

### Better Bills

# Your invoice explained

# Requirements

- 1. Contents of the bill
- 2. Tier 1 information
- 3. Tier 2 information
- 4. Better offer

Implementation date : 30 September 2023.

You'll need to notify the AER by email specifying the day upon which you will begin preparing and issuing bills if prior to 30 September.

Better Bills Guideline only applies to electricity and gas authorised retailers that operate in states that have accepted the National Energy Customer Framework ie NSW, QLD, SA and ACT. VIC is excluded.

**Note**: AER is considering changes to the retail exemption guideline in Victoria.

	QUARTER	Compliance Quarter Pty Ltd
		ABN 91 618 201 004
		www.compliancequarter.com.au
	Date: 9 March 2023	
	Utilmate Pty Ltd	
	Level 5, 56 Cawley Street, Ellerslie 1051, Auckland, New Zealand	
	By email: tracey.smith@utilmate.com	
	RE: Better Bill Guideline Version 1 Review	
	I am writing to provide the final review letter regarding our re	view of the Better Bill Guideline changes in
	the bill templates provided by your organisation.	
	We are pleased to inform you that the review has identified	that the changes applicable to the Better Bill
	Guideline Version 1 have been appropriately included in the	
	commendable, as it indicates your commitment to providing	your clients with service that aligns with the
	regulatory requirements.	
	However, it is important to note that compliance with regulat	
	and quality checks. Therefore, we recommend a quality ass	urance process that ensures compliance with
	regulatory obligations by checking the quality of the bills before clients.	ore they are issued to customers of your
	We appreciate the cooperation and support provided by you	r organisation during the review process.
/	Please contact us if you have any questions on the above.	
	Yours faithfully,	
	CJ. James	
	Cd. James	
	Connor James	
	Principal	
	0406 509 198	
	Compliance Quarter Email: connor@compliancequarter.com.au	

# 1.Contents of the bill

These are the design principles that apply to tier 1 and tier 2 information, and any other information that is on the customer's bill.

- Use simple language: conversational tone, plain language, basic grammar. It must avoid jargon, technical terms, uncommon terminology and abbreviations/acronyms.
- **Make the bill easy to understand**: Presented in a way that is easy to understand through colour, headings and shading to group information and differentiate bill elements. Use of accessible fonts styles and sizing, white space, symbols etc.
- Make the most important information most prominent: using bold or larger font sizes and colour or shading.
- Order the bill to make it easy to understand: key information must be presented first, grouped by related information.
- **Design**: Use proven practices to enhance customer comprehension.



## 2.Tier 1 information

Tier 1 information must appear on the first page of a paginated bill and at the beginning of an unpaginated bill. Tier 1 information is:

- a) customer name and address of the premises to which the energy is being supplied as well as the customer's mailing address, if different;
- b) amount due and due date;
- c) bill issue date;
- d) payment methods;
- e) customer account number;
- f) National Metering Identifier (NMI) presented using the exact words 'National Metering Identifier (NMI)' followed by the small customer's NMI;
- g) a link to the Energy Made Easy website: www.energymadeeasy.gov.au;
- h) a deemed better offer message
- i) retailer identifying information;
- j) a telephone number for the customer to:
- k) make account enquiries and complaints;
- I) contact the relevant energy ombudsman;
- m) the name and telephone number of the relevant distributor for the customer to make fault inquiries and report emergencies; and
- n) headings intended to assist a customer's understanding of prescribed Tier 1 information.

Note: You can also include, at your discretion, information relating to natural disasters, pandemics, and emergencies among Tier 1 information.

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### 3. Tier 2 information

Tier 2 information must be included in a bill, not on the first page of a paginated bill or at the beginning of an unpaginated bill, but before any additional information. Additional information can be included in bills, but not on the first page of a paginated bill or at the beginning of an unpaginated bill ahead of Tier 2 information on a paginated or unpaginated bill. Tier 2 information is:

- a) a plan summary (see sections 43 and 44);
- b) a summary of tariffs, charges and charging windows as applicable, which must be included in either the plan summary (section 41(a)) or understand your bill section (section 41(c));
- c) a breakdown of how the amount due was calculated (the understand your bill section), including by reference to the following (where applicable):
  - i. billing period (date-to-date) and number of days;
  - ii. previous reading;
  - iii. current reading;
  - iv. usage, including but not limited to shoulder, peak or off-peak (for electricity, in kilowatt-hours (kWh) and for gas, in megajoules (MJ));
  - v. rates/tariffs, in dollar figures;
  - vi. charges, in dollar figures;
  - vii. credits, in dollar figures;
  - viii. discounts;
  - ix. any amount deducted, credited or received under a government funded energy charge rebate, concession or relief scheme or under a payment plan;
  - x. any GST; and
  - xi. exports.
- average daily usage and exports, in kWh or MJ (daily average);

