

News Release



Sunday 9 September 2007

1.5 million customers can plug into new electronic smart meters

More than 1.5 million homes and businesses in NSW can now get new electronic smart meters installed for free to help give them more control over their electricity bills.

The move comes after an investigation by EnergyAustralia of 10,300 household electricity accounts already using the smart meters and timed based pricing revealed that households were saving an average \$45 a year on their electricity costs compared to EnergyAustralia's standard domestic rate.

Managing Director George Maltabarow said all homes and businesses across the EnergyAustralia network could now get a new smart meter installed free of charge.

"These new smart meters are giving households more control over their electricity costs," Mr Maltabarow said.

"They allow households to pay less for electricity outside peak times – that's 82% of the time. At the same time these customers will help make the electricity network more efficient by evening out electricity use throughout the day.

"We expect that households with air conditioning, a pool and with three or more people will be the most likely to benefit, however there are more ways to take advantage.

"It's a new and smarter way of paying for electricity and now any household or business on our network can access it.

"For example, a household would only have to use their dishwasher before they go to bed rather than after dinner – and they could save \$30 a year on the electricity costs. Using clothes dryers after 8pm or early in the morning can also help families save. If you have a pool it is as simple as setting your pool pump to run at a different time and you could save more than \$200 a year."

Analysis of smart meters across the EnergyAustralia network shows that:

- 71% of people thought that time based pricing was a fairer system
- 83% said they were more aware of their electricity consumption
- 72% said they were actively making changes to their electricity usage
- Homes with smart meters were saving on average \$45 a year compared to standard domestic rates
- 85% of customers were better off under time based pricing compared to the standard domestic tariff

The smart meters measure how much electricity is used every 30 minutes compared to older style meters which measure electricity use every three months. You then pay different amounts for electricity based on when you use it.

Smart meters are being progressively installed in homes and businesses on the EnergyAustralia network that use large amounts of electricity. There are now more than 100,000 homes and businesses with smart meters that pay for their electricity this way. Now any household or business in the EnergyAustralia network – or more than 1.5 million customers – can request a smart meter to be installed by calling 13 15 35.

Media contact: EnergyAustralia News Pager 02 9966 7985.

Smart meters and time based pricing

Households with smart meters using the time based pricing pay less for their electricity 82% of the time – that includes all weekend.

By shifting other non-essential electricity use outside peak times they could save even more money.

About 15% of the electricity network is used for only one per cent of the time. That's almost \$1.5 billion worth of electrical equipment only being used on three or four days a year.

In 10 years time, that's expected to increase to 20% of the network only used three or four days a year.

It's hoped that smart meters and time based pricing will encourage customers to switch some of their electricity use outside peak times to help even out electricity consumption and make the electricity network more efficient.

Even a small change, like a 5% shift to non peak times, can make a very big difference to the electricity network if it occurs across a bigger number of households.

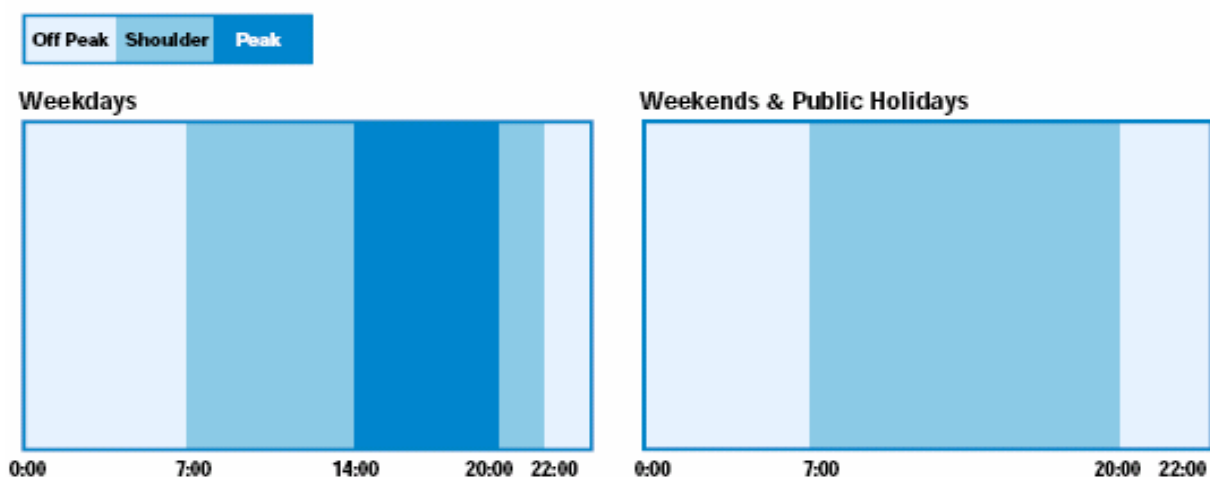
It could also help defer the need for a peak power station in 10 to 15 years time.

Time based pricing

Under this system, we separate the day into three periods: shoulder, peak and off-peak.

Three time periods and Time-of-Use Rates (incl GST)

Peak period	27.6 cents / kWh
Shoulder period	9.7 cents / kWh
Off-peak	5.6 cents / kWh



Traditional Rate (incl GST)

First block	12.87 cents / kWh
Second block	17.93 cents / kWh