



Bushfire patrols

To reduce the risk of bushfires, Ausgrid is undertaking bushfire patrols of private power poles and overhead powerlines in bushfire-prone areas as a priority.

Private poles and overhead powerlines that aren't inspected and properly maintained can become a serious bushfire hazard.

If you live in a bushfire zone, we will patrol any private or shared poles and powerlines on your property to make sure they are safe.

Your responsibilities

If we identify any bushfire hazards around your private poles and powerlines, we will give you a defect notice outlining what work is required and the time in which it must be done. It will be your responsibility to arrange and pay for a licensed electrician or qualified tree trimming contractor to carry out the required work.

If you are having difficulty with payment

Ausgrid recognises that some customers might not be able to pay for urgent repairs because of personal circumstances or the size and unexpected nature of the cost of the work. We understand that everyone's situation is different, and we will work with customers on a case-by-case basis to assess their eligibility for assistance.

If you are eligible, Ausgrid will organise the repair of your private poles and overhead powerlines or clear vegetation to make the equipment safe. We will then work with you to develop a payment plan to meet the cost of this work.

How does a payment plan work?

Payment plans are agreed between Ausgrid and the customer. We will work with you to plan repayments for the cost of the electrical repairs or vegetation removal. When we assess your eligibility for assistance, we will consider the amount of the debt and your ability to make repayments based on your individual circumstances.

Eligibility for financial assistance

If you answer 'yes' to one or more of these questions, or you are unable to pay for repairs due to the size and unexpected nature of the amount required, you may be eligible for support or assistance.

Are you:

- reliant on government assistance or Centrelink payments?
- unemployed?

Do you have, or care for someone with:

- a medical or mental health condition or disability that affects your ability to pay?

Have you:

- experienced a death in the family that affects your ability to pay?
- had a change in family circumstances that affects your ability to pay?
- had a sudden loss of income or substantial reduction in income?
- experienced a recent event such as fire, flooding or storm damage?

When considering your circumstances we will take into account the cost of the unplanned repairs relative to your capacity to pay.

Talk to us early

If you have answered yes to any of these questions, please contact Ausgrid to discuss your circumstances. We have experienced staff who are able to discuss your personal circumstances in relation to the work required. We aim to respond early in assessing the most appropriate form of assistance.

Disconnection of electricity

Ausgrid will only disconnect your electricity supply as a last resort, in extreme circumstances. This may be where there is a threat to public safety or when all other options under Ausgrid's financial hardship policy have been exhausted. If a customer or individual is deemed to be in financial hardship or requires assistance, we will seek agreement of a payment plan and proceed to rectify the defect in order to make the supply safe, and will not disconnect the property.

Your rights

As an Ausgrid customer, we commit to:

- treating you in a respectful manner
- ensuring your details and circumstances are kept confidential
- clearly explaining your options, information and available support
- protecting you from debt recovery or legal action while you meet the agreed repayments.

As a recipient of support or assistance, Ausgrid expects you to:

- acknowledge the debt and obligation to repay
- provide Ausgrid any evidence required to assist with the assessment of financial circumstances and capacity to pay
- advise Ausgrid if your contact details or financial circumstances change
- notify Ausgrid if you are unable to meet agreed payments or terms.

For more information

To find out more visit our website at ausgrid.com.au/hardship.

If you would like more information about how to assess your eligibility for financial assistance or set up a payment plan please phone us on **13 13 65**.



Interpreter service 131 450