



Electricity Rebates: are you getting yours?



INTRODUCTION

Some state and Commonwealth Government departments and agencies provide rebates and concessions to help some people with their electricity costs. Further rebates may be provided by utility companies and welfare agencies. People holding pensioner concession cards or with certain medical conditions may be entitled to a rebate. Many residents in remote communities and town camps have pre-payment meters (PPM). They buy 'power cards' and insert these into the meter at their home to get power to their house. When you access electricity using power cards you don't have an account number with a Utility. Most Utilities and government agencies require an account number to process electricity rebates.

If you don't operate your electricity by using a power card, you will have an account number. If you meet the eligibility requirements you may be able to get a rebate.

This BUSH TECH explains the different electricity rebates available and how to apply for them.

Available	Name of program	Administering agency contact details	Available to	Amount	Other details
Australia-wide	Utilities Allowance	Centrelink (Department of Human Services) Indigenous contact line: 1800 136 380 or website http://www.humanservices.gov.au/	Persons receiving payments for either: Disability Support; Partner Allowance; or Widow Allowance	Up to \$588.40 per year	Paid in four instalments each year (March, June, September and December), payment is automatic into your nominated bank account (you don't need to apply).
	Essential Medical Equipment Payment	Centrelink (Department of Human Services) Indigenous contact line: 1800 136 380 or online at: http://www.humanservices.gov.au/ You need to apply online or at your local Centrelink office	Persons who: use qualifying medical equipment or require heating/cooling due to a medical condition; hold a relevant concession card, and are an electricity account holder	\$143/year regardless of the piece of equipment being operated.	Helps cover the cost of running essential medical equipment and/or heating/cooling. Payment needs to be claimed through Centrelink each year. Medical Certificate required.
NT	Northern Territory Pensioner and Carer Concession Scheme (NTPCCS) – Electricity Concession	Northern Territory Department of Health, NTPCCS unit Download the forms at http://www.health.nt.gov.au/Aged_and_Disability/Subsidies/NT_Pensioner_and_Carer_Concession_Scheme_NTPCCS/ Or call 1800 777 704	Pensioners of all ages, who are residents of the NT and hold a relevant Centrelink Pension Concession Card; and who are also members of the NTPCCS scheme	For pre-payment meter customers, \$1.26/day, or approximately \$458/year	Powercards are posted to members every 6 months. Members who generate their own power (eg- outstations with generators) can claim reimbursement for the daily rate by producing dated receipts. To become a member, download an application form and post it in with supporting documents (proof of identity etc)
	Stay Connected Program	Salvation Army; St Vincent de Pauls; CatholicCare NT; Anglicare NT; Somerville Community Services	Power and Water customers in financial stress apply directly to administering agencies	Amount varies- at the discretion of the agency, but ranges from \$10 -\$50 per client per referral/visit	Primarily intended for conventional meter customers with overdue accounts, but some agencies also provide limited support to PPM customers.
QLD	Electricity Rebate	Funded by the Queensland Government, administered through individual electricity retailers. Ergon services most remote Indigenous communities in QLD. Customers need to ask Ergon to email them an application form. Ergon Phone: 13 10 46	Pensioner Concession Card; Department of Veterans' Affairs Gold Card; Queensland Seniors Card.	\$282.54 per year	You need to contact your individual electricity provider to apply
	Medical Cooling and Heating Electricity Concession Scheme	Queensland Government. Applications must be made using the form on the website, and must be signed off by a medical practitioner. Bank account details must be provided for payment. Application forms are available online and can be accessed at: http://www.qld.gov.au/community/cost-of-living-support/medical-cooling-heating-electricity-concession-scheme/index.html	Be a Queensland resident and have a qualifying medical condition and need cooling or heating to stop your symptoms becoming significantly worse. Qualifying medical conditions are listed on the website.	\$282.54 (including GST) per year to eligible applicants	Eligibility re-assessed every two years



