

Thursday, 13 March 2008

## Pool your savings by pumping at night

Pool owners cut their energy use in peak periods and saved around \$240 a year by installing a smart meter and changing the time of day they used their pool pump, an EnergyAustralia study has found.

A trial of 177 households over three months in Sydney's north showed that smart meters helped them on average halve their pool's energy use in peak times and save \$60 a quarter by using pool pumps outside peak times.

And pool owners are now being targeted to shift more electricity to off peak by taking up a \$150 rebate if they buy new quieter pool pumps. More than 100 people have so far applied for the rebate.

EnergyAustralia energy efficiency expert Paul Myors said the rebate would encourage people to replace their noisy pool pumps with quieter models so they may be able to run it at night without disturbing the neighbours.

"Pool pumps are one of the biggest energy users in the home after electric hot water and air conditioners," Mr Myors said.

"They are often set to run for more than six hours a day in summer without you realising it – they are a hidden energy guzzler.

"When run in peak times, they also contribute to peak electricity demand which in turn is driving the need for more expensive peaking power stations.

"Pool owners with time-based pricing, can make the biggest savings by running pool pumps at night, in the off peak, but some pool pumps are too noisy."

Noise regulations stipulate that pool pumps must not be heard from your neighbour's house between 8pm and 7am on weekdays and 8pm to 8am on weekends and public holidays.

"The noise issue is one barrier we want to help remove by giving pool owners a rebate when they swap their pool pump for a quieter model. This may mean they can run their pump at night and save and help reduce peak energy use," Mr Myors said.

The EnergyAustralia rebate applies to customers replacing their existing pool pump with one of five models which have been tested and shown to be quieter than the average on the market. The \$150 rebate reduces the cost of the new pump by about one quarter.

Mr Myors said an online pool calculator and a comprehensive information booklet have also been developed by EnergyAustralia to help pool owners reduce the running costs and environmental impact of their pool even further.

The booklet, produced in partnership with the Swimming Pools and Spas Association of NSW (SPASA), is available from pool shops in Sydney, the Central Coast and Hunter to help new pool owners be water and energy efficient from the outset.

And the new online pool calculator has been designed so households can estimate how much they can save by switching to a smart meter with time-based pricing.

A smart meter measures how much electricity a customer uses and when they use it. Households are then charged less during the off peak and shoulder periods and more during peaks times.

Mr Myers said if pool owners did not have a smart meter or access to time-based pricing, they could contact EnergyAustralia on 13 15 25 to have a smart meter installed.

The pool pump rebate is available for households in Sydney, the Central Coast and Hunter from now until June 2008.

EnergyAustralia's online pool pump rebate form, calculator, and pool efficiency booklet can be found at [www.energy.com.au](http://www.energy.com.au)

Media contact: EnergyAustralia News Pager 02 9966 7985.

## BACKGROUND

### Smart Meters and time-based pricing

Smart meters measure how much electricity is used every 30 minutes compared to older style meters where electricity use is measured every three months.

Households with smart meters pay different amounts for electricity based on when they use it, based on Off-peak, Shoulder or Peak rates.

Smart meters give households more control over their electricity costs. They allow households to pay less for electricity used outside Peak times, which is 78% of the time. At the same time these customers will help make the electricity network more efficient by spreading electricity use more evenly throughout the day.

Weekdays	Weekends & Public Holidays
<b>Shoulder</b> 7am - 2pm 9.7 cents / kWh	<b>Shoulder</b> 7am- 10pm 9.7 cents / kWh
<b>Peak</b> 2pm - 8pm 27.6 cents / kWh	<b>Off Peak</b> 10pm- 7am 5.6 cents / kWh
<b>Shoulder</b> 8pm – 10pm 9.7 cents / kWh	(no peak period on weekends and public holidays)
<b>Off Peak</b> 10pm – 7am 5.6 cents / kWh	

### Traditional rates

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

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