

STANDARD GAS SALE CONTRACT



PREAMBLE

This contract is about the sale of gas to you as a small exempt customer at your premises. It is a standard gas sale contract that starts without you having to sign a document agreeing to these terms and conditions.

In addition to this contract, the gas laws and other consumer laws also contain rules about the sale of gas and we will comply with these rules in our dealings with you.

More information about this contract and other matters is on our website www.maranoa.qld.gov.au.

1 THE PARTIES

This contract is between:

- (a) Maranoa Regional Council who sells gas to you at your premises (in this contract referred to as “we”, “our” or “us”); and
- (b) You, the customer to whom this contract applies (in this contract referred to as “you” or “your”).

2 DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATION

- (a) Terms used in this contract have the same meanings as they have in the National Energy Retail Law and our seller exemption. However for ease of reference, a simplified explanation of some terms is given at the end of this contract.
- (b) Where the simplified explanations given at the end of this contract differ from the definitions in the National Energy Retail Law and our seller exemption, the definitions in the National Energy Retail Law and our seller exemption prevail.

3 DO THESE TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY TO YOU?

3.1 These are our terms and conditions

This contract sets out the terms and conditions for a standard gas sale contract for a small exempt customer under the conditions of our seller exemption under the National Energy Retail Law.

3.2 Application of these terms and conditions

These terms and conditions apply to you if:

- (a) you are a residential exempt customer; or
- (b) you are a business customer who is a small exempt customer; and
- (c) you request us to sell gas to you at your premises.

4 WHAT IS THE TERM OF THIS CONTRACT?

4.1 When does this contract start?

This contract starts on the date you satisfy any requirements under the *Gas Supply Act 2003*, including giving us *acceptable identification* and your contact details for billing purposes.

4.2 When does this contract end?

- (a) This contract ends:

- (i) if you give us a notice stating you wish to end the contract – subject to paragraph (b), on a date advised by us of which we will give you at least 5 but no more than 20 business days notice; or
 - (ii) if you are no longer a small exempt customer:
 - (A) subject to paragraph (b), on a date specified by us, of which we will give you at least 5 but no more than 20 business days notice; or
 - (B) if you have not told us of a change in the use of your gas – from the time of change in use; or
 - (iii) if we both agree to a date to end the contract – on the date that is agreed; or
 - (iv) if a different exempt customer starts to buy gas for the premises – on the date that exempt customer’s contract starts; or
 - (v) if the premises are disconnected and you have not met the requirements in the Rules for reconnection – 10 business days from the date of disconnection.
- (b) If you do not give us safe and unhindered access to the premises to conduct a final *meter* reading (where relevant), this contract will not end under paragraph (a) (i) or (ii) until we have issued you a final bill and you have paid any outstanding amount for the sale of gas.
 - (c) Rights and obligations accrued before the end of this contract continue despite the end of the contract, including any obligations to pay amounts to us.

4.3 Vacating your premises

- (a) If you are vacating your premises, you must provide your forwarding address to us for your final bill in addition to a notice under clause 4.2(a)(i) of this contract.
- (b) When we receive the notice, we must use our best endeavours to arrange for the reading of the *meter* on the date specified in your notice (or as soon as possible after that date if you do not provide access to your *meter* on that date) and send a final bill to you at the forwarding address stated in your notice.
- (c) You will continue to be responsible for charges for the premises until your contract ends in accordance with clause 4.2 of this contract.

5 SCOPE OF THIS CONTRACT

5.1 What is covered by this contract?

- (a) Under this contract we agree to sell you gas at your premises. We also agree to meet other obligations set out in this contract and to comply with the gas laws.
- (b) In return, you agree:
 - (i) to be responsible for charges for gas supplied to the premises until this contract ends under clause 4.2 even if you vacate the premises earlier; and
 - (ii) to pay the amounts billed by us under this contract; and
 - (iii) to meet your obligations under this contract and the gas laws.

5.2 What is not covered by this contract?

This contract does not cover the physical connection of your premises to the distribution system, including *metering* equipment and the maintenance of that connection and the supply of gas to your premises.

6 YOUR GENERAL OBLIGATIONS

6.1 Full information

You must give us any information we reasonably require for the purposes of this contract. The information must be correct, and you must not mislead or deceive us in relation to any information provided to us.

6.2 Updating information

You must tell us promptly if information you have provided to us changes, including if your billing address changes or if your use of gas changes (for example, if you start running a business at the premises).

