

Media Release

The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP

Minister for Energy, the Environment and Climate Change
Minister for Solar Homes



Tuesday, 17 November 2020

HELPING VICTORIANS PAY THEIR POWER BILLS

Spending more time at home this year has meant bigger power bills for many households. To reduce this burden, the Andrews Labor Government will invest \$797 million to help Victorians cover the cost of their power bills and make homes more energy efficient.

The *Victorian Budget 2020/21* will deliver the biggest household energy efficiency package in any state's history, creating thousands of jobs, while also reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The investment includes \$335 million to replace old wood, electric or gas fired heaters with new energy-efficient systems that are safer and cheaper to run, while also driving down emissions. The program will be open to low-income earners and save 250,000 households between \$300 to \$900 each year on their energy bills.

A further \$112 million will seal windows and doors, and upgrade heating, cooling and hot water in 35,000 social housing properties – slashing bills and making homes more comfortable.

To reduce energy bills for tenants, the Labor Government will introduce minimum efficiency standards for rental properties. The standards are expected to benefit renters living in around 320,000 poor-quality accommodation, ensuring they don't have to put up with old, dodgy heaters and cold, poorly insulated homes.

The Labor Government is also providing funding to help set Victoria up for the move to 7-star efficiency standards for new homes, supporting skills, training and jobs in our construction sector.

The Labor Government will also step in and help those facing more immediate hardship, with a one-off \$250 payment for eligible concession card holders, including anyone receiving JobSeeker, youth allowance or pension payments.

The direct bill relief is available to help an estimated 950,000 Victorian households who would otherwise struggle to pay the bills and put food on the table.

Every single Victorian household will be able to access rebates for more smart appliances, with a \$14 million expansion of the existing Victorian Energy Upgrades program.

More than 100,000 households have now installed power stations on their roof through the Labor Government's *Solar Homes* program. To help more Victorians get the benefits of solar, the Labor Government will provide \$191 million to expand its landmark Solar Homes program.

This includes 42,000 additional solar rebates, meaning a total of 140,000 households will be able to install solar panels on their roof at no upfront cost over next two years. And for the very first time, small businesses will also be able to apply – with 15,000 solar rebates for businesses.

In addition, Victorians in every corner of the state will now be able to apply for a Solar Homes battery, with the Labor Government providing 17,500 household battery rebates over the next three years.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio

"Most Victorians have spent more time at home this year – and more on power bills – than they ever have. That's why we're helping those struggling to pay their bills and making homes across the state more energy efficient."

"This pandemic has been hard enough without worrying about whether you can pay the power bill. Not only will we help cover that cost – we'll help Victorians make their home more efficient and fight climate change."

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