

Attachment 2.14

Dec 19 Media Release NSW Government Energy Minister

January 2015





The Hon Anthony Roberts MP

Minister for Resources and Energy

Special Minister of State

MEDIA RELEASE

Friday, 19 December 2014

MORE HOUSEHOLDS BENEFITING FROM ENERGY REBATES

Minister for Resources and Energy Anthony Roberts today said almost a million NSW households are now benefiting from the NSW Government's energy rebates.

Mr Roberts said this includes:

- Approximately 780,000 Low Income Household Rebate recipients;
- 22,351 rebates approved through the Family Energy Rebate (FER) program;
- 30,500 Life Support Rebate recipients;
- 5,600 Medical Energy Rebate recipients; and
- 85,000 beneficiaries of the Energy Accounts Payment Assistance scheme.

"Since 1 July 2014, 40,379 applications have been received for the FER, which is a 109 per cent increase this financial year compared to the same period last year," Mr Roberts said.

"Under the former Labor Government, electricity prices rose by 60 per cent over five years, including 22.4 per cent when John Robertson was Energy Minister in 2009/10.

"The NSW Liberals & Nationals Government is determined to ease cost of living pressures for households and we're delivering through our reforms in the energy sector.

"The FER has increased from \$125 to \$150 this financial year.

We have increased our advertising of energy rebates online and boosted awareness through the State's schools.

"Information about the FER was distributed to more than 3,140 primary and secondary schools, and more than 6,600 pre-schools, kindergartens and childcare centres.

"We are also working with the Federal Department of Human Services (DHS) to provide direct marketing to NSW households that are eligible for Family Tax Benefit A or B, to ensure they are aware of the FER and know how to apply.

"The NSW Government committed \$228 million this financial year to ease energy costs for households through our rebates and I'm pleased to see more households taking advantage of the FER because no one eligible for our rebates who applies will miss out."

Eligible Western Sydney households have received more than \$600,000 in FER support since mid-2012 when the rebate was introduced, and there has been a 29 per cent increase in applications in the first quarter of this financial year, compared to the same period in 2013-14.

Last financial year, 3,417 households from the Hunter received more than \$280,000 and there has been a 36 per cent increase in applications in the first quarter of 2014-15 compared to the same period last financial year.

To be eligible for the 2014-2015 NSW FER, you must:

- Be a NSW resident;
- Have been assessed by the DHS as being eligible for the Family Tax Benefit (FTB) A or B during the last financial year, and have received a FTB payment; and
- Be an account holder of an electricity retailer or a long-term resident of a residential community (caravan or mobile home park) whose name appears on the electricity account for supply to his or her principal place of residence.

Mr Roberts encouraged energy customers to visit the Division of Resources and Energy's (DRE) website to find out whether they are eligible for the NSW Government's rebates.

"As well as increasing the FER, we have boosted the **Low Income Household Rebate** and the **Medical Energy Rebate** to \$235," he said.

"**Energy Accounts Payment Assistance** is funded by more than \$15 million in 2014-15 for customers experiencing emergency hardship and is delivered by community agencies.

"**The Life Support Rebate** is available for any resident who uses or has someone living with them who requires energy-intensive life sustaining medical equipment.

"\$4 million has been allocated for this rebate in 2014-15. The value of the rebate depends on the type of machine used by the customer."

For more information visit: www.resourcesandenergy.nsw.gov.au

MEDIA: Tim Potter 0417 822 957