6.3 Obligations if you are not an owner

If you cannot meet an obligation in relation to your premises under this contract because you are not the owner you will not be in breach of the obligation if you take all reasonable steps to ensure that the owner or other person responsible for the premises fulfils the obligation.

7 OUR LIABILITY

- (a) The quality, pressure and continuity of your gas supply is subject to a variety of factors that are beyond our control as your exempt seller, including accidents, emergencies, weather conditions, vandalism, system demand, the technical limitations of the distribution system and the acts of other persons, including at the direction of a *relevant authority*.
- (b) To the extent permitted by law, we give no condition, warranty or undertaking, and we make no representation to you, about the condition or suitability of gas, its quality, fitness for purpose or safety, other than those set out in this contract.
- (c) Unless we have acted in bad faith or negligently, the *Gas Supply Act 2003* excludes our liability for any loss or damage you suffer as a result of the total or partial failure to supply gas to your premises, which includes any loss or damage you suffer as a result of the defective supply of gas.

8 PRICE FOR GAS AND OTHER SERVICES

8.1 What are our tariffs and charges?

- (a) Our tariffs and charges for the sale of gas to you under this contract are our standing offer prices. These are published on our website and include charges for connection services.
- (b) Different tariffs and charges may apply to you depending on your circumstances. The conditions for each tariff and charge are set out in our standing offer prices.

Note: We do not impose any charges for the termination of this contract.

8.2 Changes to tariffs and charges

- (a) If we vary our standing offer prices, we will publish the variation on our website at least 10 business days before it starts. We will also include details with your next bill if the variation affects you.
- (b) Our standing offer prices will not be varied more often than once every 6 months.

8.3 Variation of tariff due to change of use

If a change in your use of gas means you are no longer eligible for the particular tariff you are on, we may transfer you to a new tariff under our standing offer prices:

- (a) if you notify us there has been a change of use—from the date of notification; or
- (b) if you have not notified us of the change of use—retrospectively from the date the change of use occurred.

8.4 Variation of tariff or type of tariff on request

- (a) If you think you satisfy the conditions applying to another tariff or type of tariff under our standing offer prices, you can ask us to review your current circumstances to see whether that tariff or type of tariff can apply to you.
- (b) If you meet the requirements for another tariff or type of tariff and request us to do so, we must:
 - (i) transfer you to that other tariff within 10 business days; or
 - (ii) transfer you to that other type of tariff from the date the *meter* is read.

8.5 Changes to tariffs or type of tariff during a billing cycle

If a tariff applying to you changes during a billing cycle, we will calculate your next bill on a proportionate basis.

8.6 GST

- (a) Amounts specified in the standing offer prices from time to time and other amounts payable under this contract may be stated to be exclusive or inclusive of GST. Paragraph (b) applies unless an amount is stated to include GST
- (b) Where an amount paid by you under this contract is payment for a “taxable supply” as defined for GST purposes, to the extent permitted by law, that payment will be increased so that the cost of the GST payable on the taxable supply is passed on to the recipient of that taxable supply.

9 BILLING

9.1 General

We will send a bill to you as soon as possible after the end of each billing cycle. We will send the bill:

- (a) to you at the address nominated by you; or
- (b) to a person authorised in writing by you to act on your behalf at the address specified by you.

9.2 Calculating the Bill

Bills we send to you ('**your bills**') will be calculated on:

- (a) the amount of gas consumed at your premises during the billing cycle (using information obtained from reading your *meter* or otherwise in accordance with this contract); and
- (b) the amount of fees and charges for any other services provided under this contract during the billing cycle; and
- (c) the charges payable for customer connection services, including connection charges if you have asked for a new connection or connection alteration and have not made alternative arrangements for payment.

9.3 Estimating the gas usage

- (a) We may estimate the amount of gas consumed at your premises if your *meter* cannot be read, if your *metering data* is not obtained (for example, if access to the *meter* is not given or the *meter* breaks down or is faulty), or if you otherwise consent.
- (b) If we estimate the amount of gas consumed at your premises to calculate a bill, we must:
 - (i) clearly state on the bill that it is based on an estimation; and
 - (ii) when your *meter* is later read, adjust your bill for the difference between the estimate and the gas actually used.
- (c) If the later *meter* read shows that you have been undercharged, we will allow you to pay the undercharged amount in instalments, over the same period of time during which the *meter* was not read (if less than 12 months), or otherwise over 12 months.
- (d) If the *meter* has not been read due to your actions, and you request us to replace the estimated bill with a bill based on an actual reading of the *meter*, we will comply with your request but may charge you any cost we incur in doing so.

