current retailer, there might be a better deal on the market. You can use the free, independent [Victorian Energy Compare website](#) to compare energy offers for a better deal.

[Read our media release →](#)



2024-25 Victorian Default Offer

From 1 July 2024, default electricity prices are being cut by around \$100 (or 6 per cent) for Victorian households and \$260 (or 7 per cent) for small businesses.

The Victorian Default Offer provides Victorian consumers access to a fair electricity deal, and acts as a reference price so you can more easily compare different deals in the market.

[Learn more about the Victorian Default Offer →](#)

Your consumer rights and the support available to you

Learn about your rights as a consumer in the sectors we regulate, including electricity and gas, local government, water, transport and the Victorian Energy Upgrades program.

[Find out more →](#)



Consultation

We're currently seeking feedback on the following:

- [Unbooked taxi fares and non-cash payment surcharge review 2024](#) - consultation closes 12 July 2024
- [Regional Wind Farms Pty Ltd - application for electricity generation licence](#) - consultation closes 15 July 2024
- [Reviewing the Energy Retail Code of Practice](#) - consultation closes 19 July 2024

[Visit our consultations page →](#)

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