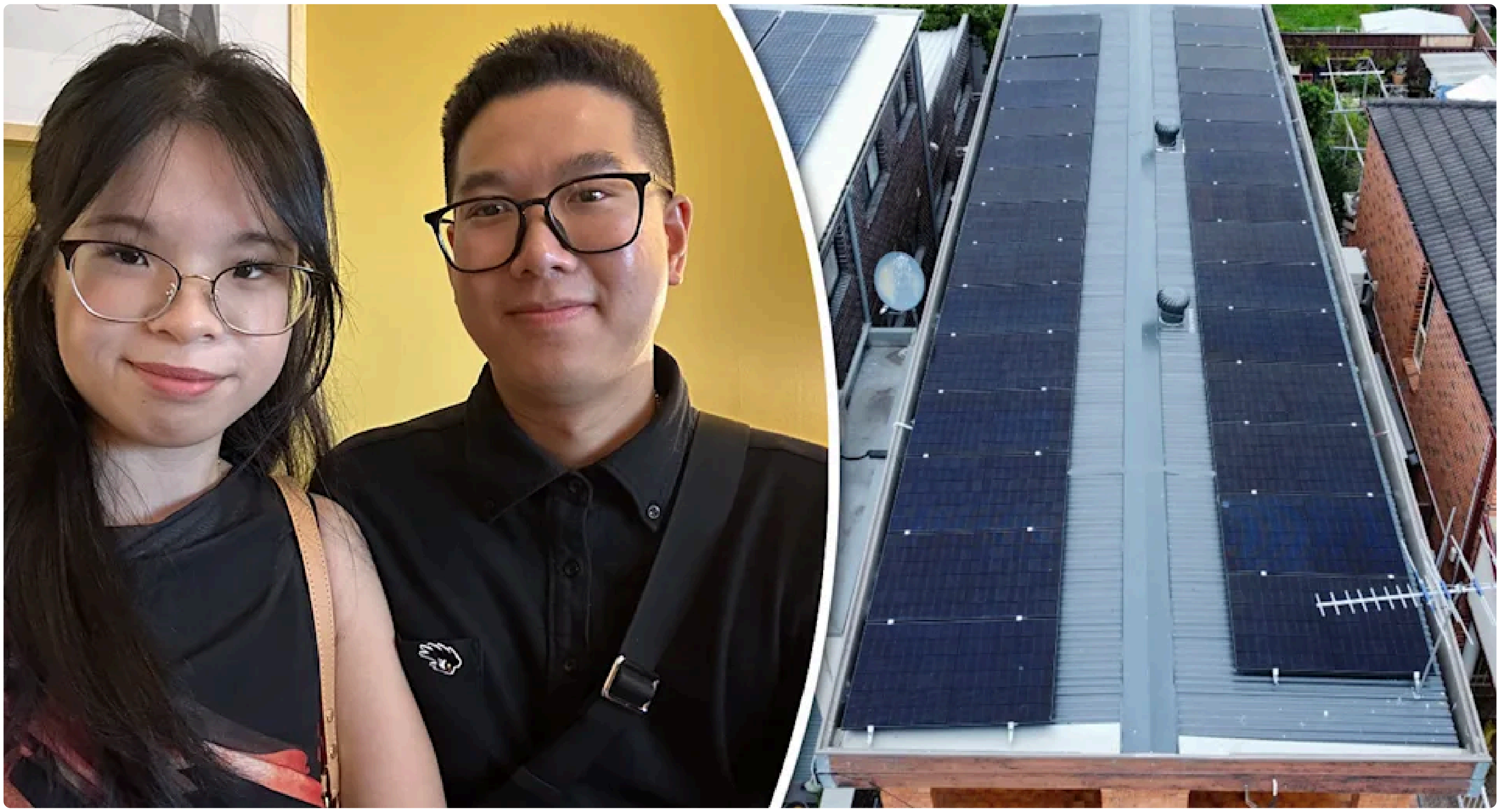
Couple slash $600 household bill to zero ahead of battery discount change from January 1: 'Incredible demand'

The government's Cheaper Home Battery discount will gradually decrease each year on January 1 until 2030.



