



Quarterly Survey of Domestic Electricity Prices

Introduction - Report for 15 May 2020

What does the QSDEP monitor?

The QSDEP monitors tariffs publicly advertised in the retail electricity market on a particular date. This provides a handy indicator of how price changes may impact on consumers. However, it does not reflect what customers have actually paid for electricity in any particular period, as the QSDEP only models one type of customer in each city or town, when in reality, consumption and pricing plans vary significantly across households.

For information on what households have actually paid for electricity over time, please see the Ministry's sales based retail electricity prices. Sales based data reflects all discounts actually received by consumers, such as prompt payment discounts, lower fixed term prices, loyalty rewards, and acquisition and retention payments.

What are the key assumptions for the model QSDEP household?

The QSDEP attempts to model a typical New Zealand household. The model customer has the following key attributes in each of the towns and cities where prices are surveyed:

- They consume an average of around 22 kWh per day. This equates to an annual consumption of 8000 kWh.
- They are on the current advertised prices for the plans surveyed by the Ministry for each retailer in each region. This represents the headline, publicly advertised retail plan for new customers for each retailer without a fixed term contract. For the modelled QSDEP customer using 8000 kWh in a year, this is always a 'low user' plan with low fixed charges.
- They pay their bill on time and receive any available prompt payment discounts (including electronic or online only discounts).
- They solely use electricity for their water heating and have a ripple controlled electricity meter.
- They are on the most common, controlled, retail metering configuration in each town and city we monitor. The most common retail metering configurations are either
 - All inclusive – customers are charged one rate for all electricity that is purchased accounting for the fact that usage for hot water is controlled.
 - Uncontrolled/Controlled – electricity use for water is metered separately from other usage and controlled. We assume 60% of household demand is uncontrolled and 40% is controlled.
 - Day/Night – electricity use is metered demanding on time of day, but hot water usage is still controlled. We assume 70% day and 30% night usage.

How are regional average retail prices calculated for the report?

- For each retailer in each town or city, the Ministry calculates an average price based on the QSDEP model household based on data sourced from Consumer Powerswitch. This information is no longer published in the QSDEP report, as retailer specific price comparisons should be sourced directly from Consumer Powerswitch. See www.powerswitch.org.nz
- Market share information for individual lines pricing areas is obtained from the Electricity Authority's Electricity Market Information (EMI) website. In the QSDEP report we use the EA latest report on "Market share trends by network reporting region". This can be obtained at: www.emi.ea.govt.nz/Datasets/Retail/MarketStructure
- This market share information is based on ICP data which includes residential consumers, as well as commercial and industrial consumers. Approximately 87% of ICPs are residential customers.

How does the QSDEP report break down the retail price into a 'Lines Component' and an 'Energy and Others Costs' component?

As part of the QSDEP we collect lines charge information separately for all electricity network companies through disclosures on their website. This information is used to calculate a 'Lines Component' of the total retail charge. The 'Energy and Others Costs' component is then calculated by subtracting the 'Lines Component' from the retail price (with the exception of 'The Line Company TLC Limited' which is the only lines company in New Zealand to directly bill residential consumers).

How does the QSDEP report break down the 'Lines Component' into a 'Transmission' and 'Distribution' component?

Lines charges cover the cost of transmission, the cost of distribution on local lines networks, and other pass-through costs such as rates and levies. Information on the transmission portion of lines charges is taken from lines company pricing schedules, and in some cases direct advice from lines companies. This is used to break down the lines component into an estimated 'transmission component' (reflecting the cost of transmission), and a 'distribution component' (covering distribution network and other pass-through charges). For some areas the QSDEP estimated transmission component may include other pass-through charges and in these cases are not a true reflection of the actual cost of transmission.

Where are metering charges included?

Metering charges are included in the 'Energy and Others Costs' component. For towns supplied by TLC Limited, the metering cost is still included under the 'Energy and Others Costs' even though it is usually billed by TLC Limited. This ensures consistent treatment of lines charges across line areas.

How is GST included?

The total retail charge in each town or city is inclusive of GST. The 'Lines Component' and 'Energy and Others Costs' components are also inclusive of GST. As a consequence the proportion of the total bill that is lines charges versus other charges is the same as it would be if GST were excluded from both parts.

What about lines company discounts and energy trust distributions?

The QSDEP report does not include any discounts or trust distributions which reflect consumer ownership in any of our retail or line price data series. This is the best way to consistently treat all lines company discounts and energy trust distributions equally in our consumer prices.

However the QSDEP does include footnotes which identify the most recent information we have on additional discounts made by lines companies and energy trusts (currently for the year ending 31 March 2019) for the model QSDEP customer.

Would you like further information?

Please see the more detailed document "Key Assumptions for the QSDEP".

