



Helping
someone
with their
energy
or water
problems?

LET'S TALK.

Our service is free, fair and independent.

EWOQ is a free, fair and independent dispute resolution service for residents and small business customers across Queensland who have a problem with their electricity or gas providers, and those in South East Queensland with water issues too.

ombudsman

n. an independent official who helps consumers resolve problems.

WE CAN:

- Arrange a hold on a disconnection or negotiate reconnection.
- Check a retailer has followed the disconnection rules.
- Investigate:
 - high bills and disputed accounts
 - default listings
 - poor customer service
 - misleading marketing practices.



LET'S TALK

How we help with complaints

Our team is trained to help your client achieve a fair and reasonable outcome.

We explain the options and guide you through the steps of our dispute resolution process.

We can:

- provide independent advice before or after the provider is contacted
- refer you elsewhere if the issue is outside our jurisdiction
- arrange for a senior representative of the provider to contact you directly about your client's complaint
- undertake an independent investigation of your client's complaint
- help negotiate a resolution between your client and their provider.





**Energy & Water
Ombudsman
Queensland**

TOP TIPS

1

You're welcome to contact us on your client's behalf with their verbal or written permission. We have an Authority to Act form on our website.

2

Before we can get involved, their provider needs to have a chance to fix the problem.

3

Act quickly if your client can't pay a bill or is facing disconnection. Contact their provider and discuss the options. This will stop the debt growing and help to keep them connected.

4

It's not essential to reveal the reasons for financial hardship but it may help when negotiating payment options.

5

Keep notes every time their provider is contacted plus copies of letters, emails and bills. This will help us understand what's happened.

6

Ask to speak to a supervisor or the hardship team if the customer service representative can't help.

7

Contact us if the problem isn't fixed, or your client isn't happy with the outcome.

DISCONNECTION

The National Energy Retail Law includes protections for consumers. Electricity and gas can't be disconnected when:

- **someone at the residence is registered for life support equipment**
- **a customer is adhering to a payment plan**
- **a customer has advised their provider they have applied for financial assistance***
- **it's a Friday, weekend or public holiday or before 8am or after 3pm any other day.**

We can:

- **check the provider has followed the disconnection rules**
- **request a hold on a disconnection while your client seeks assistance**
- **negotiate reconnection based on an agreed payment plan.**

Water can't be disconnected but the flow can be restricted.

*rules apply

A customer's supply can't be disconnected or restricted once we commence an investigation that directly relates to the reason for the proposed disconnection.

**DID YOU
KNOW?**

CUSTOMER CARE

All energy and water providers have dedicated teams to assist customers in financial difficulty to access:

- **payment plans based on a customer's ability to pay**
- **energy saving information and audits**
- **information about financial assistance, rebates and concessions, including the Home Energy Emergency Assistance Scheme (HEEAS).**

Get help early to stop the debt growing and keep supply connected. Ask to speak to the provider's customer assist or hardship team to discuss options.

If you are having trouble getting the help your client needs, give us a call on **1800 662 837** or visit **www.ewoq.com.au** and chat to us live online.

LET'S TALK

Community outreach

Working in the community with clients who have issues with their electricity, gas or water provider? The Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland is here to help with problems such as high bills, disconnections or access to hardship assistance, rebates and concessions.

We want everyone who needs our help to know we're here, to understand how we can help and to know how to access our services.

Hosting an event or training session?

We're happy to come along (in-person or online) to share information about energy and water issues with your clients, your team or other stakeholders. Our free information sessions are tailored to your needs and your audience.

Email us at info@ewoq.com.au for more information.

HOW TO SUBMIT A COMPLAINT

www.ewoq.com.au

Chat with us live online

EMAIL US

complaints@ewoq.com.au

CALL US

1800 662 837 Calling from a mobile?
We can call you back.

WRITE TO US

PO Box 3640
South Brisbane BC Qld 4101



Call **131 450** for the
Translating and
Interpreting Service.



Call **133 677** if you
have a hearing or
speech impairment.

02092024

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands across Queensland and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.