Harrison Nguyen and his partner Sheila installed rooftop solar on their Sydney home last year. (Source: Supplied)

Tamika Seeto · **Finance Reporter**
1 November 2025 • 5 min read

Australian households looking to install solar batteries are being warned the federal government's discount will decrease from January 1 next year. About 100,000 households have already installed solar batteries since the scheme launched four months ago.

Harrison Nguyen recently used the federal rebate to install a second battery at his Sydney home. The 26-year-old IT worker told *Yahoo Finance* his family no longer wanted to be solely reliant on the grid, or "feel guilty" about using the air-con during summer.

"Before going to solar and battery, we were paying around $400 to $600 a quarter. Now, with the solar and battery combined, we're virtually paying nothing now," he said.

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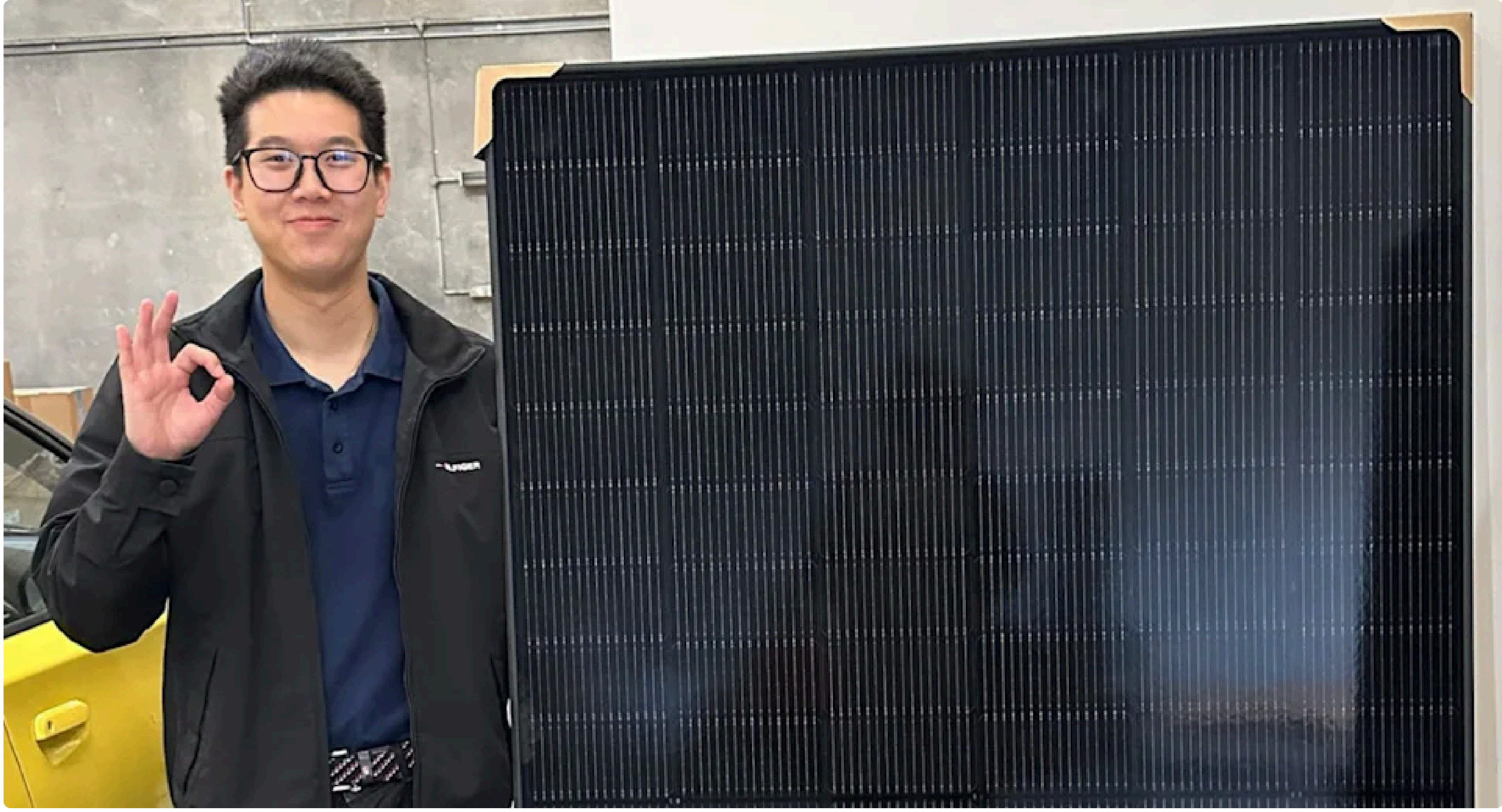
Nguyen spent around $3,300 installing a 6.6kW solar system and around $6,000 installing a 10.1kW battery in September last year.

