



Energy & Water  
Ombudsman NSW  
Free, fair and independent

# FAQs about embedded networks and exempt sellers



Embedded networks are privately owned and operated electricity networks, supplying multiple homes or businesses typically servicing a residential complex, residential park, retirement village or shopping centre.

Embedded networks are subject to rules around the supply of electricity and gas.

## How much can I be charged for my energy usage?

In NSW an exempt seller in an embedded network must not charge you more than the standing offer price from:

- EnergyAustralia if you live within the Ausgrid network area.
- Origin Energy if you live within the Endeavour Energy or Essential Energy network areas.

You also cannot be asked to pay any fee not charged by the two retailers above (in the relevant network area) for a new connection under a standard retail contract.

The exempt seller must also provide you with notice of any change in its prices as soon as practicable, which must be no later than your next bill.

## Where can I get information about my energy services?

If you move into a new home within an embedded network, your exempt seller must provide you with information about how your energy services work. The exempt seller must inform you of:

- The legal name, trading name (if relevant) and contact details of the exempt seller.
- The energy prices and all fees and charges that will apply to you.
- The conditions that the exempt seller must follow as set by the Australian Energy Regulator, for example, conditions for billing and payment arrangements, or the conditions for estimating bills.
- Your right to accept an energy contract from an authorised retailer of your choice, and information about how your metering might need to change to help you switch.
- Your right to make a complaint to the exempt seller and an explanation of its procedures for dealing with complaints. You should also be told that you can lodge a complaint or obtain free independent information and advice from the Energy & Water Ombudsman NSW (EWON).
- The flexible payment options available to you and any assistance you can access if you are unable to pay your bills due to financial difficulty.
- The emergency contact numbers in the event of a gas or electricity fault or emergency.
- Available government rebates or concessions may include the Medical Energy rebate, Life Support Energy rebate or the Low Income Household rebate. For more information go to [www.service.nsw.gov.au/services/concessions-rebates-and-assistance](http://www.service.nsw.gov.au/services/concessions-rebates-and-assistance)

You have the right to request a copy of the above information from your exempt seller at any time.



## EWON Factsheets

**Energy consumers living in an embedded network have many of the same rights as all other consumers, so you may find our other factsheets useful.**

- Difficulty paying bills?
- Disconnections and restriction of supply
- Estimated bills and meter access
- Rebates and concessions
- Saving energy and water around the home

You can call us for free, independent advice about any issue with your embedded network or exempt seller.

## What do I do if I have a problem with my energy account?

Your exempt seller must comply with a number of standard conditions established by the Australian Energy Regulator, including:

### Billing and payment

Your exempt seller must provide you with an energy bill at least once every three months. It is required to give you at least 13 business days to pay after the bill was issued, and you must be provided with at least two ways to pay the bill (apart from direct debit). The information on your energy bill should be similar to the information provided by an authorised retailer, including the meter readings and the reading dates, and an explanation of how your charges are calculated.

### Estimated bills

Your exempt seller must use best endeavours to read your meter and use this reading as a basis to calculate your energy bill. Your exempt seller can use an estimated meter reading to calculate your energy bill if it cannot reasonably or reliably base the bill on an actual meter reading. If your bill is based on an estimated meter reading this must be clearly stated on the bill. An estimated reading cannot be used as the basis for calculating the start or finalisation of your account.

### Closing your account

Your account with an exempt seller will be closed:

- by agreement between you and your exempt seller
- on the date that your lease or occupancy of the premises ends
- when a new occupant starts receiving energy services for the same premises
- 10 business days after your property has been disconnected and conditions for reconnection have not been met.

## Make a complaint or enquiry

<b>Freecall</b>	1800 246 545* Mon – Fri, 9am – 5pm
<b>Freefax</b>	1800 812 291
<b>Freepost</b>	Reply Paid 86550 Sydney South NSW 1234
<b>Interpreter</b>	131 450
<b>TTY/Voice</b>	133 677
<b>Online</b>	ewon.com.au
<b>In person</b>	Level 11, 133 Castlereagh St, Sydney, NSW 2000

\* If you are calling from a mobile phone, let us know and we will call you back.

## What should I do if I'm facing disconnection?

An exempt seller can disconnect your premises if you have not paid a bill by the due date and have not agreed to a payment plan, or you agreed to a payment plan but you did not adhere to the plan.

### It can only disconnect after it's followed these rules:

- sent you a reminder notice
- sent you a disconnection warning notice
- used it's best endeavours to contact you in person or over the telephone.

The exempt seller is also required to have offered you more flexible terms to pay the amount outstanding and reminded you of any other assistance available.

### When is disconnection not allowed?

There are times when the exempt seller cannot disconnect your electricity or gas supply even if you owe it money. These are:

- before 8am or after 3pm
- on a Friday, during the weekend, a public holiday or the day before a public holiday
- on or between 20 December and 1 January
- when you have a formal complaint with your provider or with EWON about the amount owing (either your provider or we will confirm with you that there is a hold on disconnection activity)
- where the premises are registered as having life support equipment (electricity only).
- when the regional electricity network would prohibit disconnection on that day due to extreme weather conditions.

If you are using life support equipment in your home you will need to notify your embedded network operator who must then inform their own retailer and any other retailer involved in the energy supply. You should not be disconnected without notification and for planned maintenance your embedded network operator should make arrangements for your safety as a life support customer.

### If you are experiencing financial difficulty, talk to your exempt seller.

Exempt sellers are required to offer you a flexible payment plan. It must consider your capacity to pay, how much you owe and your expected future energy consumption. The exempt seller does not have to offer you a payment plan if you have failed to adhere to two other payment plans in the previous 12 months.