

Victorians on life support now have greater protection

05 December 2019

Electricity and gas

Tens of thousands of Victorian energy consumers who rely on life support equipment at home will now have [greater protections under new rules](#) from the Victorian energy regulator.

The new rules made by the Essential Services Commission mean life support customers will be protected as soon as they pick up the phone, and won't have to wait for medical confirmation.

The new protections will also be extended to gas customers and people living in embedded networks such as apartments and retirement homes.

Commission chair Kate Symons says the new rules mean customers will be protected as soon as they inform their energy provider they require life support equipment.

“Until now, thousands of life support customers have been vulnerable because some retailers and distributors would not register them until they received medical confirmation.

“Now, as soon as a life support customer notifies their energy provider, they will need to be registered in the system,” she said.

The new rules mean:

- Energy retailers will have to ask new customers if they are on life support equipment, before signing them up to an energy deal.

- All life support customers, including 35,800 existing electricity customers, will receive more comprehensive information about their rights and the new processes to help ensure they receive protections when they need it.
- Energy businesses will have to use a standardised medical form (example on our website) to simplify the registration process.
- Energy businesses will have to maintain accurate registers of life support customers and have clear communication processes established between distributors and retailers.

The new rules also make it clearer for the commission to penalise energy businesses who fail life support customers, for example by not providing adequate notification of a planned outage.

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