

Thinking of an upgrade?

Things to consider when offered an upgrade through the NSW Government's Energy Savings Scheme

Things to consider



What is the Energy Savings Scheme (ESS)?

The ESS is a NSW government scheme designed to reduce energy use by encouraging households and organisations to invest in upgrades to save energy.

The scheme provides incentives for accredited businesses to provide your household or small business with energy efficient products and upgrades at reduced cost. These include lighting, water heating, air conditioning, draught proofing, showerhead, pool pump, ventilation, space heating, and door and window upgrades.

See our [Upgrades for households and small businesses](#) page for more details.

Before deciding on an upgrade be sure to:

1. Know who is involved in the upgrade. Check the installer's credentials. They should be licenced, have clear photo identification and provide detailed information about the proposed upgrade. The installer should also identify the accredited business they are working with to deliver the upgrade at a lower cost. Keep their details – you might need them later.
2. Discuss the equipment they propose installing and confirm it will meet your needs. The cheapest offer may not be the best value for you. You are under no obligation to do an upgrade under the ESS. If you are a tenant, you may require the landlord's permission to install or change equipment.
3. Normal consumer rights and warranties apply. Consider the length of any product warranty, what it covers, and whether the heat pump supplier has appropriate after-sales service, spare parts, geographical coverage, and warranty provisions to back up any stated product warranty it offers on its products.
4. Understand any commitments you are asked to make, such as agreeing not to reuse, sell or refurbish the old equipment that was removed.
5. Carefully consider any agreement you are asked to sign in the same way you would for any other contract for work at your property (see our [Things you should consider](#) page).



How you get the benefits

The ESS can make it less costly to install an upgrade and help you benefit from ongoing lower energy bills.

The scheme makes this possible by enabling accredited businesses to create certificates from energy savings that will occur after your upgrade.

The accredited business can sell these certificates and use a portion of their value to offer you a lower installation price. You will typically deal with installers associated with these businesses.

The NSW Government doesn't set the price of the equipment, or endorse products accepted for use in the scheme.



What you need to do

1. **Use an accredited business.** See the list of accredited businesses by region on the [Energy website](#) by selecting the relevant upgrade. You aren't obliged to use a particular business or install an upgrade, and they aren't obliged to provide a service or upgrade to you. We recommend you shop around to get the best deal possible.
2. **Pay at least the minimum payment.** You need to pay a minimum payment - see our [website](#) for details. Depending on the type, model and complexity of the installation, you may need to pay more than the minimum payment.
3. **Sign a nomination form (paper or digital) before installation and a declaration that you are satisfied after installation.**

Note: You may be contacted by an auditor to confirm details of your installation. By assisting the auditor you can help maintain the integrity of the scheme.

Note: IPART accredits businesses to create certificates. We don't license tradespersons or regulate safety or consumer rights, which are NSW Fair Trading functions.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who can offer upgrades under the ESS?

Only accredited businesses or their representatives can offer upgrades. IPART accredits businesses to create certificates from certain energy saving activities under the ESS.

An accredited business may offer upgrades or it may contract the work to third party installers, such as electricians or air conditioning technicians. Accredited businesses and their representatives are not employees or representatives of the NSW Government.

A list of accredited businesses and the upgrades they are accredited to deliver is available on the ESS website: [Who can help with energy upgrades](#). We recommend you shop around for a product/service that best meets your needs – see the [Energy website](#) for a list of accredited businesses in your region. Accredited businesses can provide more information on the specific products and services they deliver and the locations they service.

Does the ESS give rebates?

No, the ESS is a certificate trading scheme that does not give direct rebates. Instead, accredited businesses may create certificates for the energy savings that arise from the upgrades they deliver. They can then sell those certificates and may use some of the revenue they get from that sale to offer their customers upgrades at a lower price.

Where can I get more information?

In the first instance, you should contact the accredited business. They will be able to provide more information on the products and services they offer.

The ESS website contains:

- [general information about the scheme](#)
- information for [households and small businesses](#)
- answers to [frequently asked questions](#).

How much will the upgrade cost?

The accredited business or installer will tell you what your upgrade will cost. The scheme makes it possible for you to get an upgrade at a lower price.

You need to pay a minimum amount towards the cost of the upgrade^a. The amount depends on the type of upgrade – see our [Households and small businesses](#) page for details. You may need to pay more than the minimum amount depending on the type and size of the upgrade.

The accredited business or its representatives should not complete the upgrade unless you have paid the minimum amount. The minimum payment cannot be reimbursed to you in cash or as non-cash inducements such as gift vouchers. You cannot make in-kind payments towards the cost of the upgrade (such as providing goods and services).

a. This payment is not required for upgrades provided under a Low-income Energy Program or an Exempt Energy Program under the ESS Rule.

What does the minimum payment cover?

The minimum payment may cover the costs of products, installation, site assessment or other related works carried out at your property.

Depending on the type, size, model and complexity of the installation, you may need to pay more than the minimum payment.

Why do I need to sign a nomination form?

By signing this form you give the accredited business the right to create certificates from your installation. They can then sell these certificates, which allows them to offer the upgrade at a lower price. They can't create certificates without this form.

Only one accredited business can be nominated for a particular upgrade. The nomination must be made before the equipment is installed.

Why can't I keep old equipment?

Removed or replaced equipment cannot be reused, resold or refurbished and must be appropriately disposed of by the accredited business. This is a legislated requirement to ensure the old energy inefficient equipment is not used somewhere else after it is removed or replaced with new equipment.

Who can I contact if I have concerns?

If you are not happy with the quality of work, or require more information, speak to your ACP or lighting provider first. If you are unable to resolve the problem, NSW Fair Trading or Building Commission NSW may be able to assist. NSW Fair Trading investigates unfair practices and ensures the products sold in NSW are safe and meet its regulations and safety standards. Its website has information about your rights as a consumer, tips for resolving consumer disputes, and how you can make a complaint: www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au.

The [Building Commission](#) licenses tradespeople such as electricians and plumbers and is responsible for the regulation of laws that apply to them. The Building Commission may be able to assist if you have concerns about the work of licensed tradespeople or unlicensed work.

If you are concerned the accredited business or its representative has not complied with ESS requirements or they're not responding, you can contact us at: ESS.Compliance@ipart.nsw.gov.au.

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ESS HEER Fact Sheet or at:
<https://bit.ly/heer-fact-sheet>