

# Undergrounding Powerlines

## Frequently Asked Questions



**October 2020**

### **Why doesn't Ausgrid put powerlines underground?**

**A:** Putting the entire Ausgrid network underground would be incredibly expensive and disruptive.

It would cost between \$72 billion and \$130 billion dollars and take up to 40 years to complete.

It costs about \$2.5 million per kilometre to put wires underground, which is 15 times more expensive than the cost of above-ground wiring.

Customers would need to pay an additional \$1200- \$2,200 per year for 40 years on their electricity bill. That's a cost we're not willing to pass on to customers.

It's also much more difficult and time consuming to repair.

Replacing all existing overhead powerlines in the network with underground cables would cause massive disruption to the community and its power supply while we dig up roads, footpaths and other public areas.

It's also difficult to locate services underground in inner-city areas where there are existing essential services including water, gas and telecommunications lines.

Underground cables are installed as a default during construction in new urban release areas, where the developers cover the cost.

### **Why are powerlines underground in some areas but not others?**

**A:** Underground cables are installed as default during construction in new urban release areas, where the developers cover the cost. Sections of overhead power lines can also be undergrounded at the request of a developer or other entity. In these cases, the work is known as relocation, and the cost is covered by the entity that requests the undergrounding eg: the developer.

### **Who can request undergrounding of powerlines?**

**A:** Ausgrid works with Councils and local communities if they ask to underground powerlines. The community or local Council would normally fund such works.