

Taking a photo can help avoid bill shock this winter

Victorians can avoid bill shock this winter by sending a photo of their gas meter to their energy company.

The state's energy regulator has found more than half a million estimated bills are issued in Victoria each year*.

Essential Services Commission's energy director Sarah McDowell says Victorians who have received an estimated bill will be able to correct this by reading their own meter and providing it to their retailer.

"We consume more gas during winter. If our bills are estimated, we do not know the true cost of our consumption until months later. This can lead to bill shock.

"Victorians can take control by providing their own meter reading to their energy retailer before the due date of their estimated bill," she said.

The ability to read your own meter was introduced on 1 July 2019 as part of a package of reforms aimed at making it easier for [Victorians to engage in the energy market](#).

Alongside this customer entitlement, energy retailers must inform customers how to submit their self-meter reads. If the energy retailer does not accept a customer's meter read, Victorians can lodge a dispute with the [Energy and Water Ombudsman of Victoria](#).

Take control of your energy

[It's your energy](#) – for information about your energy rights

[Victorian Energy Saver](#) - for information about how to save on power this winter

[Energy Info Hub](#) – for information about energy concessions and more.

Other ways Victorians can take control of their gas costs this winter is to check whether they are on the [best available offer](#) with their retailer. Consumers can also go to [Victorian Energy Compare](#) to search the market for the best energy deal for them.

To find out more about your energy rights visit www.esc.vic.gov.au/its-your-energy

*Based on the number of estimated bills issued to residential customers up to 2018-19

For further information call: Clayton Bennett, Senior Communication Adviser, 0447 933 140

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