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	Electricity Life Support concession	The Queensland Government provides an electricity life support concession for eligible people who are seriously ill and use a home-based oxygen concentrator or kidney dialysis machine. Phone Concession Services on (07) 3247 5907. And ask for an application form to be sent to you.	Use an oxygen concentrator or kidney dialysis machine and hold a Pensioner Concession Card; Health Care Card; Health Care Interim Voucher; Child Disability Allowance; Queensland Seniors Card	Up \$143.86 per quarter (3 months) for each oxygen concentrator. Up to \$96.34 per quarter (3 months) for each kidney dialysis machine.	The concession is calculated monthly and paid quarterly.
WA	Cost of Living Assistance Payment	Replaces the State Government Energy Rebate and assists with the cost of energy (including electricity and gas). Apply using the 'Ready Power Account Establishment' form, available from Horizon Power. 1800 267 926	Centrelink Health Care Card; Pensioner Concession Card; Veterans' Affairs Gold Card; Veterans' Affairs Pensioner Concession Card; WA Seniors Card	For customers with mainstream electricity accounts, the value is \$208 divided into daily amounts credited to the customer's bill. Because there is no daily service charge on pre-payment meter accounts, the rate of this rebate is reduced to \$24 every 6 months.	Paid twice yearly into bank account (\$24 every 6 months for PPM customers)
	Dependent Child Rebate	Helps concession card holders with dependent children with energy costs. Apply using the 'Ready Power Account Establishment' form, available from Horizon Power. 1800 267 926	Centrelink Health Care Card; Pensioner Concession Card; Veterans' Affairs Gold Card	\$69.28 cents/day for 1 child, \$87.44 cents/day for 2 children, \$105.60 cents/day for 3 children, 123.76 cents/day for 4 children	
	Reduced Meter Test Fee	If you think your electricity meter is damaged, this rebate helps with the costs of testing a meter (the company will charge you if they test a meter and it is not faulty). Contact Horizon Power regarding your meter and mention this rebate.	Centrelink Health Care Card; Pensioner Concession Card; Veterans' Affairs Gold Card; Veterans' Affairs Pensioner Concession Card	\$139.80	If you are worried about your meter being broken contact your electricity company (Horizon Power) and organise for it to be tested. This rebate will help cover the cost of the test.
	Air-Conditioning rebate	This rebate helps seniors and families who live in the hottest parts of WA, with air conditioning costs. Apply using the 'Ready Power Account Establishment' form, available from Horizon Power. 1800 267 926	Commonwealth Seniors Health Card, or Pensioners Concession Card; or people receiving the Dependent Child Rebate	\$47.07 per month (amount of months the rebate is paid depends on location)	Rebate rates depend on which town you live in. To check this, see the 'Application for Air Conditioning Rebate' form on the Horizon website. For example, the rebate is paid for 7 months/year in Roebourne (\$329), 9 months/year in Kununurra and 10 months/year in Wyndham (\$470)
	Life Support Equipment Electricity Subsidy	This scheme is intended to help financially disadvantaged persons, or their dependants, meet the energy costs associated with operating life support equipment at home. Application forms can be obtained from www.finance.wa.gov.au or the Energy Subsidies enquiry line on (08) 9262 1373.	The equipment must be prescribed by an appropriate specialist medical practitioner or a medical practitioner working in a specialist department of a hospital (see "Medical authorisation", below); Pensioner Concession Card (issued by either Centrelink or the Department of Veterans' Affairs); or Health Care Card (does not include Commonwealth Seniors Health Card); or Health Care Interim Voucher.	\$40 - \$1000 per year, depending on the types of equipment required. For a list of approved equipment, see the 'Life Support Equipment Energy Subsidy Scheme' factsheet at www.finance.wa.gov.au	The payment is made by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) directly into the bank account nominated by the applicant
	Thermo-regulatory Dysfunction Subsidy Scheme	This scheme is intended to help financially disadvantaged persons (and dependents) with thermoregulatory dysfunction offset the energy costs associated with temperature control at their home.	The patient must be: Certified by a treating doctor who has been treating the patient for at least three months; and Assessed as meeting one of the four Primary Qualifying Conditions; and Assessed as meeting one of the three Secondary Qualifying Conditions. Also hold a Pensioner Concession Card (issued by either Centrelink or the Department of Veterans' Affairs); or Health Care Card (does not include Commonwealth Seniors Health Card); or Health Care Interim Voucher.	\$567 per annum and is paid annually in advance. For more information on conditions that meet the criteria for this scheme, see the 'Thermoregulatory Dysfunction Subsidy Scheme' factsheet available at www.finance.wa.gov.au	The payment is made by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) directly into the bank account nominated by the applicant

NB: THE 2014-2015 FEDERAL BUDGET PROPOSES CHANGES TO FUNDING TO THE STATES FOR ELECTRICITY REBATES.