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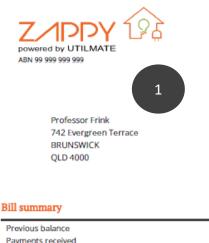
### 3. Tier 2 information continued

- e. if a bill was issued by the same retailer for the corresponding billing period in the previous year, the particulars of the customers' consumption in that previous billing period;
- f. contact details to enable a small customer to access:
  - i. financial assistance;
  - ii. interpreter services (in community languages); and services for customers with hearing or speech impairments;
- g. whether the bill amount is based on metering data or on an estimation of the customer's consumption of energy. Where a bill amount is based on an estimation of the customer's consumption of energy, the bill must:
  - i. state that the relevant amount is 'based on an estimation';
  - ii. not use an abbreviation of this, for example the letter 'E'; and
  - iii. include a statement on how to access the guidance and requirements for a customer read estimate required under rule 21(3C) of the Retail Rules'.

#### Requirement to prepare and include a plan summary

- The purpose of a plan summary is to help small customers easily understand and compare the key features of their plan.
- The plan summary must include the following information:
  - plan name (if applicable);
  - renewable sources and carbon offsets, if applicable to a small customer's plan; and
  - benefit and benefit change date, if applicable to a small customer's plan.

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Payments received	\$122.11 CF		
Opening balance	\$0.00		
New charges			
Electricity charges (please see over for details)	\$138.77		
Total new charges including GST	\$138.77		
GST included in new charges:	\$12.61		
Account balance	\$138.77		
Balance due by 29 Jul 2022	\$138.77		

Account details Account number: 4901005154 Invoice number: 202207/185593 Issue date: 12 Jul 2022 Site Identifier: 0000002669XX0AE2

TAX INVOICE

Phone: 1300 00 00 00 Monday - Friday 8:30am - 5:00pm (AEST) Email: support@zappy.com Web: zappy.com 2

4

Important numbers Faults and emergencies: 13 20 99 (United Energy) 24 hours, 7 days Disputes: 1300 300 993

#### Could you save money on another plan? Based on your past usage, you are on best plan we can offer you. The Austral Energy Regulator requires us to include this information. Compare plans To understand, compare and control your energy

service and efficiency, visit www.energymadeeasy.gov.au



y.com.au. Save time by having your account paid automatically. Apply online at zappy.com or call us on 1300 00 00 00. Post this payment slip and your cheque made payable to PO Box 123,

\$122.11

Our bank details are as the following Branch: 123 456 Account number: 123456789 Reference: 4901005154

#### Tier 1 information: paginated bill example



The guideline requires the use of white space to reduce clutter making it easy to read.



Grouping of related content, using colour, different fonts and heading sizes to highlight information and be readily understandable.



The "better offer message" is prominent and lets your customers know you might be able to offer them a better plan. The guideline prescribes specific wording for key parts of the message.



You are required to include the link to the Energy Made Easy website.



Payment information formatted and placed where expected. Use of symbols to simply access by screen reading technologies, with links to online payment options. Payment options must be included even if the bill is a credit.

**Note**: We've used *Site identifier* instead of National Metering Identifier. You will need to request an exemption from the AER to use this terminology.

#### New obligations:

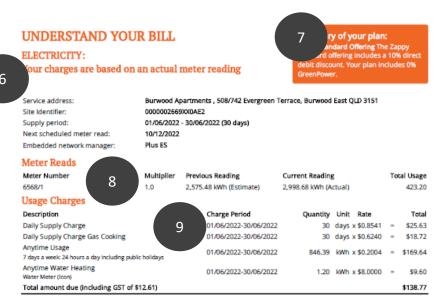
National Metering Identifier Deemed better offer Energy ombudsman contact details Headings to assist customers understanding of tier one information

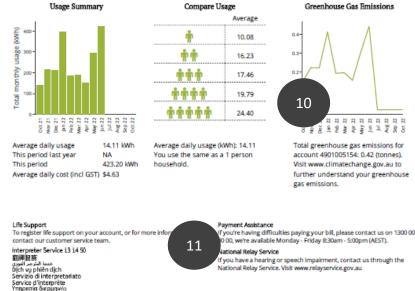
Present and pay this bill at a NAB branch near you.

Melbourne VIC 3000.

