

Electricity Retail Billing Guaranteed Service Level Scheme

What is the Electricity Retail Billing Guaranteed Service Level Scheme?

Queensland's new Electricity Retail Billing Guaranteed Service Level (GSL) Scheme was introduced on 19 September 2008 to ensure householders and other small customers are compensated for errors in their electricity bills.

Electricity retailers are already required to refund any overcharged amount on their customers' electricity bills. On top of this, they must now also pay a GSL rebate to their small customers for the inconvenience caused by the error.

Under the GSL Scheme, electricity retailers must give small customers who are overcharged on their electricity bill a GSL rebate of:

- \$15 if the overcharge is at least 40 cents but less than \$10
- \$40 if the overcharge is \$10 or more.

When is the GSL rebate payable?

Electricity retailers are required to pay the GSL rebate if, because of the retailer's error:

- the retailer fails to pass on the pensioner rebate or ambulance levy exemption to an eligible customer
or
- the customer is overcharged because the bill includes an incorrect price or rate.

Electricity retailers are not required to pay the GSL rebate if:

- the retailer has issued an amended bill that corrects the overcharge before the incorrect bill has been paid by the customer
- the billing error is clearly outside of the retailer's control, such as a faulty meter or a meter reading error, or if incorrect or insufficient information has been provided to the retailer
or
- the retailer has simply made an adjustment to the customer's bill following an estimated bill being issued to the customer.

How is the GSL rebate paid?

The GSL rebate will be paid as a credit on the customer's next electricity bill. If the GSL rebate exceeds the amount owing on the customer's next bill, the remaining amount will be applied to the customer's future electricity bills.



Do I need to apply for the rebate?

The electricity retailer must use its best endeavours to automatically give a customer a GSL rebate to which the customer is entitled.

However, a customer may make a claim to the retailer if they believe they are entitled to a GSL rebate. The claim must be made within four months of the customer paying an incorrect electricity bill.

What if my rebate claim is rejected?

If a customer has a dispute with their electricity retailer about their entitlement to a GSL rebate, this must firstly be dealt with by the retailer's complaint handling process. If the complaint is not resolved, the customer may refer the dispute to the Energy Ombudsman Queensland (telephone: 1800 662 837, email: info@eoq.com.au).

Checking bills

While the GSL Scheme is meant to ensure retailers improve their billing systems and automatically compensate customers for errors, as a consumer it is always good practice to check your bills, whether they are electricity bills or any other bill. You are the person best placed to know what concessions apply to you, and pick up potential billing errors.

More information

For more information, you can download a copy of the new Electricity (Retail Billing Guaranteed Service Level Scheme) Code from the Department of Mines and Energy website www.dme.qld.gov.au.