9.4 Your historical billing information

Upon request, we must give you information about your billing history for the previous 2 years free of charge. However, we may charge you if we have already given you this information in the previous 12 months, or if you require information going back more than 2 years.

9.5 Bill smoothing

We may, where you agree, arrange for you to pay your bills under a bill smoothing arrangement, which is based on a 12 monthly estimate of your energy consumption.

10 PAYING YOUR BILL

10.1 What you have to pay

You must pay to us the amount shown on each bill by the date for payment (the *pay-by date*) on the bill. The *pay-by date* will be no earlier than 13 business days from the date on which we issue your bill.

10.2 Issue of reminder notices

If you have not paid your bill by the *pay-by date*, we will send you a *reminder notice* that payment is required. The *reminder notice* will give you a further due date for payment which will be not less than 6 business days after we issue the notice.

10.3 Difficulties in paying

- (a) If you have difficulties paying your bill, you should contact us as soon as possible. We will provide you with information about payment options.
- (b) If you are a residential exempt customer and have told us that you have difficulty paying your bill, we must offer you the option of paying your bill under a payment plan. However, we are not obliged to do so if you have had 2 payment plans cancelled due to non-payment in the previous 12 months or have been convicted of an offence involving the illegal use of gas in the previous 2 years.
- (c) Additional protections may be available to you, if you are an exempt customer experiencing payment difficulties due to hardship. Please contact Council to discuss your payment options.

10.4 Late payment fees

If you have not paid a bill by the *pay-by date*, we may require you to pay a late payment fee, which is part of our standing offer prices published on our website.

11 METERS

- (a) You must allow safe and unhindered access to your premises for the purposes of reading and maintaining the *meters* (where relevant).
- (b) We will use our best endeavours to ensure that a *meter* reading is carried out as frequently as is needed to prepare your bills, consistently with the *metering rules* and in any event at least once every 12 months.

12 UNDERCHARGING AND OVERCHARGING

12.1 Undercharging

- (a) If we have undercharged you, we may recover the undercharged amount from you. If we recover an undercharged amount from you:
 - (i) we will not charge interest on the undercharged amount; and
 - (ii) we will offer you time to pay the undercharged amount in instalments over the same period of time during which you were undercharged (if less than 12 months), or otherwise over 12 months.
- (b) The maximum amount we can recover from you is limited to the amount that has been undercharged in the 9 months immediately before we notify you, unless the undercharge is your fault, or results from your unlawful act or omission.

12.2 Overcharging

- (a) Where you have been overcharged by less than \$50.00, and you have already paid the overcharged amount, we must credit that amount to your next bill.
- (b) Where you have been overcharged by \$50.00 or more, we must inform you within 10 business days of our becoming aware of the overcharge and, if you have already paid

that amount, we must credit that amount to your next bill. However, if you request otherwise, we will comply with that request.

- (c) If you have stopped buying gas from us, we will use our best endeavours to pay the overcharged amount to you within 10 business days.
- (d) If you have been overcharged as a result of your own fault or unlawful act or omission, we may limit the amount we credit or pay you to the amount you were overcharged in the last 12 months.

12.3 Reviewing your bill

- (a) If you disagree with the amount you have been charged, you can ask us to review your bill in accordance with our standard complaints and dispute resolution procedures.
- (b) If you ask us to, we must arrange for a check of the *meter* reading or *metering data* or for a test of the *meter* in reviewing the bill. You will be liable for the cost of the check or test and we may request payment in advance. However, if the *meter* or *metering data* proves to be faulty or incorrect, we must reimburse you for the amount paid.
- (c) If your bill is being reviewed, you are still required to pay any other bills from us that are due for payment and the lesser of:
 - (i) the portion of the bill that you do not dispute; or
 - (ii) an amount equal to the average of your bills in the last 12 months.

13 SECURITY DEPOSITS

13.1 Security deposit

We may require that you provide a *security deposit*. The circumstances in which we can require a *security deposit* and the maximum amount of the *security deposit* are governed by the Rules.

13.2 Interest on security deposits

Where you have paid a *security deposit*, we must pay you interest on the *security deposit* at a rate and on terms required by the Rules.

