

a switched on service

Electricity Customer Service Charter



alintaenergy

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our service commitment to you

Welcome to Alinta Energy. We're an electricity retailer, which means that we're responsible for buying electricity and then selling electricity to you.

This Electricity Customer Service Charter ("**Customer Service Charter**") explains how we plan to provide you with the best customer service at all times.

Our Customer Service Charter and Code of Conduct

At Alinta Energy, we comply with the *Code of Conduct for the Supply of Electricity to Small Use Customers* ("**Code of Conduct**") and other laws when supplying electricity to small use customers in Western Australia.

The *Code of Conduct*:

- Outlines some of your key rights as a small use customer and some of our obligations as an electricity retailer;
- Regulates the behaviour of electricity marketing agents, retailers and distributors; and
- Defines the standards of conduct when marketing electricity to customers, to protect you from undesirable marketing conduct.

This Customer Service Charter summarises your key rights and obligations as a small use customer, our obligations as an electricity retailer under the *Code of Conduct* and also our service commitment to you as a valued electricity customer.

We recommend you read this Customer Service Charter together with your electricity supply contract, which contains the terms and conditions of the contract between you and Alinta Energy.

This Customer Service Charter is also available on our website **alintaenergy.com.au**

If you would like a copy of the *Code of Conduct*, please visit **www.era.wa.gov.au** or contact us on **13 13 58**.

Know your electricity supply contract

We may supply electricity to you under a standard form contract or a non-standard contract.

Standard form contracts must be reviewed and approved by the Economic Regulation Authority.

Non-standard contracts must still comply with relevant legislation, however some of the obligations in the *Code of Conduct* and other laws can be varied if both parties agree.

Our electricity contracts are available on our website alintaenergy.com.au or please call us on **13 13 58**.

This Customer Service Charter does not summarise the terms and conditions of your electricity contract with us. You should always read your contract carefully, and seek independent legal advice where appropriate, to make sure that you fully understand your rights and obligations.

Our Customer Service Charter: for small use customers only

This Customer Service Charter applies to our **small use customers** only. You're considered a small use customer if you consume less than 160MWh of electricity per year. As a rough guide, 160MWh of electricity per year amounts to an annual electricity account of approximately \$56,000.

We can only sell electricity to small use customers within our licence area. In general terms, this is the area of Western Australia that is served by the South West Interconnected System ("SWIS"). The SWIS extends from Kalbarri in the north to Albany in the south, and also eastwards to Kalgoorlie.

At this time, we are not allowed to supply electricity to customers who consume less than 50MWh of electricity per year (an annual electricity account of approximately \$15,300). This may change in future if the Western Australian electricity industry is deregulated further.

Marketing conduct

We're committed to providing the highest standards of behaviour in the way in which we market our products and services to you, and we have specific obligations under the *Code of Conduct*. These obligations govern how, where and when we can make contact with you. We're also required to give you certain information when you enter into an electricity supply contract with us.

Cooling off period

The Australian Consumer Law provides for a 10 business day cooling-off period in relation to unsolicited contracts.

We will not supply you electricity during the cooling-off period unless you request us to supply you. If you request us to supply you with electricity during the cooling-off period but end the contract during the cooling-off period, you must pay us for any electricity supplied.

our role: electricity retailer

As an electricity retailer, we're responsible for purchasing electricity and then selling electricity to you. We're also responsible for:

- Establishing and managing your account;
- Dealing with any enquiries you may have about your account; and
- Keeping you informed about issues relating specifically to your electricity supply.

western power's role: electricity distributor

The electricity distributor (referred to in this document as the “**Network Operator**”) plays a vital role in delivering electricity to your premises.

In the SWIS where we are licensed to sell electricity, Western Power is the Network Operator. As the Network Operator, Western Power is responsible for:

- Operating and maintaining the equipment that delivers power to you (including your electricity meter); and
- Managing and maintaining the electricity transmission and distribution network that makes up the SWIS.

information and communication

When you call Alinta Energy, our friendly and experienced customer service representatives will help with any of your queries.

Our aim is to answer your call within 20 seconds. If you phone us during a busy period, we may need to place your call in a queue and answer you as soon as we can.

How to contact us

Our Customer Contact Centre is open Monday to Friday 7am – 7pm and Saturday 8am – 12pm (excluding public holidays).

We can help you with:

- Account enquiries – including new accounts, final accounts, account transfers and payments
- New connections
- Disconnections
- Reconnections
- Other products and services
- Suggestions and concerns

Call 13 13 58

(Local call fee from anywhere in WA, excluding mobiles)

If you're in Australia but outside WA, please call us on **1800 677 945** during business hours (WST).

If you're overseas, please call us on **+61 8 9486 3000**.

