

Media Release

The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP

Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change
Minister for Suburban Development



**DELIVERING
FOR ALL VICTORIANS**

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NEW VICTORIAN ENERGY DEFAULT OFFER

The Andrews Labor Government will force the big power companies to give Victorians a better deal on their power bills by legislating a new default offer that will cut the cost of energy for households across the state.

The Labor Government will abolish standing energy offers and require energy retailers to offer a fairer price for energy – called the Victorian Default Offer – which could save households hundreds of dollars a year on average on their energy bills.

The new measure is part of the Labor Government's final response to the bipartisan Independent Review of the Electricity & Gas Retail Markets in Victoria.

The Independent Review – undertaken by John Thwaites, Terry Mulder and Patricia Faulkner – was the result of detailed research into energy retail prices and extensive consultation with consumers and industry.

The Review looked at whether the electricity and gas retail markets were operating in the best interests of Victorians and found customers were paying too much for energy.

The Review found that intervention was required to ensure better outcomes for customers and recommended a range of measures to put downward pressure on prices and protect low income and vulnerable customers.

The Labor Government is supporting all of the review's 11 recommendations, including the new default offer, which will be implemented from 1 July 2019.

It will also direct the Essential Services Commission to review the Energy Retail Code to ensure contracts are clear and fair.

Work is already underway on the report's recommendations, including an Energy Brokerage Pilot to connect low income households with energy brokers to help them find a better energy offer, and the Essential Services Commission issuing a draft determination requiring retailers to notify a customer of their best available offer.

This builds on the Government's work to cut power bills for Victorians. This includes the \$50 Power Saving Bonus, which has encouraged more than 200,000 people to compare their energy offer and save on their power bills.

A re-elected Andrews Labor Government will also install solar panels, batteries or hot water systems on 720,000 houses across the state through the *Solar Homes* program – driving down energy prices and greenhouse gas emissions.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio

"We're putting power back in the hands of Victorians – who've put up for too long with big corporations ripping consumers off ever since the Liberals privatised our electricity."

"Only Labor will modernise our electricity system to transition Victoria to a more affordable, reliable and clean energy system."

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