13.3 Use of a security deposit

- (a) We may use your *security deposit*, and any interest earned on the *security deposit*, to offset any amount you owe under this contract:
 - (i) if you fail to pay a bill and as a result we arrange for the disconnection of your premises; or
 - (ii) in relation to a final bill (i.e. a bill we issue when you vacate the premises or when you stop purchasing gas from us at your premises or when you request that your premises be disconnected).
- (b) If we use your *security deposit* or any accrued interest to offset amounts owed to us, we will advise you within 10 business days.

13.4 Return of security deposit

- (a) We must return your *security deposit* and any accrued interest, in the following circumstances:

- (i) you complete 1 year's payment (in the case of residential exempt customers) or 2 years' payment (in the case of business exempt customers) by the *pay-by dates* on our initial bills; or
 - (ii) subject to clause 14.3 of this contract, you stop purchasing gas at the relevant premises under this contract.
- (b) If you do not give us any reasonable instructions, we will credit the amount of the *security deposit*, together with any accrued interest, to your next bill.

14 DISCONNECTION OF SUPPLY

14.1 When can we arrange for disconnection?

Subject to us satisfying the requirements in our seller exemption, we may arrange for the disconnection of your premises if:

- (a) you do not pay your bill by the *pay-by date* and, if you are a residential exempt customer, you:
 - (i) fail to comply with the terms of an agreed payment plan; or
 - (ii) do not agree to an offer to pay the bill by instalments, or having agreed, you fail to comply with the instalment arrangement;
- (b) you do not provide a *security deposit* we are entitled to require from you; or
- (c) you do not give access to your premises to read a *meter* (where relevant) for 3 consecutive *meter* reads; or
- (d) there has been illegal or fraudulent use of gas at your premises in breach of clause 16 of this contract; or
- (e) we are otherwise entitled or required to do so under the Rules or by law.

14.2 Notice and warning of disconnection

Before disconnecting your premises, we must comply with relevant warning notice requirements and other provisions in our seller exemption. However, we are not required to provide a warning notice prior to disconnection in certain circumstances (for example, where there has been illegal or fraudulent use of gas at your premises or where there is an emergency or health and safety issue).

14.3 When we must not arrange disconnection

- (a) Subject to paragraph (b), your premises may not be disconnected during the following times ('the protected period'):
 - (i) on a business day before 8.00am or after 3.00pm; or
 - (ii) on a Friday or the day before a public holiday; or
 - (iii) on a weekend or a public holiday; or
 - (iv) on the days between 20 December and 31 December (both inclusive) in any year.
- (b) Your premises may be disconnected within the protected period:
 - (i) for reasons of health and safety; or
 - (ii) in an emergency; or

- (iii) as directed by a *relevant authority*; or
- (iv) if you are in breach of your connection contract in relation to the interference with gas equipment; or
- (v) if you request us to arrange disconnection within the protected period; or
- (vi) if your premises contain a commercial business that only operates within the protected period and where access to the premises is necessary to effect disconnection;
- (vii) where the premises are not occupied.

15 RECONNECTION AFTER DISCONNECTION

- (a) We must arrange to reconnect your premises if, within 10 business days of your premises being disconnected:
 - (i) you ask us to arrange for reconnection of your premises; and
 - (ii) you rectify the matter that led to the disconnection; and
 - (iii) you pay any reconnection charge (if requested).
- (b) We may terminate this contract 10 business days following disconnection if you do not meet the requirements in paragraph (a).

16 WRONGFUL AND ILLEGAL USE OF GAS

16.1 Use of gas

You must not, and must take reasonable steps to ensure others do not:

- (a) illegally use gas supplied to your premises; or
- (b) interfere or allow interference with any gas equipment that is at your premises except as may be permitted by law; or
- (c) use the gas supplied to your premises or any gas equipment in a manner that:
 - (i) unreasonably interferes with the connection or supply of gas to another exempt customer; or
 - (ii) causes damage or interference to any third party; or
- (d) allow gas purchased from us to be used otherwise than in accordance with this contract; or
- (e) tamper with, or permit tampering with, any *meters* or associated equipment.

17 NOTICES AND BILLS

- (a) Notices and bills under this contract must be sent in writing, unless this contract or the National Energy Retail Law and our exempt seller conditions say otherwise.
- (b) A notice or bill sent under this contract is taken to have been received by you or by us (as relevant):
 - (i) on the date it is handed to the party, left at the party's premises (in your case) or one of our offices (in our case) or successfully faxed to the party (which occurs when the sender receives a transmission report to that effect); or
 - (ii) on the date 2 business days after it is posted; or

- (iii) on the date of transmission (unless the sender receives notice that delivery did not occur or has been delayed) if sent electronically and the use of electronic communication has been agreed between us.
- (c) Our contact details for you to contact us or send us a notice are as set out in our bill to you, or as notified to you from time to time.