In Person

BSB: 123 456 Reference: 4901005154





Tier 2 information: must not appear on page 1

Must include whether the bill is based on metering data or on a consumption estimation. The exact wording from the AER is to be used. "Understand your bill" is a required title.

- A plan summary to help customers understand and compare key features of their plan. It must include plan name (if applicable), renewable sources and carbon offsets (if applicable) and benefit and benefit change date (if applicable).
- The word "estimate" and "actual" must be shown (cannot be A and E) and if interval metering and index read is available, this must be shown.
- A summary of tariffs, charges, and charging windows ie 6 am 10 pm for peak usage, must be provided, using consistence terminology. A breakdown of how the amount was calculated including items such as charges/credits/discounts.
- Descriptive headings and titles for charts with additional information
- Contact details for customers to access financial assistance, interpreter services and services for customers with hearing or speech impairments.

Note: Understand your bill is a required heading.

#### **New obligations:**

Plan summary Summary of tariffs

Breakdown of calculations

Based on metering data or an estimation of consumption, and must not use an abbreviation ie 'A' or 'E'. If an estimation, must include information on how to read the meter.





UNDERSTAND YO	Summary of your plan: Zappy Standard Offering The Zappy Standard offering includes a 10% direct debit discount. Your plan includes 0% GreenPower.						
GAS: Your charges are based o Submit a meter reading ensures yu zappy.com/reads for more info on							
Service address:	Minnippi Q	uarter, UNIT 3/742 Evergreen Te	errace, Carina QLD	4152			
Site Identifier:	000003670XX5F21						
Supply period: 01/06/2022 - 30/06/2022 (30 days)							
Next scheduled meter read: 10/12/2022							
Embedded network manager:							
Meter Reads							
Meter Number	Multiplier	Previous Reading	Current Reading			Tota	al Usage
610000047#04/1 1.0		0.00 (Actual)	1,673.92 (Estimate)		1,673.92		
Usage Charges							
Description		Charge Period	Quantity	Unit	Rate		Tota
Daily Supply Charge		01/06/2022-30/06/2022	30	days	x \$1.1109	=	\$33.33
Gas Usage Standard Gas Meter		01/06/2022-30/06/2022	1,673.92	MJ	x \$0.0334	=	\$55.98

#### Example of an estimated bill

The bill must:

- 1. state that the relevant amount is 'based on an estimation';
- 2. cannot be abbreviated ie the letter 'E';
- 3. include a statement on how to access the guidance and requirements for a customer read estimate required ie link to your website with information.



# 3.Additional information

You may include any other information that is not required by the Guideline.

#### Request to include additional content

An energy retailer can seek approval from the AER to include additional content among Tier 1 information by submitting a written application containing the information set out in section 34 of the Guideline to aercompliance@aer.gov.au.

Where information is required to be included in a bill by operation of a State, Territory, or Commonwealth law (other than the Guideline), and that law specifies a location for that information, an energy retailer must include that information in the location specified by the relevant law.



# Invoice Messages

Page	Filter Criteria	Title	Message
One		Compare plans	To understand, compare and control your energy service and efficiency, visit
			www.energymadeeasy.gov.au
Two			Interpreter Service 13 14 50 翻譯服務 Dịch vụ phiên dịch Servizio di interpretariato Service d'interprète Υπηρεσία διερμηνέα
Two		Life Support	To register life support on your account, or for more information, please contact our customer service team.
Two		Payment Assistance	If you're having difficulties paying your bill, please contact us on 1300 00 00 00, we're available Monday - Friday 8:30am - 5:00pm (AEST).
Two	NSW only	NSW Social Programs	There are Social Programs for Energy available for NSW residential customers. Please visit www.energy.nsw.gov.au for more information.
Two		SA Customer Concession Scheme	The South Australian Government Customer Concession Scheme for Energy is administered by the South Australian Department of Human Services. For details about concessions and how to apply please contact the ConcessionsSA Hotline on 1800 307 758 or go to www.sa.gov.au/concessions
Two	Estimated bills only	yEstimated Reading	If you received an estimated bill, you may request an adjusted bill in accordance. Please call our customer service team with a meter self read and we will issue an adjusted bill and inform you of any changes to your payment obligations.
Two		National Relay Service	If you have a hearing or speech impairment, contact us through the National Relay Service. Visit www.relayservice.gov.au

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# Could you save money on another plan?

Based on your past usage, our Zappy Saver plan may cost you up to \$100 less per year than your current plan. To switch plans, call us on 1300 00 00 00. The Australian Energy Regulator requires us to include this information.

