

News from Marlborough Lines

WINTER 2020

Advanced Discount Payment

As a trust owned Electricity Distribution Business Marlborough Lines Limited (MLL) makes an annual discount payment to eligible consumers connected to its network. The most recent discount payment was in March/April this year, where an average domestic consumer received a payment of \$226 (including GST).

With COVID-19 potentially impacting businesses and households across Marlborough, MLL has decided to bring forward the March 2021 discount payment (partially), with a proposed payment date to electricity retailers of 28 August 2020. This payment would be based on a six-month period, from 1 February 2020 to 31 July 2020.

For an average domestic consumer, the amount of this discount payment is estimated to be **\$117** (including GST). The amount of the payment for each eligible consumer will vary as it is dependent on the nature of the consumer connection and the amount of electricity consumed over the period.

Looking further ahead, discount payments are expected to be made annually in May, instead of March. This timing shift aligns with MLL's pricing years, making processing of the annual discount payment more straightforward. It also shifts the timing of the payment closer to winter, when most consumers incur higher electricity costs.

Previously, MLL has sent letters to each eligible consumer providing information about the discount payment and confirming the amount paid. To reduce processing time and postage requirements, MLL no longer intends to continue with this approach. Consumers can look for the discount payment on their monthly electricity invoice after 28 August.

Some consumers are ineligible for the discount payment, for example, those that are in remote locations, and those that are vacant on the pre-determined qualification date.

If you require further information about MLL's discount payments, we encourage you to visit the MLL website: www.marbloroughlines.co.nz



Line Delivery Prices

MLL revised its line delivery prices on 1 April 2020. Decreases to residential, small/medium businesses and large commercial/industrial consumers' line delivery prices were applied, along with the introduction of an uncontrolled irrigation consumer price plan. Additionally, discount payment rates were increased for many consumers.

MLL passes on its prices to electricity retailers trading on MLL's network, and how retailers apply price plans to consumers may vary. For further information on MLL's pricing, please visit the MLL website at: www.marbloroughlines.co.nz



Residential Low User Price Plan

All Electricity Distribution Businesses (including MLL) and electricity retailers are required to offer a "low fixed charge" price plan in accordance with the Electricity (Low Fixed Charge Tariff Option for Domestic Consumers) Regulations 2004. Consumers that satisfy criteria can elect to be placed on this price plan. One of the eligibility criteria is using less than 8,000kWh per annum.

For consumers who use less electricity than this MLL's line delivery prices will be lower, compared to the standard residential price plan equivalent.

Conversely, if a consumer on the low fixed charge price plan uses more than 8,000kWh MLL's line delivery prices will be higher, compared to the standard residential price plan equivalent. MLL suggests you speak to your electricity retailer if you are unsure which price plan is best suited to you.

Supporting the Marlborough Community

MLL's sponsorship mission is to **Grow Marlborough Together** through supporting Marlborough initiatives which focus on:

- Youth education and employment.
- Regional events.
- The environment.

As well as continuing to support long-standing initiatives and events including Marlborough Lines Stadium 2000, Science & Technology Fair, Tertiary Study Awards, Garden Marlborough and the Marlborough Sounds Restoration Trust Wilding Pine Eradication Programme, we've added some new sponsorships to the mix.

These new sponsorships include Marlborough Youth Trust "CACTUS" youth programme, Marlborough Heritage Trust "Heritage Education Programme", School Start First Impressions Marlborough Charitable Trust, and the Marlborough Foodbank.

All these initiatives align well with our sponsorship objectives and we're very pleased to support such worthy causes which help our Marlborough community thrive.

If you would like to apply for sponsorship, please visit: www.marbloroughlines.co.nz to view our criteria for evaluating requests and for further information about the application process.

Medically Dependent Consumers and Emergency Preparedness Planning

Consumers who require electricity to support devices for medical (health) dependence should have back up plans in place in the unlikely event of a sustained period without electricity.

While MLL endeavours to provide a reliable supply of electricity, circumstances and situations can arise where a sustained unplanned power outage occurs on the network. The November 2016 Kaikoura Earthquake was a stark reminder of this.