18 PRIVACY ACT NOTICE

We will comply with all relevant privacy legislation in relation to your personal information. If you have any questions, you can contact Council.

19 COMPLAINTS AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION

19.1 Complaints

If you have a complaint relating to the sale of gas by us to you, or this contract generally, you may lodge a complaint with us on one of the following:

Customer Contact	1300 007 662
In Person	Cnr Bungil and Quintin Streets, Roma
Write to Council	Chief Executive Officer PO Box 42 MITCHELL QLD 4465
Email	council@maranoa.qld.gov.au
Send a Fax	07 4624 6990

19.2 Our obligations in handling complaints

If you make a complaint, we must respond to your complaint within the required timeframes set out in our standard complaints and dispute resolution procedures and inform you:

- (a) of the outcome of your complaint and the reasons for our decision; and
- (b) that if you are not satisfied with our response, you have a right to refer the complaint to the Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland.

20 FORCE MAJEURE

20.1 Effect of force majeure event

If either party to this contract cannot meet an obligation under this contract because of an event outside the control of that party ('a force majeure event'):

- (a) the obligation, other than an obligation to pay money, is suspended to the extent it is affected by the force majeure event for as long as the force majeure event continues; and
- (b) the affected party must use its best endeavours to give the other party prompt notice of that fact including full particulars of the event, an estimate of its likely duration, the extent to which the affected party's obligations are affected and the steps being taken to remove, overcome or minimise those effects.

20.2 Deemed prompt notice

If the effects of a force majeure event are widespread, we will be deemed to have given you prompt notice if we make the necessary information available by way of a 24 hour telephone service within 30 minutes of being advised of the event or otherwise as soon as practicable.

20.3 Obligation to overcome or minimise effect of force majeure event

A party that claims a force majeure event must use its best endeavours to remove, overcome or minimise the effects of that event as soon as practicable.

20.4 Settlement of industrial disputes

Nothing in this clause requires a party to settle an industrial dispute that constitutes a force majeure event in any manner other than the manner preferred by that party.

21 APPLICABLE LAW

The laws of Queensland govern this contract.

22 RETAILER OF LAST RESORT EVENT

If we are no longer entitled by law to sell gas to you due to a Retailer of Last Resort (RoLR) event occurring in relation to us, we are required under the National Energy Retail Law and the Rules to provide relevant information (including your name, billing address and *metering* identifier) to the entity appointed as the relevant designated exempt seller for the RoLR event and this contract will come to an end.

23 GENERAL

23.1 Our obligations

Some obligations placed on us under this contract may be carried out by another person. If an obligation is placed on us to do something under this contract, then:

- (a) we are taken to have complied with the obligation if another person does it on our behalf; and
- (b) if the obligation is not complied with, we are still liable to you for the failure to comply with this contract.

Simplified explanation of terms

billing cycle means the regular recurrent period for which you receive a bill from us.

business day means a day other than a Saturday, a Sunday or a public holiday.

disconnection means an action to prevent the flow of energy to the premises, but does not include an interruption.

emergency means an emergency due to the actual or imminent occurrence of an event that in any way endangers or threatens to endanger the safety or health of any person, or normal operation of the distribution system or transmission system, or that destroys or damages, or threatens to destroy or damage, any property.

energy means electricity or gas.

energy laws means national and State and Territory laws and rules relating to energy and the legal instruments made under those laws and rules.

exempt customer means a person who buys or wants to buy energy from a retailer.

force majeure event means an event outside the control of a party.

GST has the meaning given in the *GST Act (A New Tax System (Goods and Services Tax) Act 1999* (Cth)).

National Energy Retail Law means *the Law* of that name that is applied by each participating State and Territory.

relevant authority means any person or body who has the power under law to direct us, including the Australian Energy Market Operator and State or Federal Police.

residential exempt customer means a person who purchases energy principally for personal, household or domestic use at their premises.

RoLR event means an event that triggers the operation of the Retailer of Last Resort Scheme under the National Energy Retail Law.

security deposit means an amount of money paid to us as security against non-payment of a bill in accordance with the Rules.

small exempt customer means:

- (a) a residential exempt customer; or
- (b) a business exempt customer who consumes energy at or below a level determined under the National Energy Retail Law.

standing offer prices means tariffs and charges that we charge you for or in connection with the sale and supply of energy. These are published on our website.