#### Compare plans

To understand, compare and control your energy service and efficiency, visit www.energymadeeasy.gov.au

# Could you save money on another plan?

Based on your past usage, you are on our best plan we can offer you. The Australian Energy Regulator requires us to include this information.

#### Compare plans

To understand, compare and control your energy service and efficiency, visit www.energymadeeasy.gov.au

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#### **Example of deemed better offer messages**

#### A negative deemed better offer message:

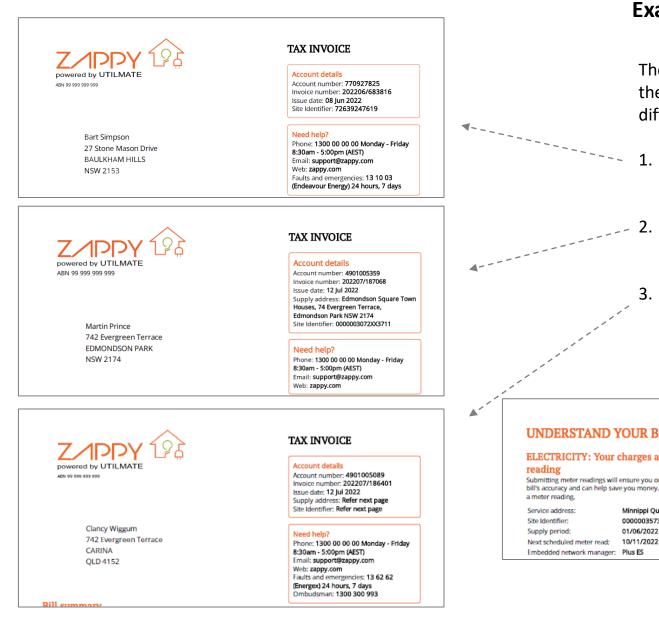
- a) must contain a title using the exact words:
  - a) 'Could you save money on another plan?';
  - b) 'Based on your past usage, our' followed by the name of the deemed better offer plan, followed by the exact words 'may cost you up to', followed by the dollar amount of the deemed better offer check result, followed by the exact words 'less per year than your current plan.';
  - c) 'The Australian Energy Regulator requires us to include this information.';
- b) where the deemed better offer is subject to conditions, may provide that conditions apply and set out the nature of those conditions; and
- c) must contain clear and simple instructions on how to switch to the deemed better offer.

#### A positive deemed better offer message:

- a) must contain a title using the exact words
  - a) 'Could you save money on another plan?';
  - b) 'Based on your past usage, you are on the best plan we can offer you.';
  - c) must contain the exact words 'The Australian Energy Regulator requires us to include this information.'; and
- b) must contain clear and simple instructions on how to compare other plans on Energy Made Easy.

#### Note:

- 1. Required for all States, but only required to compare to VDO in Victoria.
- 2. If more than 1 plan, all plans must be displayed.



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#### Example of supply / postal address

The bill must have the customer name and address of the premises to which the energy is being supplied, as well as the customer's mailing address, if different.

- If the supply address and postal address are the same, we don't show 1 the site address in the Account details box
  - If the supply address and postal address are different, the supply address will display
- If the supply address is more than 1, and postal address are different, it 3. will display "refer next page"

#### UNDERSTAND YOUR BILL

ELECTRICITY: Your charges are based on an estimated meter reading Submitting meter readings will ensure you only pay for the energy you use, improves your bill's accuracy and can help save you money. Go to zappy.com for more info on how to submit a meter reading. Service address: Minnippi Quarter, UNIT 3/742 Evergreen Terrace, Carina QLD 4152 Site Identifier: 0000003573XXA311 01/06/2022 - 30/06/2022 (30 days) Supply period: Next scheduled meter read: 10/11/2022

