

# Ergon Energy Retail Drought FAQs



WE'RE HERE TO HELP

MARCH 2022

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## WHAT DROUGHT RELIEF IS AVAILABLE?

For farmers located in a drought declared area or whose property is individually declared, drought assistance provides relief from supply charges on accounts that are primarily used to pump water for farm or irrigation assistance.

**WAIVED CHARGES** - Farmers may apply for waiving of fixed components where the supply charge components of the electricity account/s are waived (excluding minimum demand charges) - charges include supply charges for tariffs used for pumping water, service fees including metering charges and minimum payments.

**DEFERRED PAYMENTS** - For farmers experiencing financial difficulties because of the drought, you may apply to defer payment of your electricity accounts relating to farm or irrigation usage for 12 months with a sustainable payment plan in place. Supporting evidence of experiencing financial difficulties in the form of a statement of financial position prepared and certified by a financial counsellor/advisor/bank/account is required.

## WHAT ARE MY DROUGHT TARIFF OPTIONS?

Small customers must remain on the same tariff to retain drought relief waiving of fixed charges.

Once drought relief is approved, a change to your tariff may result in the drought relief expiring.

Large customers must be on the lowest annual cost tariff based on your variable and fixed charges before considering the drought relief assistance provided.

## HOW DO I KNOW IF MY SHIRE IS DECLARED?

The Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries makes area or shire drought declarations based on the recommendations of local drought committees. (LDCs).

See the Queensland Government website for the latest drought map and shire listings: <https://www.longpaddock.qld.gov.au/drought/drought-declarations>

## MY SHIRE IS NOT CURRENTLY DECLARED BUT MY PROPERTY IS IN DROUGHT - CAN I APPLY FOR DROUGHT RELIEF?

If your property is in an area which is not drought declared and you are experiencing drought conditions, you can apply for an Individually Droughted Property (IDP) declaration through the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF). For a copy of the IDP application form call DAF on 132523 or see website:

<https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industries/farms-fishing-forestry/agriculture/rural-disaster-recovery/drought/declarations-revocations/idp-declarations>

A copy of the full approved IDP for your property must be submitted with your drought application.

## HOW DO I KNOW IF MY APPLICATION HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL?

Once your drought application has been processed, you will be notified by post/email. Our Drought Team automatically assess eligibility for backdating when processing your application. If eligible, drought relief waiver of fixed components may be backdated 6 months (backdate will not precede the commencement date of the relevant drought declaration).

## DO I NEED TO REAPPLY FOR DROUGHT FOR EACH BILL?

No - drought relief waiver will be applied to your bills until you are no longer eligible for drought relief. The drought relief waiver will show on the second page of the bill under 'Other Charges & Credits'.

## HOW IS DROUGHT RELIEF REVOKED?

A shire drought declaration is revoked after widespread rainfall, on the recommendation of Local Drought Committees.

Ergon Energy Retail has no discretion in determining drought declarations or drought revocations.

If you have an account and receiving drought assistance and your Shire has Drought Revoked, you will receive notification from Ergon Energy Retail that drought relief assistance will cease.

Farmers may also revoke their individual drought relief if they feel that conditions on their property have improved.

## WHAT HAPPENS TO MY TARIFF IF DROUGHT IS REVOKED?

Your tariff will remain the same, and any fixed components that were being waived will resume being billed. If you are unsure about what this change means for you, the current waived amount can be viewed in the 'other charges and credits' section of your bills.

## CAN I RETURN TO THE TARIFF THAT I HAD PRIOR TO APPLYING FOR DROUGHT RELIEF?

If you had previously requested to change tariff when applying for Drought Relief, your previous tariff (e.g., Tariff 62 or 65) may no longer be available or suitable for your

needs. You should consider any changes to your usage over the next 12 months along with current tariff pricing. Current tariff and pricing information is available at <https://www.ergon.com.au/retail/business/tariffs-and-prices>

## I'M A 'SMALL' CUSTOMER, CAN I CHANGE MY TARIFF ONCE DROUGHT IS REVOKED?

Once drought is revoked, small customers may request to change their tariff. Tariff changes are effective from the last meter read or billed date. You can complete a tariff comparison and request a tariff change via Energy Analysis ([ergon.com.au/myaccount](http://ergon.com.au/myaccount)).

Tariffs 62A, 65A and 66A are limited-access obsolete tariffs. Small customers can switch once to a limited-access obsolete tariff only if they have accessed the corresponding discontinued tariff (62 – 62A, 65 – 65A, 66-66A) at any time between 1 July 2017 and 30 June 2020. Any subsequent change must be to an applicable standard tariff and you can no longer access a limited-access obsolete tariff.

I.E., if you are currently on tariff 66A and wish to change to tariff 62A once drought is revoked, you must have accessed tariff 62 between 1 July 2017 and 30 June 2020.

## I'M A 'LARGE' CUSTOMER, CAN I CHANGE MY TARIFF ONCE DROUGHT IS REVOKED?

To maintain eligibility for drought relief, large customers are required to be on their lowest annual cost tariff based on variable and fixed charges before taking into account drought relief assistance. Once drought is revoked, you should not need to

change tariff. Current tariff and pricing information is available at <https://www.ergon.com.au/retail/business/tariffs-and-prices>

You can also complete a tariff comparison via Energy Analysis <https://www.ergon.com.au/retail/business/account-options/my-account>

### **WHAT HAPPENS IF I HAVE A BASIC METER? (WHERE THE DROUGHT REVOCATION DATE IS NOT ALIGNED WITH A BASIC METER READ)**

Your bill will be adjusted and you will see this adjustment on your future bill. Drought relief will be applied on a pro-rata basis.

### **WHAT CAN ERGON ENERGY RETAIL OFFER TO CUSTOMERS FACING HIGHER BILLS, FOLLOWING DROUGHT REVOCATION?**

Large customers who have less than 100 MWh p.a. annualized usage, can request reclassification to a small customer.

Customers who were eligible for ETAS, will receive the ETAS rebate, as long as they remain eligible for the rebate. The eligibility rules are in the ETAS gazette. For

example, if an ETAS customer moves to Tariff 62A, 65A or 66A, they will lose eligibility for ETAS.

<https://www.ergon.com.au/retail/business/tariffs-and-prices/transition-rebate>

Customers who experience payment difficulty should contact us for assistance.

### **MY ACCOUNT IS NOT WITH ERGON ENERGY RETAIL. HOW DO I APPLY?**

Non-Ergon Energy Retail customers should apply directly to the Queensland Government. You can review your eligibility and apply at <https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industries/farms-fishing-forestry/agriculture/rural-disaster-recovery/drought/assistance/drecs>

Alternatively email: [droughtrelief@epw.qld.gov.au](mailto:droughtrelief@epw.qld.gov.au) or phone: 13 43 87