Important

Although every attempt has been made to ensure the information in the report is accurate, neither the Crown nor any Minister, employee or agent of the Crown:

- warrants the accuracy, completeness or usefulness for any particular purpose of the information contained in this publication in paper or electronic form; or
- accepts any liability for any loss or damage, however caused, from the reliance on or use of that information or arising from the absence of information or any particular information in this publication in paper or electronic form.



Quarterly Survey of Domestic Electricity Prices

Nominal indicators on 15 May 2020

Modelled NZ Consumer - 22 kWh per day on cheapest low user tariff available without a fixed term contract. For further detail see the notes page.

* indicates an area where, due to GXP based billing, it is not possible to completely align lines charges with retail charges. Therefore the breakdown into components is an approximation.

Location	Lines Company	Notes	Indicators on 15-5-2020			Analysis of Change in Last Quarter			Analysis of Change in Last Quarter		
			Retail	Lines Comp	Energy and Other	Percentage Change			Absolute Price Change		
						Retail	Lines Comp	Energy and Other	Retail	Lines Comp	Energy and Other
c/kWh	c/kWh	c/kWh	%	%	%	c/kWh	c/kWh	c/kWh			
New Zealand			30.7	11.1	19.6	-0.5%	-8.3%	4.5%	-0.16	-1.00	0.84
North Island											
Kerikeri	Top Energy	1	41.67	21.6	20.1	-2.7%	-12.1%	10.1%	-1.14	-2.98	1.84
Whangarei	Northpower	2	32.60	12.1	20.5	2.1%	0.0%	3.4%	0.68	-	0.68
Auckland North Shore	Vector (Northern)		29.69	10.6	19.1	0.1%	-7.6%	5.0%	0.03	-0.88	0.91
Auckland Central	Vector (Auckland)	3	28.95	10.6	18.4	0.1%	-7.6%	5.2%	0.02	-0.88	0.90
Pukekohe	Counties Power	4	31.38	12.8	18.6	1.5%	0.0%	2.5%	0.45	-	0.45
Tauranga	Powerco (Tauranga)	5	33.45	10.6	22.8	-1.3%	-11.7%	4.5%	-0.43	-1.41	0.99
Hamilton	WEL Networks		30.78	10.6	20.2	0.1%	-7.6%	4.8%	0.04	-0.88	0.92
Thames	Powerco (Thames Valley)		32.64	11.4	21.3	-1.8%	-13.0%	5.4%	-0.60	-1.69	1.09
Cambridge	Waipa Networks		29.31	8.7	20.6	2.4%	0.0%	3.4%	0.68	-	0.68
Whakatane	Horizon Energy (Urban)	6	30.06	11.7	18.4	-1.3%	-7.3%	2.8%	-0.41	-0.92	0.51
Rotorua	Unison (Rotorua)		32.67	11.4	21.2	-1.8%	-13.5%	5.9%	-0.59	-1.78	1.19
Taupo	Unison (Taupo)		32.69	11.4	21.3	-1.5%	-13.5%	6.4%	-0.49	-1.78	1.29
Gisborne	Eastland (High Density)		35.20	14.6	20.6	-1.5%	-8.7%	4.4%	-0.52	-1.40	0.87
* New Plymouth	Powerco (Western A - Nth Taranaki)		30.18	9.9	20.2	-2.7%	-14.2%	4.3%	-0.82	-1.65	0.83
Otorohanga	The Lines Company (Hangatiki GXP - LV High Density)		33.53	14.4	19.1	-3.8%	-9.3%	0.9%	-1.31	-1.48	0.17
Taumararui	The Lines Company (Ongarue GXP - LV High Density)	7	33.53	14.4	19.1	-3.8%	-9.3%	0.9%	-1.31	-1.48	0.17
Napier	Unison (Hawke's Bay)	8	31.71	12.0	19.7	-1.1%	-13.9%	8.7%	-0.36	-1.93	1.57
* Hawera	Powerco (Western B - Sth Taranaki)		33.53	11.9	21.6	-3.0%	-14.3%	4.6%	-1.04	-1.98	0.95
Waipukurau	Centralines	9,10	38.07	20.0	18.1	1.3%	0.0%	2.8%	0.49	-	0.49
* Whanganui	Powerco (Western A - Whanganui)		31.26	9.9	21.3	-2.3%	-14.2%	4.5%	-0.73	-1.65	0.92
* Dannevirke	Scanpower	11	33.84	15.1	18.7	1.4%	0.0%	2.6%	0.48	-	0.48
* Masterton	Powerco (Western B - Wairarapa)		33.38	11.9	21.5	-2.5%	-14.3%	5.5%	-0.86	-1.98	1.12
* Palmerston North	Powerco (Western A - Manawatu)		30.36	9.9	20.4	-2.4%	-14.2%	4.7%	-0.74	-1.65	0.91
Paraparaumu	Electra	12	29.70	11.9	17.8	0.8%	-0.2%	1.5%	0.24	-0.03	0.27
Wellington City	Wellington Electricity Lines		28.95	9.7	19.2	-2.1%	-13.8%	5.0%	-0.63	-1.55	0.92
South Island											
Nelson	Nelson Electricity		30.43	8.8	21.7	0.7%	-5.8%	3.6%	0.21	-0.54	0.75
Richmond	Network Tasman	13, 14	29.38	9.0	20.4	2.5%	5.5%	1.3%	0.72	0.47	0.26
Blenheim	Marlborough Lines (Non-remote)	15, 16	36.40	14.7	21.7	2.0%	-0.7%	3.9%	0.71	-0.10	0.81
Westport	Buller Electricity		39.63	17.0	22.6	1.7%	0.0%	3.0%	0.65	-	0.65
Greymouth	Westpower	17	36.38	13.2	23.2	3.3%	2.7%	3.6%	1.16	0.35	0.81
Rangiora	Mainpower (North Canterbury)	18, A	30.12	11.4	18.7	-4.7%	-11.0%	-0.4%	-1.49	-1.42	-0.07
Kaipoi	Mainpower (Kaipoi)		29.78	11.4	18.3	1.7%	8.5%	-2.1%	0.50	0.89	-0.39
* Christchurch	Orion NZ		29.13	10.1	19.0	0.2%	-6.0%	3.8%	0.05	-0.65	0.70
Ashburton	EA Networks	19	28.12	7.4	20.7	-1.6%	-13.6%	3.6%	-0.46	-1.17	0.71
Timaru	Alpine Energy (Low Cost Area)	20	31.12	12.7	18.5	-3.5%	-18.6%	10.5%	-1.14	-2.89	1.75
Oamaru	Network Waitaki	21	29.47	10.5	19.0	1.7%	3.2%	0.9%	0.49	0.33	0.16
Dunedin	Aurora Energy (Dunedin)		26.74	8.7	18.1	1.6%	-0.2%	2.4%	0.41	-0.02	0.43
Queenstown	Aurora Energy (Queenstown)		29.16	9.6	19.5	0.2%	-7.6%	4.4%	0.04	-0.79	0.83
Cromwell	Aurora Energy (Clyde/Cromwell)		33.21	13.2	20.0	0.1%	-6.5%	5.0%	0.02	-0.92	0.95
* Balclutha	OtagoNet Joint Venture		41.55	19.2	22.4	-2.6%	-10.4%	5.2%	-1.13	-2.24	1.11
* Winton	The Power Company (Urban)	22	33.53	14.1	19.5	1.6%	2.3%	1.1%	0.53	0.32	0.21
* Invercargill	Electricity Invercargill		28.76	10.1	18.6	0.0%	-5.4%	3.2%	0.00	-0.58	0.58

