

Friday, 1 September 2006

REGIONAL VICTORIANS BENEFIT FROM GAS REBATE EXTENSION

More regional Victorians will have cheaper heating bills thanks to the Bracks Government adding a further \$1 million to the successful Gas Heater Rebate scheme.

Minister for Energy, Industries and Resources, Theo Theophanous, today urged more households to take advantage of the rebate extension and make the switch to gas heating.

“Gas is a more cost effective and cleaner form of heating that produces less greenhouse gas emissions than electric or wood heaters,” Mr Theophanous said.

“By converting to 5 star gas heating households can slash their heating bills by up to \$500 every year and reduce their environmental impact at the same time.”

The High Efficiency Gas Heater Rebate program, managed by Sustainability Victoria, is available to regional and outer metropolitan households receiving a Network Tariff Rebate that have been connected to gas for two years or more.

Households that don't have access to natural gas can also receive rebates for converting to LPG for heating and hot water.

The scheme provides up to \$1000 towards the cost of a high efficiency gas heater and up to \$700 to convert from wood and day-rate electric water heaters to gas hot water systems.

Mr Theophanous said over 3000 households had received the rebate since the scheme was launched two years ago.

“About 300 retailers currently offer the rebate, providing business for regional retailers as well as helping households to cut their energy bills,” Mr Theophanous said.

Minister Theophanous said the Victorian Government took energy saving seriously as shown by the recent energy saving campaign urging households to save energy in the same way they save water.

The natural gas and LPG appliances eligible for the scheme are:

- 4 and 5 star flue space heaters
- 5 star high efficiency gas ducted heating systems
- 5 star gas hot water systems for households converting from wood and day-rate electric water heaters.

“With Victoria's energy demand growing by around two per cent each year and greenhouse pollution increasing by more than 40 per cent since the early 1990s, we need to look to cleaner, more sustainable energy options to protect our environment and lifestyle,” Mr Theophanous said.

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The rebates are advertised through regional newspapers and participating gas heater retailers and are provided to customers as a point of sale discount.

For more information of the Gas Heater Rebate visit www.sustainability.vic.gov.au or call 1300 366 195.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- The rebate applies to consumers who are currently receiving a Network Tariff Rebate, who do not use gas as their main source of heating, and who can demonstrate that electricity or firewood is their main current source of heating.
- Eligibility for consumers is restricted to customers in postcodes that correspond to the electricity distribution areas of SP Ausnet (formerly TXU) and Powercor and hence will be available to regional consumers and outer metropolitan consumers.
- The rebate is available for residential properties only. However, this extends to rental properties, where the property is available for residential rental and the occupant/lessee is directly responsible for the energy bills. This ensures that the occupant of the home, whether they are the owner or not, will have the opportunity to benefit from the reduced energy costs.
- The rebate will be up to \$1000 inclusive of GST, being approximately 50 per cent of the total costs of purchasing and installing an average 5 star gas space heater.
- The rebate is structured to correspond to the various 4 and 5 star appliances on the market, with the highest rebate available for 5 star appliances.
- The rebate structure is as follows:

Gas Heating

- Concession card holder/5 star appliance - \$1000
- Concession card holder/4 star appliance - \$900
- All other residents/5 star appliance - \$600
- All other residents/4 star appliance - \$500

Hot Water Heating

- Concession card holder/5 star appliance - \$700
- All other residents/5 star appliance - \$400

- The rebate will be administered as a point-of-purchase subsidy and will be available to 30 June 2007.
- New homes or homes built or commenced construction post 1 July 2003 will be ineligible to receive the subsidy.