

Media Release

The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP
Minister for Climate Action
Minister for Energy and Resources
Minister for the State Electricity Commission



Friday, 30 December 2022

GIVING THE POWER BACK TO RESIDENTS

Victorians who live in new apartments will soon have more choice when it comes to their electricity provider, as compulsory embedded networks will be banned in new apartments from 1 January 2023.

Embedded networks are private electricity networks that serve multiple customer properties in a building or self-contained site like apartment blocks, retirement villages, social housing and caravan parks.

Consumers in these dwellings told an expert panel they felt 'trapped' in embedded networks, and the Andrews Labor Government has taken action to put an end to it and make sure families can shop around for the best deal.

A second phase of reforms will create choice and protections for residents in all types of new and existing networks, including retirement villages, caravan parks and social housing – and the Government will consult consumers and industry to make sure people feel they have adequate choice.

This phased transition will ensure all existing embedded networks move into the licensing regime, so customers have access to the same protections and choice of retailer as other Victorian customers. These reforms will benefit the more than 140,000 Victorians living in residential embedded networks.

The exception to the ban will be embedded networks powered by 100 per cent renewable energy benefitting residents, with at least 5 per cent of that power generated on-site.

Since 2018, the Labor Government has strengthened oversight of the energy sector, banned harmful sales practices, set an embedded networks price cap, expanded consumer protections, and given Victorians access to the Ombudsman's free dispute resolution services.

Victorians in embedded networks can still access the Government's \$250 Power Saving Bonus, which has provided immediate bill relief to more than a million households since 1 July - and from March 2023, all Victorian households will be able to access another round of the Bonus.

The Labor Government is also investing \$1 billion towards delivering 4.5 gigawatts of renewable energy with our plan to bring back the State Electricity Commission – giving Victorians cheaper, cleaner government-owned energy.

For more information on embedded networks reforms, visit engage.vic.gov.au/embedded-networks-review.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Energy and Resources Lily D'Ambrosio

"We're putting the power back in consumers' hands—by banning embedded networks in new residential buildings, we're making sure future residents can access the best power deals."

"For too long Victorians living in apartments, retirement villages, social housing, and caravan parks have been trapped with mandatory, uncompetitive network providers, and we're changing all of that."