



## Media release

Energy & Water Ombudsman NSW

Monday 28 November 2016

### Solar Bonus Scheme customers - act now to avoid bill shock

The Energy & Water Ombudsman NSW (EWON) is concerned many Solar Bonus Scheme customers are not prepared for its closure on 31 December this year.

“The Solar Bonus Scheme ends in just over a month and many customers need still to have their meter changed to receive a feed-in tariff and be prepared for their electricity use in the new year,” Energy & Water Ombudsman NSW, Janine Young, explains.

There are 146,000 households across NSW receiving a feed-in tariff of 60 or 20 cents for electricity they sell back to the grid under the Solar Bonus Scheme. From 1 January 2017 they will get a much lower feed-in tariff, or no tariff at all if they don't act now.

“What we're hearing from industry is that some customers are not aware that they are on the Scheme, while others are aware but not acting quickly enough to get ready for its closure,” Ms Young says.

As the Ombudsman, Janine Young is particularly concerned about the impact the end of the Scheme could have on vulnerable customers, including seniors.

“Some Solar Bonus Scheme customers haven't received an electricity bill for several years, so there's a very real chance they could be taken by surprise when they open their first electricity bill early next year,” Ms Young says.

EWON is urging people to make sure they're ready and get the best deal they can for their situation by following the steps below:

1. Check if you're on the Solar Bonus Scheme by looking at your bill. If you're receiving a 60 or 20 cent feed-in tariff you're on the Scheme.
2. Call your energy retailer and ask if you need a new meter. Make sure you find out the following:
  - if they will charge you for a new meter if you need one
  - when they will install a new meter
  - what feed-in tariff they're offering
  - what the contract terms will be – including additional charges or fees, or other contract terms



3. If you're not sure you're getting the best deal, compare your retailer's offer with others at [energymadeeasy.com.au](http://energymadeeasy.com.au) or talk to electricity retailers directly.
4. Sign up to a new deal as soon as possible and before 31 December.
5. Prepare for a higher electricity bill in the first quarter of next year – or in some cases your first bill in a long time. See our tips on keeping your electricity use in check on our [saving energy and water around the home factsheet](#).

If people need assistance or would like more information, they can get free and independent advice by calling EWON on 1800 246 545 or by visiting [ewon.com.au](http://ewon.com.au).

“Solar Bonus Scheme customers need to make sure they're ready now or they will face high energy bills in the new year,” Ms Young warns.

**For more information or to arrange an interview with the Ombudsman, contact: Mia Lauzé,  
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