

More companies slugging customers for paper bills

ENERGY Australia is the latest Australian company to reveal it will soon start hitting its customers with extra charges if they opt to receive paper statements in the mail.

The electricity provider will start slugging an extra \$1.69 per bill or \$6.76 per year for customers who receive bills quarterly.

The charges come into effect on November 1 and will apply to Energy Australia customers in Victoria, NSW, South Australia and Queensland.

Commenting on the move, executive director of Keep Me Posted Australia Kellie Northwood says, "These steps from Energy Australia are



Defending paper: Keep Me Posted executive director Kellie Northwood

irresponsible and disappointing as this company has dismissed the millions of Australians who are disadvantaged by these 'pay-to-pay' practices.

"It is our most vulnerable



living on the lowest household incomes, managing disabilities, pensions and skills shortages that companies like Energy Australia are penalising the most."

Energy Australia has assured it would exempt certain groups from receiving the charge including concession card holders, pensioners and people in hardship programs.

In March the Commonwealth Bank of Australia (CBA) was slammed for introducing a similar measure, revealing it would slap customers with a \$2.50 charge for each extra bank statement a customer requested in the mail.

However, CBA was not the first to introduce the paper charge, other companies such as Telstra, Optus, and Origin Energy were already charging customers a similar fee for paper statements.