



## ✓ Checklist — helping you help clients

### Bills

#### Discounts, Concessions, Hardship

Are there any **discounts** shown on the bill? Discounts can lapse at the end of a market contract term. Check the retailer's website to renew or compare current contracts or [energymadeeasy.gov.au](http://energymadeeasy.gov.au) to find better options.

Is there a **concession** shown on the bill? Is the client eligible? Check entitlements with Concessions Finder at [sa.gov.au/concessions](http://sa.gov.au/concessions).

Is the client on a **hardship plan**? If the client is struggling, contact the retailer's hardship team to negotiate installment amounts and set up a plan.

#### Meter reading, Off-peak, Solar

**Meter readings — estimated or actual?** If estimated, is it higher/lower than the client's real usage? If actual, is it making up for a previous high/low estimated bill? Compare with previous bills (refer to usage graph).

If the client has an electric storage hot water system (125 litres or larger), make sure the bill shows an **off-peak** (ancillary or controlled load) meter reading.

Is there a solar power system? Check the bill for **feed-in tariff credits**. If the system is working well, solar credits can significantly reduce the bill.

#### Tariffs, Fees & Charges

Check the **tariffs**: are they unusually high? Has there been a price increase? Look for a better deal — try the existing retailer first, before their competitors. Beware of exit fees.

Are there any **extra fees or charges**? Eg. late payment fees, credit card charges or direct debit dishonour fees. Can these be avoided in the future? Some retailers will waive fees if you ask them.

### Running Costs / Energy and Water Saving Measures

#### Usage, Appliances, Resources

Check the **average daily usage** compared with the same period last year and with other households in the area (benchmarks are usually shown on the bill). Discuss **energy usage patterns**. Has there been a change? Suggest energy and water saving measures.

Ask the client to list their **appliances** (heating/cooling, water heating, fridges, cooking, washing ...). Discuss running costs. Refer to Retailer Energy Efficiency Scheme (REES) - find participating retailers at [www.escosa.sa.gov.au](http://www.escosa.sa.gov.au).

Give copies of *Do your own home energy audit*, *Summer cooling guide* and *Winter heating guide*. Suggest borrowing *Home Energy Toolkit* from the local library.

### Advocacy and Assistance

#### Ombudsman, Assistance, Referrals

Problems with the retailer? Discuss contacting the retailer on the client's behalf. If the issue cannot be resolved, refer to the **Energy and Water Ombudsman** (EWOSA) [www.ewosa.com.au](http://www.ewosa.com.au).

Does the client need other forms of assistance such as a no-interest loan to purchase energy efficient appliances? - refer where necessary. Serious risk of disconnection? Refer to a financial counsellor to explore options.