MLL would like to remind consumers who are medically dependent to check their status with their electricity retailer, and to ensure that they are well prepared with an appropriate back-up plan in place. Electricity retailers hold the information about consumers who are medically dependent.

The same message applies to all consumers on MLL's network. A natural hazard, or unplanned event could result in a significant period of time without electricity. Fortunately, these events are very rare, however, MLL encourages consumers to prepare accordingly by reviewing your business or home emergency preparedness plans.

Safety Messages

Trees Near Overhead Power Lines

Trees impacting overhead power lines continue to be a leading cause of power outages across Marlborough. MLL staff routinely inspect overhead lines to assess any vegetation risks, and has a team fully equipped to safely trim or remove trees in close proximity to overhead lines.

If you observe any trees or vegetation near overhead lines, please contact MLL. Similarly, please contact MLL prior to undertaking any tree or vegetation work near overhead lines.

Fallen Overhead Power Lines

Occasionally overhead power lines are brought to the ground from incidents such as a vehicle accident, being struck by a fallen tree, or stormy weather. Power lines should **always be treated as live (energised)** and should never be approached under any circumstances. If you do encounter fallen power lines, stay well clear and contact MLL as soon as possible.

How to avoid incidents with overhead power lines:

- Treat all overhead lines as live (energised).
- Never approach a fallen overhead line.
- Never climb a power pole or pylon.
- Never fly kites near overhead lines.
- Look up before handling long objects, using mechanical plant, or before handling or moving a yacht mast.
- Avoid lighting fires under lines.

Note that high voltage can “jump” across gaps, meaning you don’t need to touch the power lines to be electrocuted, so stay at least 4 metres away at all times. If in any doubt, please contact MLL.

Service Lines

Property owners are responsible for the power line from the point of supply – which is typically where the line crosses the boundary of the property – to the point of connection at the installation. This is generally known as the service line. However, the point of supply is not always clear for all consumer connections.

Overhead service lines may extend over several poles on a property before they connect to MLL’s network. If you are unsure which portion of the power line is your responsibility, please contact MLL.

It is recommended that property owners carry out regular visual assessments to ensure that the overhead lines (including poles), are free of defects and do not present a risk, including from vegetation growing nearby. MLL can assist with undertaking assessments of your overhead lines, if required.



Issue With Your Power Supply?

If you experience an issue with your power supply, please contact your electricity retailer, or MLL in the first instance.

MLL will be able to advise (free of charge in most cases) if the issue is associated with the premises (i.e. your home or businesses electrical wiring or meterboard), or whether the issue is related to MLL’s network. If the issue is on your premises, you will need to contact an electrician.

MLL advises electricity retailers of both planned and unplanned network power outages. MLL also has a map showing where active outages are on our website under the “Our Network” tab.

Key MLL information:

- 24 hours a day, 7 days a week fault response service. Ph (03) 577 7007.
- Alfred Street office hours are 8am to 4.30pm weekdays (excluding public holidays).
- www.marlboroughlines.co.nz provides further information about the network, services provided, pricing and disclosure information.

Contact Us



Have a Question or Concern?

While MLL always endeavours to provide the highest level of service to consumers, should you have any questions or concerns you would like to discuss please contact our Customer Services Team by phoning (03) 577 7007 or emailing us at: info@mll.co.nz.

If you contact us directly with a concern, we will review your concern and attempt to resolve it with you within 20 business days. If we are unable to resolve your concern in that time, you may decide to raise a complaint with Utilities Disputes.

MLL is a member of Utilities Disputes Limited, an organisation that provides a free and independent dispute resolution service for electricity utilities complaints.

Utilities Disputes also consider concerns about actions of staff or contractors, as well as access to land and its use on which electricity infrastructure and installations are located.

To contact Utilities Disputes please see their details below:

Phone	0800 22 33 40 or (04) 914 4630
Email	info@utilitiesdisputes.co.nz
Website:	www.utilitiesdisputes.co.nz
Postal	PO Box 5875 Wellington 6140
Freepost	192682

