

Last updated: 03 May 2023

## Estimated bills

*Explains when and why bills are issued based on estimated meter readings.*

## Meter reads

### How often is the meter read?

#### Electricity and gas:

Every 3 months (or at least once every 12 months).

#### Water:

Every 3 months (or at least once every 12 months).

Most electricity customers will have smart meters that do not require physical meter readings – your usage information is sent remotely to the retailer. **Gas and water meters are still read in person.**

### Sometimes a meter can't be read.

The most common reason is because of an access issue, such as:

- Secure premises with locked gates.
- Dog(s) preventing access.
- The meter being located in an inaccessible place (e.g. locked indoors).
- If there is a problem with part of the interval data collected by smart meters.

### What are my responsibilities?

You have a duty to provide safe, convenient and unhindered access to a meter.

If you don't allow access for 3 consecutive meter readings, your **energy** supply may be disconnected.

## Need help?

### 1800 500 509 (Freecall)

Monday to Friday between 8:30 am and 5:00 pm

### Email & Web

Email us at [ewovinfo@ewov.com.au](mailto:ewovinfo@ewov.com.au)  
or visit [ewov.com.au](http://ewov.com.au)

### Post

GPO Box 469, Melbourne, Victoria 3001

### Translating and Interpreting Service:

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## Estimated bills

You may be issued with an estimated bill if your meter wasn't read. **If a bill has been estimated it must say so on the bill.** This may appear as the letter 'e' or the word 'estimated' next to the usage charge.

An estimated bill is likely to be either above or below your usage. If it is above your usage, you are paying more than you should and will be credited on your next bill.

If it is below your usage, you will get a backbill at some stage. Electricity and gas companies can send you a backbill for up to four months, unless you're at fault. For example, if you've denied a request to access your meter, you would be at fault. Water companies can send you a backbill for up to four months. You are better off getting an actual bill, rather than an estimate.

See our backbilling, refunds and lost payments factsheet – [ewov.com.au/fact-sheets/backbilling](http://ewov.com.au/fact-sheets/backbilling) – for more information.

### How are bills estimated?

Your energy retailer or water company can estimate your bill based on your previous usage. If they don't have this information, the estimate will be based on average usage across a class of customers.

To avoid an estimated bill, you may be able to provide a reading of your own meter to your energy retailer or water company.

## Self meter reads

### Electricity and gas

If you have an accumulation (flat-rate) gas or electricity meter you can submit a self-meter read **before the due date** of your estimated bill. Your retailer will tell you how to do this when you receive an estimated bill – for example, taking a photograph of the meter and sending it to them. **This does not apply to customers with smart meters.**

### Water

Water companies may request self-meter reads for estimated bills, and some allow you to submit a self-read online. Contact your water company to see if this is an option.

Need further help? If you receive an estimated bill and need assistance, first contact your energy retailer or water company. If you're not happy with its response, contact EWOV – we're here to help!

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