

Media Release

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



Thursday, 22 June 2023

STRENGTHENING VICTORIA'S BILL-BUSTING VEU PROGRAM

The Andrews Labor Government will ban the telemarketing of products under the Victorian Energy Upgrades (VEU) program, in a suite of reforms that will protect consumers and strengthen compliance while helping Victorians cut their bills and reduce emissions at home.

Minister for Energy and Resources Lily D'Ambrosio today announced accredited providers will no longer be allowed to use cold calling to spruik products and services included in the program.

Consumer groups and industry will be consulted on the design, timing and implementation of this ban – which simply strengthens the 2022 VEU Code of Conduct, already banning high-pressure tactics in market and sell products, following a similar ban in late 2021 for energy retailers.

Stronger requirements for accredited providers and scheme participants will also commence on 1 July, improving compliance through measures like penalties for misconduct of third parties participating in the program.

The Essential Services Commission (ESC) has completed its review of the program's refrigerated cabinet activity, following its removal from the VEU last year.

The Labor Government is proposing to reintroduce incentives for energy-efficient refrigerated cabinets and will be consulting with stakeholders on further protections to complement their reintroduction.

The Government is also working to further enhance the ESC's powers to promote the independent, robust certification of eligible products and to ensure suppliers do not benefit from providing inaccurate information to the regulator.

Consultation papers on the telemarketing ban and reintroduction of refrigerated cabinets will be released soon.

More than 2 million households and 150,000 business premises have participated in the VEU program since it commenced in 2009, reducing Victoria's greenhouse gas emissions by over 75 million tonnes to date with average annual bill savings of \$110 for participating households and \$3700 for participating businesses.

Even those who do not participate in the program will save on their bills – with households saving \$150 and business saving \$870 over the next 10 years.

The quickest and most effective way to drive down energy bills is to help people take up efficient electric alternatives – that's why the program has expanded to provide more electrification options and gas appliances will no longer be available after July 1.

For information on the program and accredited providers, visit energy.vic.gov.au.

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

"Victorians need to be able to make informed decisions as they upgrade and make their homes more energy efficient. We've heard them on unwanted telemarketing calls and are taking action to stop this practice."

"We have helped two million households and businesses slash their power bills through our nation-leading Victorian Energy Upgrades program as we work towards net zero by 2045."

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