



**A** Suite 2, Level 14, 1 Castlereagh Street  
Sydney NSW 2000  
**T** 02 9220 5500  
**W** [energyconsumersaustralia.com.au](http://energyconsumersaustralia.com.au)  
**Twitter** @energyvoiceau  
**in** /energyconsumersaustralia  
**f** /energyconsumersaustralia  
ABN 96 603 931 326

## Media Release

25 October 2022

---

### Putting people in control of energy use is our most urgent national energy priority

Energy Consumers Australia said the expected rises in electricity and gas prices over the next two years contained in today's Budget, means there must be a critical national conversation on how governments will help people control their energy use and bring bills down.

CEO Lynne Gallagher said the strategy needs to make sure there is adequate assistance for families and small businesses struggling to pay their bills, and support people to control their energy use.

She said the National Energy Performance Strategy could build on the National Energy Transformation Partnership with a "power of work" needed between now and the May budget to flesh out the detail on how the government will support households to get control of their power bills.

"With rising inflation and global pressures driving prices up, helping consumer bring their bills down by controlling their energy use is the most urgent priority for households and small businesses," Ms Gallagher said.

"We strongly welcome the investments in energy efficiency for small businesses announced today. Now we need an equivalent investment to help households manage their energy use – not just with energy efficiency but also by driving greater participation by households.

"We need investment at least cost, while maximising consumer participation to manage energy use – that is the only way we will keep control of bills in the coming 2-3 years."

Ms Gallagher said consumers want to see us come together and move to a clean energy future and they see energy affordability as the single most important issue to address in the transition.

"Our latest Energy Consumer Sentiment Survey found that nearly two thirds of households think that having affordable energy prices for all Australians is the biggest challenge ahead for the energy system.

"Tackling affordability in the context of rising prices will require lateral thinking and it starts with capitalising on the opportunity of existing consumer energy resources - like solar panels and batteries.

"We must recognise the second biggest source of energy in Australia is consumers themselves – mainly through rooftop solar and the best way to address energy security and affordability is to help consumers control their energy use.

"We need to ensure our energy generation and network are delivering reliable power at lowest cost, but the single biggest opportunity to address climate, energy security and affordability is to engage better with consumers.

"Helping consumers control their energy use will take pressure off the grid and lower the need for expensive network investment at a time when infrastructure costs are at record highs."

She said energy affordability affects everyone, but there is also a concerning and growing energy divide.

"Energy affordability affects us all, but for some in our community it is a painful choice between paying the power bill and putting food on the table and that is only going to get worse in the year ahead without a lot of hard work by government, together with consumers."

#### About Energy Consumers Australia

Energy Consumers Australia is the independent, national voice for residential and small business energy consumers. We enable residential and small business energy consumers to have their voices heard.

**Media contact:** Tim O'Halloran 0409 059 617