Notes on additional ownership based discounts and distributions for the year ending 31 March 2019. For the full report see our webpage.

Note	Type	Made by	Amount for model customer
1	Lines company discount	Top Energy	2.5 c/kWh
2	Lines trust distribution	Northpower Electric Power Trust	1.5 c/kWh
3	Lines trust distribution	Entrust	4.4 c/kWh
4	Lines company discount	Counties Power	2.4 c/kWh
5	Retailer trust distribution	Tauranga Energy Consumers Trust	5.4 c/kWh
6	Lines company discount	Waipa Networks	0.9 c/kWh
7	Lines trust distribution	King Country Electric Power Trust	0.7 c/kWh
8	Lines trust distribution	Hawkes Bay Power Consumers Trust	2.8 c/kWh
9	Lines company discount	Centralines	1.9 c/kWh
10	Retailer trust distribution	Central Hawke's Bay Consumers Power Trust	11.3 c/kWh
11	Lines company discount	Scanpower	3.8 c/kWh
12	Lines company discount	Electra	2.4 c/kWh
13	Lines company discount	Network Tasman	3.0 c/kWh
14	Lines trust distribution	Network Tasman Trust	1.0 c/kWh
15	Lines company discount	Marlborough Lines	2.8 c/kWh
16	Lines trust distribution	Marlborough Electric Power Trust	2.6 c/kWh
17	Lines company discount	Westpower	2.0 c/kWh
18	Lines company discount	Mainpower	2.3 c/kWh
19	Lines company discount	EA Networks	0.5 c/kWh
20	Lines trust distribution	Line Trust South Canterbury	0.8 c/kWh
21	Lines company discount	Network Waitaki	1.4 c/kWh
22	Lines company discount	The Power Company	2.0 c/kWh

A Mainpower pays a discount to customers in North Canterbury at the time of billing. Retail prices are published inclusive this discount. This ownership discount has been added to the retail price in order to ensure consistent treatment of discounts.