

# Customer Claims - Frequently Asked Questions

## Q) I've had a power outage and an appliance has failed, can I claim from Essential Energy?



The supply of electricity to your premises is in accordance with Essential Energy's [Deemed Standard Connection Contract](#) (Contract), which applies under legislation including the National Energy Retail Law.

Our electricity network is designed to deliver electricity to customers safely and efficiently. While we regularly inspect and maintain the electricity network to ensure you enjoy reliable electricity supply, there will be occasions when the quality and reliability of the electricity supply is subject to a variety of factors that are beyond our control and cause the supply to be interrupted both on a planned basis (where we can provide notice) and unplanned or emergency when no notice is possible.

Other than loss or damage resulting from an outage or fault in your electricity supply that is caused by our negligence, we are unable to compensate for any damage. This covers power interruption attributed to events beyond our control, such as adverse weather conditions, vandalism, motor vehicle collisions with power poles and other such events.

You can read all the terms, conditions and limits that do apply in the Contract, available [here](#). We assess all claims in accordance with this Contract, which may mean that your claim is denied or adjusted.

## Q) Can I claim for loss of business from Essential Energy because my power has been out?



While we do try to minimise interruptions and limit our impact on homes and businesses, under both legislation and the Deemed Standard Connection Contract we are not able to guarantee a continuous supply of electricity.

On this basis Essential Energy does not accept liability for claims associated with consequential business loss and will not compensate customers for losses of this kind.

If your business requires a continuous supply of electricity to generate income or is involved in manufacturing a product for resale with equipment that is likely to be impacted by an interruption to the electricity supply, we recommend taking proactive measures to minimise any loss you might suffer in the event of a power outage.

These steps might include investing in a back-up generator or uninterruptable power supply and speaking with your insurer to arrange the appropriate level of insurance coverage to protect your business interests should there be an interruption to your electricity supply.

## Q) I think Essential Energy has damaged my property, can I make a claim?



To consider your claim we will need to investigate what happened, if the results of our investigations show that Essential Energy's actions may have been responsible for your loss or damage, Essential Energy will consider your claim.

Following the investigation, our Customer Resolutions team may contact you to seek proof of your loss or damage. We will then finalise our claim assessment and advise you of the outcome within 30 days.

## Q) Can I claim damage in Natural Disaster Areas?



If your Local Government Area has been declared a Natural Disaster Area, depending on the severity of the storms/floods/bushfires, disaster relief assistance may be available.

This declaration triggers multiple assistance schemes, which are designed to assist with the cost of disaster relief and recovery.

Further information including eligibility criteria can be obtained from the Office of Emergency Management website at <https://www.emergency.nsw.gov.au/>

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## Q) Can I claim for damage from wildlife?



Damage from wildlife activity is outside of Essential Energy's control, so we are not able to accept liability.

This type of loss is usually covered under household or business insurance, so please contact your insurer to check.

We may be able to help by providing confirmation of wildlife activity to help you make your claim with your insurer.

## Q) Can I claim food loss?



Essential Energy is unable to cover the cost of food loss resulting from storms, floods, wind, lightning, wildlife, bushfires, natural disasters or the actions of a third party such as impact by a motor vehicle.

Some home and contents insurance policies provide coverage for food spoilage with no excess.

## Q) Can I claim under my own insurance policy?



Many home, contents and small business insurance policies provide 'new for old' (i.e. without depreciation) cover for unexpected damage to electrical items, especially where the cause of damage was storms, wildlife activity, vehicle impact or burning/explosion.

Essential Energy can provide a letter for your insurer to assist with the claims process. In some circumstances we can also consider contributing towards payment of your insurance excess.

## Q) If I make a claim with Essential Energy, how long will it normally take for a response?



Essential Energy's Customer Resolutions team will acknowledge your claim within four business days of it being received, your claim will then be allocated to a Customer Support Officer who will commence their investigations.

The investigation of claims is often a complex and time-consuming process with many factors to consider including the information you have provided us in the Customer Incident Investigation Form. As we work through your claim, we will contact you every three weeks to confirm that it is still under investigation and provide information around our progress.

While our target is to respond to claims in less than 30 days, some investigations may take longer than this and we thank you in advance for your patience while we complete our thorough assessment.

## Q) What happens if you are not satisfied with our response?



If you are not satisfied with our response, you can request a review of the original investigation and decision.

If you are still not satisfied, we will recommend you consider contacting the Energy and Water Ombudsman NSW (EWON) which provides a free, independent complaints resolution service. You can contact EWON by calling 1800 246 545 (free call), visiting their website [www.ewon.com.au](http://www.ewon.com.au) or in writing to Reply Paid 86550, Sydney NSW 1234.

Customers who live in Queensland can contact the Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland (EWOQ) which provides a free, independent complaints resolution service. You can contact EWOQ by calling 1800 662 837 (free call), visiting their website [www.ewoq.com.au](http://www.ewoq.com.au) or in writing to PO Box 3640, South Brisbane BC, QLD, 4101.

To apply, complete the Incident Investigation Form and post to Essential Energy, PO Box 5730 Port Macquarie, NSW 2444 or email to [customer.resolutions@essentialenergy.com.au](mailto:customer.resolutions@essentialenergy.com.au)

