Keeping our energy network safe, secure, and reliable

An important update from Jemena: understanding our role in the energy sector



Who is Jemena?

Jemena owns and operates the local electricity distribution network across Melbourne's north-west. Each day we manage the poles, wires, and other infrastructure needed to take electricity from the high voltage transmission network and deliver it safely to households, community services, and businesses in our network area. As part of our work we:

- maintain the poles, wires, substations and other electricity distribution infrastructure across Melbourne's north-west
- connect customers to our network, and
- maintain a safe and reliable supply of electricity.

We are also responsible for maintaining and upgrading our electricity network to support the current and future needs of our customers.

This factsheet provides more information about Australia's energy system, Jemena's role in it, and the decisions we make.

Connecting new customers to the network

When households, community services, and businesses apply for a connection to the electricity network, Jemena assesses their request in line with our regulatory obligations, as well as technical and safety requirements. Jemena's role involves:

- assessing how an efficient, safe, and reliable connection can be made,
- identifying any network upgrades that may be needed to facilitate the connection, and
- providing a formal connection offer.

Importantly, Jemena – as an electricity network provider – does not decide whether a customer should be allowed to connect to the electricity network.

Overview of Jemena's role when connecting new customers to the electricity network

Our role

- Assess all customer connection requests against regulatory requirements
- Identify how to connect customers to the network
- Plan, operate and maintain an efficient, safe and reliable electricity network

Not our role

- Approve major development projects in local areas
- Make decisions that belong to government or local councils
- Grant planning permits or make land use decisions

Jemena's role is to assess and provide electricity connections. Decisions about whether major new developments within local areas can proceed are considered through Victoria's planning and approval processes.

Why are network upgrades sometimes needed?

When a new or existing customer seeks a connection or changes to their existing electricity connection, Jemena considers how to connect the customer to the network as well as the impact the request may have on the broader network. To do this Jemena undertakes technical studies to assess what work is required, its impact, and whether new or upgraded infrastructure is needed. For smaller customers, such as households, connections can often occur without network upgrades, however for some larger customers (such as airports, new housing developments, manufacturing facilities, logistics centres, hospitals, or data centres) upgrades may be required.

New electricity demand → **Technical assessment** → **Determine network impacts** → **Identify any required upgrades**

Network upgrades help ensure future customers can be connected to the network and existing customers continue to receive a safe and reliable supply of electricity.

Depending on the network connection type, a large customer may be required to contribute financially to some or all of their connection and network upgrade related costs. This is determined by the regulatory framework overseen by the Australian Energy Regulator.

Who oversees Jemena?

Because Jemena provides an essential public service, its activities are governed by a regulatory framework that supports an efficient, safe and reliable electricity network and protects the long-term interests of customers. Jemena's activity is overseen by:

Governments (both state and federal)	Establish laws and policy settings relating to the management and operation of Australia's energy networks
Energy regulators (such as the Australian Energy Regulator (AER) and the Essential Services Commission (ESC))	Regulate electricity distribution networks, including aspects of network access, investment, pricing and customer connection charges. These requirements help ensure electricity networks can meet growing demand at an efficient cost and protect the long-term interests of consumers.
Safety regulators such as Energy Safe Victoria (ESV)	Regulate safety aspects of electricity distribution works
Australian Energy Market Commission (AEMC)	Makes and amends the National Electricity Rules
Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO)	Operates and plans the broader electricity system and market