## Recommended Government Resources

The following are two useful tools for your energy journey. Energy Made Easy is a free and independent energy plan comparison site you can use to find the best plan for your use. The Energy and Water Ombudsman can assist greatly with most energy related complaints. They can also be useful in checking information and making sure energy retailers are accountable.

## Energy Made Easy Website

Energy Made Easy is a free energy price comparison service for households and small businesses in Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia, Tasmania, and the Australian Capital Territory. It can be used to find and compare home and small business electricity and gas plans. With Energy Made Easy you can compare the different energy companies and choose the best plan for you. It's a free, independent government service.

Energy Made Easy cannot switch you to a new plan. They provide all the details you need to make an informed decision, however you need to contact the retailer of your choice, to switch to a new plan. When you contact your new retailer to sign up, they will take care of the rest, including letting your current retailer know that you are changing over.

### Getting Started

Energy Made Easy will need to ask you some questions about your household and your energy usage. It is a good idea to have a recent bill in front of you as this may help you answer some of the questions.

The more information you can provide, the more personalised results Energy Made Easy can find. If you don't provide your energy usage information from your bills, they will use benchmarks for residential customers that are based on typical usage where you live.

### Energy Made Easy Steps

1. Enter your suburb or postcode - Help them find the energy companies that cover your area.
2. Tell them about your situation - Answer a few questions about your home or business so they can suggest the best options for you.
3. Enter information about your energy usage - Add information like your National Meter Identifier so they can compare your energy use to other plans or use their Quick compare feature.
4. Compare the plans - Find and compare plans.

## Energy and Water Ombudsman

The Energy and Water Ombudsman is an independent authority that can assist consumers and customers of energy and water retailers. They are the intermediary in disputes, acting as an impartial mediator.

To put a complaint into the Ombudsman, you must have attempted to address the problem with your retailer first. They can also give general advice regarding energy and water matters, assist with queries, and assess the accuracy of information given by retailers.

### Complaints

The Energy and Water Ombudsman has the authority to mediate between the retailer and the customer. Before sending a complaint to the Ombudsman, you need to contact or attempt to contact your retailer. The Ombudsman has the authority to assist in all areas up to the power meter, such as supply, billing, vegetation management, and the retailer’s customer service. The Ombudsman cannot assist with the setting of prices within a water or energy contract and all solar panel complaints other than Solar Feed in Tariffs being under or unpaid.

The Ombudsman will refuse any complaints they find frivolous or vexatious, any issues the customer was aware of for more than 12 months or are decisions made by legal proceedings. A full list of areas the Ombudsman can and cannot assist with can be found on their website. In the case where the Ombudsman cannot assist, they will be able to provide information and refer to who is best suited to assist.

### The Complaints Process

After receiving and reviewing a complaint, the Ombudsman will refer it to a higher level within the retailer. This higher level allows for complaints to be easily escalated to those with the authority to resolve the dispute. Once referred the retailer has five days to contact the customer and discuss the problem. If they fail to contact the customer, or no reasonable resolution can be reached, the Ombudsman can begin their investigation. An Ombudsman investigation allows them to act on the customer's behalf to negotiate a reasonable resolution. This involves the Ombudsman informing the retailer of the problem and the customer's desired outcome, then asking how they will be addressing it.

This may require several requests and clarifications, so this process usually takes up to twenty business days, however, it may take longer depending on its complexity. The customer will be kept informed of its progress. During this investigation, there is no communication between the customer and the retailer about the problem, as all communication goes through the Ombudsman. If no response is given, or the investigation cannot reach a reasonable resolution, the Ombudsman has the authority to issue final orders. These are legally enforceable demands of the retailers that would resolve the issue.

### General Advice

The Ombudsman is also available for general advice on electricity, gas, and water. Enquiries to the Ombudsman are common and range from a request for further information about government rebate programs to clarifying information given by retailers. The Ombudsman is also able to assist in explaining tariff types and the obligations of energy and water retailers.

### Contacting the Ombudsman

Phone: 1800 662 837

Online:

* For complaint assistance: [Make a complaint | EWOQ](https://www.ewoq.com.au/make-a-complaint)
* For general enquiries and feedback about EWOQ services: [Send your enquiry online](bookmark://contactus/)

In Person

Customers can book an appointment to meet with EWOQ team members in person in one of their offices open 8:30am to 5:00pm every weekday except Tuesday, when they open at 9:30am.

* Brisbane: Level 16, 53 Albert St, Brisbane City QLD 4000
* Rockhampton: Level 2, 209 Bolsover St, Rockhampton QLD 4700
* Cairns: Level 1, 15 Lake St, Cairns City QLD 487