How to contact us

Email:

customer.services@alintaenergy.com.au

Fax: **1800 651 161**

Mail to: **Customer Enquiries
Alinta Energy
Locked Bag 55
PERTH BC WA 6849**

Online: **alintaenergy.com.au**

Customers with special needs

If you need help to interpret the information we provide, please call **13 13 58** or visit **alintaenergy.com.au** for details.

TTY Phone (National Relay Service)

If you are deaf or have a hearing/speech impairment you can use the National Relay Service to contact us on the numbers below:

**TTY users should call 13 36 77
and ask for 13 13 58.**

**Speak and listen users can call 1300 555 727
and ask for 13 13 58.**

If you have any further questions about the National Relay Service please visit their website: **www.relayservice.com.au**

Telephone Interpreter Service – 13 14 50

If you have difficulty communicating in English, please call **13 14 50**.

faults and emergencies

Electricity emergency line 13 13 51

If you experience a fault, supply interruption or emergency involving your electricity supply, please call **13 13 51**.

This is the Network Operator's 24-hour emergency line for:

- Information about the nature of the fault or emergency; and
- An estimate of how long it will take for your electricity supply to be restored.

If you call this number from a fixed line anywhere in Western Australia, you'll be charged the cost of a local call. Higher costs will apply if you use your mobile phone to call.

Your safety in an emergency

Your safety and the safety of the community is our most important priority, and we're committed to working with the Network Operator to fulfil that responsibility.

The Network Operator has various legislative powers relating to:

- The supply of electricity;
- Access to premises in the event of an emergency; and
- Removal or repair of network equipment.

If an emergency situation occurs (or is likely to occur), the Network Operator may interrupt your electricity supply. For your own safety, you must allow the Network Operator to enter your premises in an emergency situation if required. The Network Operator will use best endeavours to restore your electricity supply as soon as possible after the emergency.

at your service

New electricity connections

If you would like to purchase electricity from us, please visit **alintaenergy.com.au** or call **13 13 58**.

Once your contract is signed, an Alinta Energy representative will liaise with you to organise all aspects of the connection. We'll organise for the Network Operator to connect and energise your premises within the time frame outlined in the *Code of Conduct*.

Life support equipment

When you open a new account, we need to know if there is anybody living at the supply address that needs life support equipment. This includes any equipment recognised as life support equipment by the Life Support Equipment Electricity Subsidy Scheme, such as peritoneal dialysis machines, heart pumps, certain oxygen concentrators, feeding pumps, suction pumps, apnoea monitors (for children only) and nebulisers (for children only).

If there is somebody at your address requiring life support equipment you will need to register with us.

More information regarding the life support subsidy and how to apply can be found at **www.finance.wa.gov.au**.

Your obligations using electricity

As one of our electricity customers, you have certain obligations under your electricity supply contract to use your electricity in a safe and approved manner. The points below are particularly important:

- The electricity we supply to your premises cannot be used at another address, and electricity we have provided to another address cannot be used at your address.
- You may not supply electricity to any other person unless by agreement with us.
- You must not tamper with or bypass the meter at your property, or allow anyone else to do so.
- You must not prevent or hinder our representatives or those of the Network Operator from accessing your premises to read your electricity meter.

Please see your contract for more details about these and other obligations.

Reasons you may be disconnected

We may direct the Network Operator to disconnect the electricity supply to your premises for a number of reasons, including:

- If it is required for emergency reasons, or by law;
- If your account is not paid;
- If you deny us, or the Network Operator, access to your electricity meter;
- If you obtain electricity illegally; or
- For any other reason listed in your electricity supply contract.

When we cannot disconnect you

Except in the case of an emergency, there are some situations where we cannot disconnect your electricity. These include:

- If you have made a complaint to the Energy Ombudsman that relates to the reason why your electricity is to be disconnected, and the complaint hasn't been resolved yet;
- If it's after 3.00pm on Monday to Thursday, or after 12.00pm on a Friday, or if it's a Saturday, Sunday, public holiday or the business day before a public holiday (except where you are a business customer and your normal trading hours fall only within these time frames); or
- If you fail to pay a bill by the due date but a person living at your premises is registered with us as requiring the use of life support equipment.

Disconnection for failing to pay your account

Before we ask the Network Operator to disconnect your electricity for failing to pay your account, we will:

- Send you a reminder notice;
- Try to contact you personally by post, telephone or electronic means; and
- If you still haven't paid the account, send you a written disconnection warning giving you at least five (5) business days' notice that we intend to disconnect your electricity.

The *Code of Conduct* details the circumstances where we cannot arrange for your electricity to be disconnected for failure to pay an account.

If you have trouble paying your electricity bill, please call **13 13 58** to discuss how we can help you.

