

ELECTRICITY Regulation & the CODE OF CONDUCT

WACOSS
Utilities Hotline
Information & Advice
9420 7217

Customer Protection
How are electricity consumers protected by regulation and legislation in Western Australia?

Code of Conduct
What consumers rights and obligations are stipulated in the Code?

WACOSS CUP CONTACTS
Post: 2 Delhi St
West Perth 6005

Phone: 9420 7222

Fax: 9486 7966

Email:

consumers@wacoss.org.au

Website:

www.wacoss.org.au/utilities/index.htm



Customer Protection in the electricity market is regulated by the *Code of Conduct for the Supply of Electricity to Small Use Customers* (The Code) under the *Electricity Industry Act 2004*.

The Code has been in operation since the 1st January 2005. It provides the key regulatory mechanism to deliver customer protection to electricity consumers. The Code applies to all retailers who sell electricity to a customer who consumes less than fifty (50) megawatt hours of electricity each year (mostly residential and small business customers).

It is a license condition of all electricity retailers that they comply with the terms of the Code. The agency in charge of monitoring and enforcing compliance is the Economic Regulation Authority (ERA). The ERA will collect information and report publicly on the customer service performance of electricity license holders.

There are fourteen (14) parts to the Code. Some of the most important parts of the code are summarized below:

- **Marketing:** what an electricity retailer must do when advertising their product to be transparent and accountable
- **Billing:** how frequently a customer be billed, meter readings and estimated bills
- **Payment Difficulties & Financial Hardship:** the requirement to have a policy in place to make sure that customers who are having trouble paying bills are protected
- **Disconnection & Reconnection:** the steps that must be taken by a provider before disconnecting and customer rights to reconnection
- **Pre-payment Meters in Remote Communities:** the rights of customers on Pre-payment meters
- **Complaints & Dispute Resolution:** outlines the requirement to be a part of the Energy Ombudsman scheme
- **Service Standards Payments:** compensation payments owing to customers for breached service standards.

A copy of the complete *Code of Practice* and *A Guide to Understanding the Code* are available on the WACOSS CUP website.

Ways to make a difference

WACOSS Consumer Utilities Project is funded by the
WA Department of Consumer & Employment Protection

