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# Essential News

Latest news from the Essential Services Commission

**February 2026**

## Updated framework for new customer contributions to water infrastructure

New customer contributions, also known as developer charges, are one-off charges levied by water businesses on a property owner applying to connect to water infrastructure or applying to receive increased services.

New customer contributions establish how much a connecting party pays upfront, and what will be paid through ongoing charges by the connecting party and all other customers.



The updated framework now requires water businesses to develop clear, comprehensive, and internally consistent connection policies, which are reviewed and approved by the commission through the price review process. This new approach promotes transparency and accountability.

[Read more](#)

## Enforcement

### **Business banned from Victorian Energy Upgrades program for false claims with doctored photos**

We have cancelled the Victorian Energy Upgrades (VEU) accreditation of Save Energy Solutions for making false claims about energy efficiency projects.

We allege Save Energy Solutions submitted doctored photos of heat pump water heater installations as evidence for multiple projects to falsely claim certificates. The photos showed false drill holes across multiple tanks and manipulated compliance plate information on the original hot water systems.



[Read more](#)

### **Businesses punished for breaking Victorian Energy Upgrades program rules, including illegal doorknocking**

We have taken action against two Victorian Energy Upgrades (VEU) accredited businesses for allegedly breaching the program rules.



We suspended Target Green Pty Ltd from the VEU program for three months for allegedly making false claims and breaching multiple consumer protections.

We also placed a six-week restriction on Cyanergy Pty Ltd's accreditation for allegedly claiming Victorian energy efficiency certificates for four non-compliant heat pump water upgrades.

[Read more](#)

## Ballarat energy upgrades compliance blitz

Our inspectors have been in the Ballarat area on a compliance blitz, checking that lighting upgrades on farming and agricultural sites meet Victorian Energy Upgrades (VEU) program rules.

We'll be doing more inspections than ever this year to make sure VEU upgrades deliver genuine energy savings and meet industry standards, and we'll continue to take strong action against businesses that break the rules.



## Consultations

We're currently seeking feedback on:

- [Energy Trade Pty Ltd - Application for an electricity retail licence](#) - consultation closes 16 February 2026
- [Regulating with consumer vulnerability in mind](#) - consultation closes 18 February 2026

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