

ENERGY FACTS: MOVING HOUSE

Moving house can be a major undertaking and you want it to go smoothly. Forgetting to notify your electricity, gas, and water retailer can cause serious unexpected problems.

Follow these easy steps for a smooth move ...

Moving Out

STEP 1: NOTIFY YOUR RETAILER AT LEAST 3 DAYS BEFORE YOU MOVE.

Failure to notify could result in you having a debt for energy or water used after you moved out.

Depending on the terms of your contract, you may be required to give a longer period of notice. You may also be required to pay an early termination fee, if your contract is for a fixed term and cannot be moved to your new address.

If you are in a share house and the account is in your name, it is important to notify the retailer of your change of address and to arrange for one of the other occupants to take over responsibility for the account - it is your reputation that is on the line. If you do not notify the retailer when you move out, your responsibility for energy or water bills could continue for months (or even years) after you have moved out of the property.

STEP 2: GIVE A FORWARDING ADDRESS FOR YOUR FINAL BILL

Failure to pay your final account could lead to your name being reported to a credit referencing agency. This may reduce your access to credit facilities or lead to an increase in the cost of credit or other services.

STEP 3: PROVIDE ACCESS TO THE METER

Moving In

Moving in without setting up utility accounts, could result in:

- You receiving a large back bill - your obligation to pay for energy and water starts as soon as you start using it.
- Unexpected disconnection of energy, due to:
 - Notification by the previous occupant to their retailer that they are moving out.
 - Unpaid bills by the previous occupant, where the retailer is not aware that the former occupant has moved out.
- A requirement by your retailer that you provide a refundable advance (security deposit). This can occur when:
 - You did not contact a retailer when you moved in.
 - You have an outstanding debt with **any** energy retailer.

The retailer also has a right to disconnect you if you do not provide your details and set up an account. If the retailer plans to disconnect, they must send warning notices, which will be addressed 'to the occupier'.

STEP 1: CHOOSE AN ENERGY RETAILER

All Victorian energy consumers have the right to choose their energy retailer. A list of energy retailers with contact details is available from www.esc.vic.gov.au/yourchoice or by calling **1300 134 575**.

You don't need to find out who was previously supplying power to the property (even if the power is still on). You just need to choose the retailer who has the offer that suits you and request them to connect you.

You will be required to enter into a contract with the retailer of your choice. For information about different types of contracts and how to exercise the power of choice visit www.esc.vic.gov.au/yourchoice also see our brochure **Energy Facts: Guide to Negotiating a Contract** or call **1300 134 575**. Also, call retailers for an **Offer Summary** or visit retailers' websites for a **Product Information Statement**.

For water, different retailers supply different parts of Victoria. A list of the water retailers that supply different areas is available from www.esc.vic.gov.au or by calling **1300 664 969**.

STEP 2: FIND OUT WHICH WATER RETAILER SUPPLIES YOUR NEW AREA

Tenant's and landlords share the responsibility for water charges. The landlord is responsible for supply charges, and the tenant for usage charges. Landlords in rural areas may also be responsible for some of the sewage disposal costs. Your water retailer will explain your obligations.

About this Document

This Document has been prepared by the Essential Services Commission - the independent regulator of the energy and water industries in Victoria.

For further information, visit www.esc.vic.gov.au/yourchoice or call 1300 134 575.

STEP 3: REQUEST CONNECTION BEFORE YOU MOVE

Allow at least:

- **2 days for an existing home.**
- **20 business days for energy and 10 days for water for a new home.** This amount of time is required once the property is ready to be connected - all the internal wiring and piping must be in place and any required safety certificates issued.

The retailer will ask you to pay any connection charge and, if required, to provide:

- Acceptable identification;
- Contact details; and
- In relation to a new rental property, contact details for the property owner or owner's agent.

If you find that the energy and water is still connected at the new property, you still need to contact a retailer and set up an account. If you don't, you may find you have a significant back bill once the retailer supplying the property catches up with you - your obligation to pay for energy and water starts as soon as you start using it.

The failure to provide appropriate contact details may also disadvantage you if the retailer or distribution company wanted to alert you to:

- Problems about access to the meter; or
- An interruption, outage or other loss of supply.

STEP 4: PROVIDE ACCESS TO THE METER

STEP 5: DO NOT TRY TO TURN THE POWER OR GAS ON OR OFF YOURSELF.

ALWAYS PUT YOUR SAFETY FIRST!

Your retailer may ask you to ensure that your electricity mains switch is in the off position prior to connection. Other than this, you should not interfere with the electrical or gas equipment. Turning the gas on or off could cause an explosion or damage pipes or appliances and there can be a risk of electrocution if you endeavour to connect the electricity yourself.

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