Embedded network manager: Plus ES

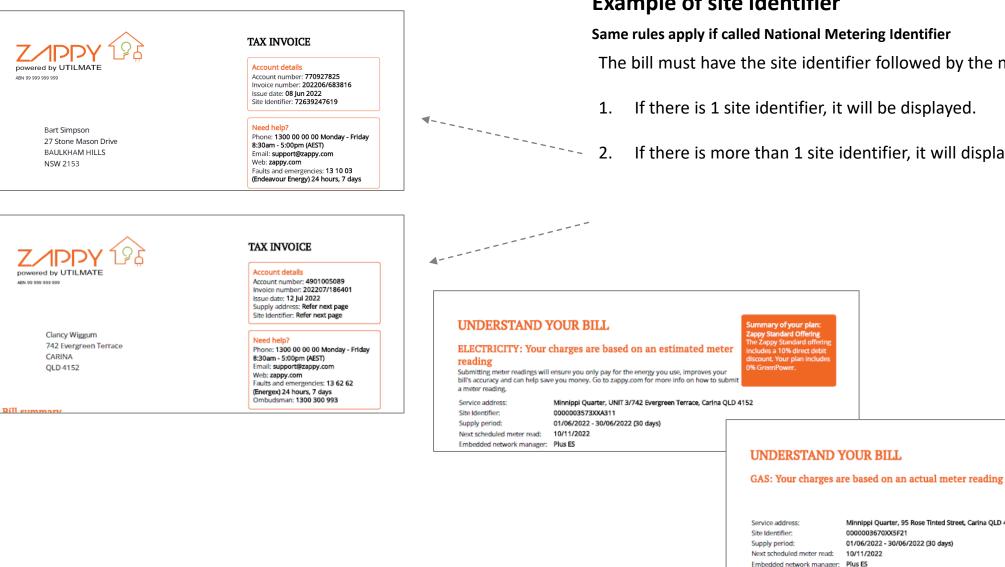
ummary of your plan: Zappy Standard Offering he Zappy Standard offeri ncludes a 10% direct debi liscount. Your plan include 0% GreenPower

#### UNDERSTAND YOUR BILL

GAS: Your charges are based on an actual meter reading

Summary of your plan: Zappy Standard Offering Zappy Standard offer scount. Your plan include % GreenPowe

Service address: Minnippi Quarter, 95 Rose Tinted Street, Carina QLD 4152 Site Identifier: 0000003670XX5F21 01/06/2022 - 30/06/2022 (30 days) Supply period: Next scheduled meter read: 10/11/2022 Embedded network manager: Plus ES



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#### **Example of site identifier**

Same rules apply if called National Metering Identifier

The bill must have the site identifier followed by the number.

- If there is 1 site identifier, it will be displayed.
- If there is more than 1 site identifier, it will display "refer next page"

Minnippi Quarter, 95 Rose Tinted Street, Carina QLD 4152

0000003670XX5F21

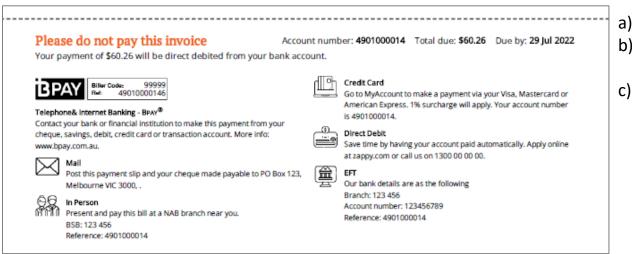
10/11/2022

01/06/2022 - 30/06/2022 (30 days)

immary of your plan: appy Standard Offering e Zappy Standard offer

cludes a 10% direct debit scount. Your plan includes )% GreenPower.

#### Payment method



- Use icons/symbols to display various payment methods
- Include payment methods even when the amount is not payable ie direct debit or credit.
- Your current payment methods will not change.



### Next Steps

#### Step 1

When you are ready, raise a support ticket and confirm you'll be moving to the Better Bills invoice template. Your Better Bills examples will be sent to you for review. This will include your brand, payment options, and using a dummy data set.

You'll receive 2 or 3 examples:

- 1. Customer on best offer
- 2. Customer not best offer
- 3. Customer with more than 1 product (which includes estimated and actual readings)

#### Step 2

Utilmate will alert you to any important conditions/exceptions in your current invoice template to consider.

#### Step 3

You will review your Better Bills invoice. If you require changes to this compliant template, please discuss this with us for a costing estimate.

#### Step 4

You'll need notify the AER by email specifying the day upon which you will begin preparing and issuing bills if prior to 30 September, otherwise the new invoice needs to be used from 30 September. You'll also need to request AER approval if you are including information that is not required by the guideline.

#### Step 5

You will need to confirm to Utilmate the date to liven your Better Bills invoice.

It will be a busy period for Utilmate and our customers to move across to the new template. Please allow sufficient time to get this done. Ideally we'd like confirmation you will be moving to Better Bills by 30 April 2023. If we do not hear from you, we'll assume you are not changing your invoice.





Pritish Naik Salgaonkar

General Manager: Energy Regulation & Compliance

Compliance Quarter

04 31297702

pritish@compliancequarter.com.au

www.compliancequarter.com.au





AER Better Bills Guideline version 2

https://www.aer.gov.au/retail-markets/guidelines-reviews/better-bills-guideline-version-2

AER Better Bills Guideline version 1 https://www.aer.gov.au/retail-markets/guidelines-reviews/better-bills-guideline-version-1