Disconnection for failing to provide access to your meter

If you deny access to your electricity meter for more than nine (9) consecutive months we can disconnect you.

Before we disconnect your electricity for failing to give access we will:

- Give you at least five (5) business days' written notice requesting access to your meter and advising you that we may disconnect your supply;
- Give you an opportunity to provide reasonable alternative access arrangements;
- Inform you of any alternative meters that are suitable for your premises; and
- Send you a disconnection warning giving you at least five (5) business days' notice that we intend to disconnect your electricity.

Getting your electricity reconnected

If your electricity supply is disconnected because:

- You have not paid your account;
- You have not provided access to your meter; or
- You have used electricity illegally,

you can remedy the situation and then ask us to reconnect your electricity supply. We will then request the Network Operator to reconnect your electricity.

After we send the Network Operator a request on your behalf, if your supply address is in a metropolitan area (as defined in the Code of Conduct), the Network Operator must reconnect your electricity:

- Within one (1) business day of receiving our request, if the request is received before 3.00pm on a business day; or
- Within two (2) business days of receiving our request, if the request is received after 3.00pm on a business day, or on a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday.

If your supply address is in a regional area, the Network Operator must reconnect your electricity:

- Within five (5) business days of receiving our request, if the request is received before 3.00pm on a business day; or
- Within six (6) business days of receiving our request, if the request is received after 3.00pm on a business day, or on a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday.

Moving premises

If you are vacating your supply address, please give us at least five (5) days' prior notice so we can organise for your meter to be read and prepare your final account. This will ensure that you only pay for electricity up until the day you leave your premises.

If you would like to open a new electricity account for your new premises, please call us on **13 13 58**. We'll arrange for the Network Operator to connect (if required) and energise your new premises, and establish a new account for your new address.

If you would like to terminate your contract with us, please read your electricity supply contract carefully, as it explains your obligations in more detail.

your alinta energy account

Paying your account

The *Code of Conduct* describes the information we need to include on your bill and how frequently we can issue your bill.

If you are a business customer, unless otherwise agreed, you'll receive an account from us approximately once every month. You need to pay by the due date specified in your account. Please note that interest and other charges on overdue accounts will apply in most cases, and these will be detailed in your account.

If you have trouble paying your account by the due date, please call us on **13 13 58** to discuss how we can help you. For example, we may be able to set up alternative payment arrangements with you.

We offer a range of easy payment methods for you to pay your account, including:

- Electronic Funds Transfer;
- BPay; and
- Credit card (Visa or Mastercard) payment online or over the telephone.

Financial hardship

If you're a residential customer who is experiencing financial hardship, we may be able to help you by making alternative payment arrangements with you.

You can access our "Hardship Policy" online at **alintaenergy.com.au** or call us on **13 13 58**.

How your electricity account is calculated

The amount we bill you is based on a reading of the electricity meter at your premises. Your meter measures how much electricity you have used and gives us an accurate, up-to-date record of your electricity consumption. Electricity meters are usually read every month for business customers and every two months for residential customers.

The Network Operator is obliged to provide you with historical consumption data if you request it. You can also ask us to arrange a reading of your meter.

If you believe your meter reading is incorrect, you can ask us to organise for your meter to be re-read .

The Network Operator charges us for each meter reading, so if you ask us to re-read your meter, and there was no error in the original meter reading, you'll be charged a fee. If an error has been made, you will not be charged a fee and we'll adjust your account for any undercharging or overcharging caused by the error.

Meter testing

If you think your meter may be faulty, you can ask us to arrange a test of your meter. You will need to pay us a fee for arranging the test, which covers the amount that the Network Operator charges us, but we'll refund this amount to you if the meter is found to be faulty. We'll also adjust your account for any undercharging or overcharging caused by a faulty meter.

Estimated accounts

If for some reason we don't have an actual meter reading available when we prepare your account, we'll provide you with an estimate of your electricity consumption in order to calculate your account.

If we have estimated the amount of electricity, we'll let you know on your bill, and we're happy to provide you with the basis of our estimation if you ask for it.

If your account has been estimated and we then receive actual metering data, we'll adjust your account to reflect any differences in the charges.

Tariffs

Your tariff, which is the price you pay for the electricity you use, will be specified in your contract. This amount will vary depending on your contract. If circumstances change that affect your tariff (e.g. if your electricity usage changes significantly), we'll let you know about the change of price in writing.

If we undercharge or overcharge you for electricity, we'll follow the procedures outlined in the *Code of Conduct*, which limits our rights to recover undercharged amounts from you.

