

Media Release

The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP

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



Tuesday, 2 February 2021

CUTTING THE COST OF ENERGY BILLS FOR STRUGGLING VICTORIANS

The Andrews Labor Government is reducing the cost of energy for Victorians doing it tough, with a one-off \$250 payment to help with their energy bills.

Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio announced today that low income households can now apply for the new Power Saving Bonus.

The bonus is available to any households with a Victorian electricity account who holds a pensioner concession card or receives JobSeeker, Austudy, Abstudy or Youth Allowance. It will be available for 12 months and provide immediate financial relief to more than 900,000 Victorian households.

The \$250 bonus will be transferred electronically into the bank account of the recipient or provided via cheque on request, and processing will take approximately two to three weeks from application.

Electricity bills are the top cost of living issue for consumers and about 20 per cent of Victorian households requested financial assistance with their energy bills last year due to the impacts of coronavirus.

To ensure the bonus is accessible to those who need it most, including those from marginalised communities and families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, the Government has enlisted the support of the Brotherhood of St. Laurence and the Consumer Policy Research Centre.

The Victorian Energy Compare website is designed to help consumers take charge of their energy costs by finding the best energy deal available. Seven out of ten people save money by using the website, with typical annual household savings of \$330 on energy bills in the first year alone.

The Power Saving Bonus is part of an unprecedented \$797 million household energy affordability package that was announced in the recent State Budget.

The bonus is available through the Victorian Energy Compare website – compare.energy.vic.gov.au – or by calling 1800 000 832.

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

"This one off payment will provide immediate financial relief for those struggling to pay their power bills."

"It's part of the ongoing support we're providing to Victorian households as we rebuild from the pandemic – as well as helping more families put solar on their homes to reduce their power bills and save money."

"The coronavirus pandemic and spending more time at home has meant that many people have had higher power bills. This \$250 bonus will help take the pressure off household bills for those doing it tough."