

Media Release

The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP

Minister for Energy

Minister for the Environment and Climate Action

Minister for Solar Homes



Wednesday, 29 June 2022

SUSPENSION OF FRIDGE DISCOUNTS AFTER REPORTS OF GAMING

Government incentives for energy efficient refrigerated cabinets will be removed from the Victorian Energy Upgrades (VEU) program as of today until a full activity review can be undertaken.

Minister for Energy Lily D'Ambrosio has acted swiftly to protect Victorians following reports of providers dumping fridges and gaming of the energy efficiency program by removing all VEU incentives for 'plug-in' refrigerated cabinets.

The review will ensure the VEU program continues to meet its goals, making Victorian households and businesses more energy efficient and appropriately incentivising upgrades.

The review will also look to strengthen the requirement to replace existing refrigeration cabinets and limiting the number of fridges per business.

The removal of incentives builds on the action taken last week by the Essential Services Commission, the regulator and administrator of the VEU program, to pause the processing of Victorian energy efficiency certificates for multiple installations of refrigerator cabinets while investigating any wrongdoing.

Since 2009, more than two million households and businesses across Victoria have saved on their energy bills thanks to the highly successful Victorian Energy Upgrades program, helping Victorians cut power bills and reduce emissions through discounted energy-efficient products and services.

From 1 July, a Code of Conduct will be introduced for businesses working under the program, alongside legislative reforms and improved communications to consumers.

The Code includes protections for Victorians when it comes to marketing and sales, contracts, communication, installation, after sale follow-up and customer dispute resolution. These protections are in step with industry codes and Australian Consumer Law.

On average, households save \$110 a year on energy bills through the VEU program, with average businesses saving \$3,700. Savings can run into the hundreds of thousands of dollars for larger businesses. All Victorians benefit from lower energy prices thanks to these energy efficiencies.

To access the bill busting VEU program visit: energy.vic.gov.au/energy-efficiency/victorian-energy-upgrades.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Energy Lily D'Ambrosio

"The Victorian Energy Upgrades program has helped more than two million Victorian households and businesses cut their energy bills and created local jobs while we aim to halve emissions by 2030."

"We're constantly reviewing the VEU program to ensure that it's delivering good value for Victorians and delivering the intended emission reductions."