Service standard payments

We aim to provide you with the best possible service at all times. The *Code of Conduct*, specifies certain circumstances in which you may be eligible to apply for a service standard payment. These include:

- If we fail to follow the required procedures before disconnecting you for failure to pay a bill, we must pay you \$100 for each day that you were wrongfully disconnected;
- If we fail to arrange the reconnection of your electricity supply within the required time frames, we must pay you \$60 for each day that the reconnection is late, up to a maximum of \$300; and
- If you make a written complaint and we fail to acknowledge the complaint within 10 business days, or fail to respond by addressing the matters in the complaint within 20 business days then we must pay you \$20.

You can apply to receive a service standard payment within three (3) months of the date when you believe we failed to meet the required service standards. Please note, only one payment can be made to each affected supply address for each service standards failure.

If our failure to comply with a service standard is because of events or conditions outside our control, or the Network Operator's control, we are not liable to make a service standard payment.

privacy and confidentiality

The protection of your personal information is something that Alinta Energy takes very seriously. We will:

- Keep your personal information confidential;
- Only use your personal information for our business purposes (e.g. for debt collection purposes or to fully investigate a complaint); and
- Only pass on your personal information if we are required to do so by law, or you give us permission to do so (including where we are allowed to under your electricity supply contract).

Our Privacy Policy is on our website and describes how we manage your personal information in accordance with the Australian Privacy Principles. For more information please visit **alintaenergy.com.au** or call us on **13 13 58**.

your feedback is valuable

At Alinta Energy, we are committed to delivering the highest levels of service to you. If our efforts do not meet your expectations, we'd like to know so we can do something about it.

We also appreciate any positive feedback from you so we know whether we're achieving our customer service goals.

If you would like to give us feedback on any of our services, please contact us:

- Call **13 13 58**
- Mail your comments to

Customer Services
Alinta Energy
Locked Bag 55
PERTH BC WA 6849

- Fax your comments to **1800 651 161**
- Email your comments to
customer.services@alintaenergy.com.au

Our commitment to you

If you have a complaint about us, we guarantee that it will be taken seriously and fully investigated.

If you write to us, we'll respond within 10 business days.

If you call us, we'll do our best to solve the problem right then. If that's not possible, we'll call you back at an agreed time with a solution. Otherwise we'll give you the name and phone number of a person who can help you.

If you have a complaint

Our customer complaint handling policy was developed in accordance with the Australian Standard for complaints management and the *Code of Conduct*. Our policy addresses how we deal with complaints, how we distinguish general queries from complaints, and how and when we will respond to you if you make a complaint.

If you have a complaint, our customer contact centre will usually be your first point of contact. Our friendly customer service representatives are trained to handle and resolve disputes, so your complaint will be responded to immediately during your initial conversation.

If we're not able to resolve your complaint immediately, it will be escalated. We'll involve the relevant people within Alinta Energy (including senior management when necessary) to help resolve your complaint in a timely manner.

Contacting the Energy and Water Ombudsman

If you're not satisfied with the resolution of your complaint, you can contact the Energy and Water Ombudsman, an independent external dispute resolution body which helps to mediate and resolve customer disputes. There is no charge to you for this service.

The Energy and Water Ombudsman for Western Australia can be contacted:

- By phone:
08 9220 7588
Freecall:
1800 754 004
((mobile phones charged at applicable rates))
- By email:
energyandwater@ombudsman.wa.gov.au
- Online at:
www.ombudsman.wa.gov.au/ewowa

**for more
information**

Business enquiries 13 13 58

Monday to Friday 7am – 7pm

Saturday 8am – 12pm

(excluding public holidays)

customer.services@alintaenergy.com.au

alintaenergy.com.au

Electricity emergencies 13 13 51

7 days a week, 24 hours a day

www.westernpower.com.au

For more information about your electricity supply

You can find out more about your electricity supply from the following sources:

- Economic Regulation Authority
www.era.wa.gov.au
Phone: 08 6557 7900
- Public Utilities Office
www.treasury.wa.gov.au
Phone: 08 6551 2777
- Energy Safety
www.commerce.wa.gov.au/energysafety/

Phone: 08 6251 1900

If you would like a copy of the *Code of Conduct for the Supply of Electricity to Small Use Customers*, please visit **www.era.wa.gov.au**

The *Code of Conduct* outlines some of your key rights as a small use customer, regulates the behaviour of electricity marketing agents, retailers and distributors and defines the required standards of conduct when marketing electricity.

There is a wide range of legislation in place to govern the electricity industry in Western Australia, including the:

- *Electricity Industry Act 2004* (WA);
- *Energy Operators (Powers) Act 1979* (WA);
- *Electricity Corporations Act 2005* (WA); and
- *Electricity Act 1945* (WA).

These documents are available on the State Law Publisher website at **www.slp.wa.gov.au**

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