With one battery, the family was able to get their electricity bill down to around $50 a quarter. With the second battery, Nguyen expects his bill will now be "zero" or "in credit".

Ngugen paid about $2,140 for the second battery, which is the same size as the first. That price included the government's battery discount, plus a promotion his battery installer was running.

Do you have a story to share? Contact tamika.seeto@yahooinc.com



Nguyen said installing solar and batteries has helped him drastically cut his electricity bills. (Source: Supplied)

The government's Cheaper Home Batteries program launched on July 1 and gives households and small businesses a discount on the upfront cost of installing a battery. The discount is currently around 30 per cent, but will gradually decrease until 2030.

The government revealed 2 gigawatt-hours of storage had now been installed across Australia, with the program increasing home battery capacity by more than 50 per cent.

Nguyen has estimated it will take around six years to payback the cost of the solar system and batteries.

He lives with his partner, Sheila, along with his parents and a sibling, and noted they were now using their electricity more.

It comes after Cotality research revealed homes with solar power systems are valued around 2.7 per cent, or $23,100, more than those without.

What is changing from January 1?

Federal solar and battery rebates will step down on January 1.

The discounts operate under the Small-scale Renewable Energy Scheme (SRES) and are based on Small-scale Technology Certificates (STCs).

Story continues

David Koch helped one Aussie mum save $5,300 on her household bills with a couple of tweaks. · Source: Getty/Compare the Market

David Koch
Fri 24 July 2026 at 10:52 am GMT+8 • 5 min read

Could you be sitting on more than $5,000 in potential savings? I know it sounds like a lot, but it really does happen more often than you'd think.

I recently met inspiring mum-of-three Naomi Cao, a divorce coach and strategist based in Sydney, while filming the latest season of Your Money and Your Life.

She volunteered to take part in Compare the Market's Bill Challenge, a segment where the comparison experts go through your bills and look for saving opportunities.

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Depending on what she decides, we found she could save up to $5,300 on her household bills with a few tweaks and changes.

Sound interesting? Let's walk through what we did.

Car insurance: the first big saving

Naomi's latest car insurance renewal notices were massive: $2,700 for her EV and more than $5,200 for the ute shared by her two sons, who are currently at uni.

I don't know about you, but spending nearly $8,000 to insure two cars sounds a little extreme – even with two young drivers on one policy.

Compare the Market did some sleuthing and found two great options that could save Naomi between $790 and $1,290 on her first car, depending on whether she would consider increasing her excess to $1,000.

The boys could save between $2,200 and $3,200 by switching insurers and making the same excess tweak on their ute. Not bad beer money for a couple of lads at uni!

Naomi Cao and her sons were able to save when it camew to their car insurance. · Source: Your Money & Your Life

Home loan: negotiating your own rate cut

Next, we looked at Naomi's home loan. Everyone with a mortgage has been feeling the pinch after the past three 0.25 per cent rate hikes from the RBA.

But if you're willing to do a bit of legwork, you may be able to negotiate a rate cut of your own. We found Naomi could reduce her repayments by around $134 a month – or $1,600 over the year (calculated on a static interest rate) – by switching to a cheaper rate with a different bank.

With interest rates as high as they are, and more potential hikes on the horizon, it's important to keep the margin you pay the bank as low as possible.

Home and contents: the loyalty tax in action

Then came home and contents insurance, where Naomi's renewal had jumped by around $380 year-on-year to almost $3,000. That's a lot of money, and it's a good reminder that sticking with the same insurer year after year isn't always healthy for your wallet. Some call it the loyalty tax, and it can quietly creep into the bills we stop questioning.

Story continues

NewsWire

$60 refund for thousands of Australians

Cameron Micallef
15 July 2026 • 2 min read

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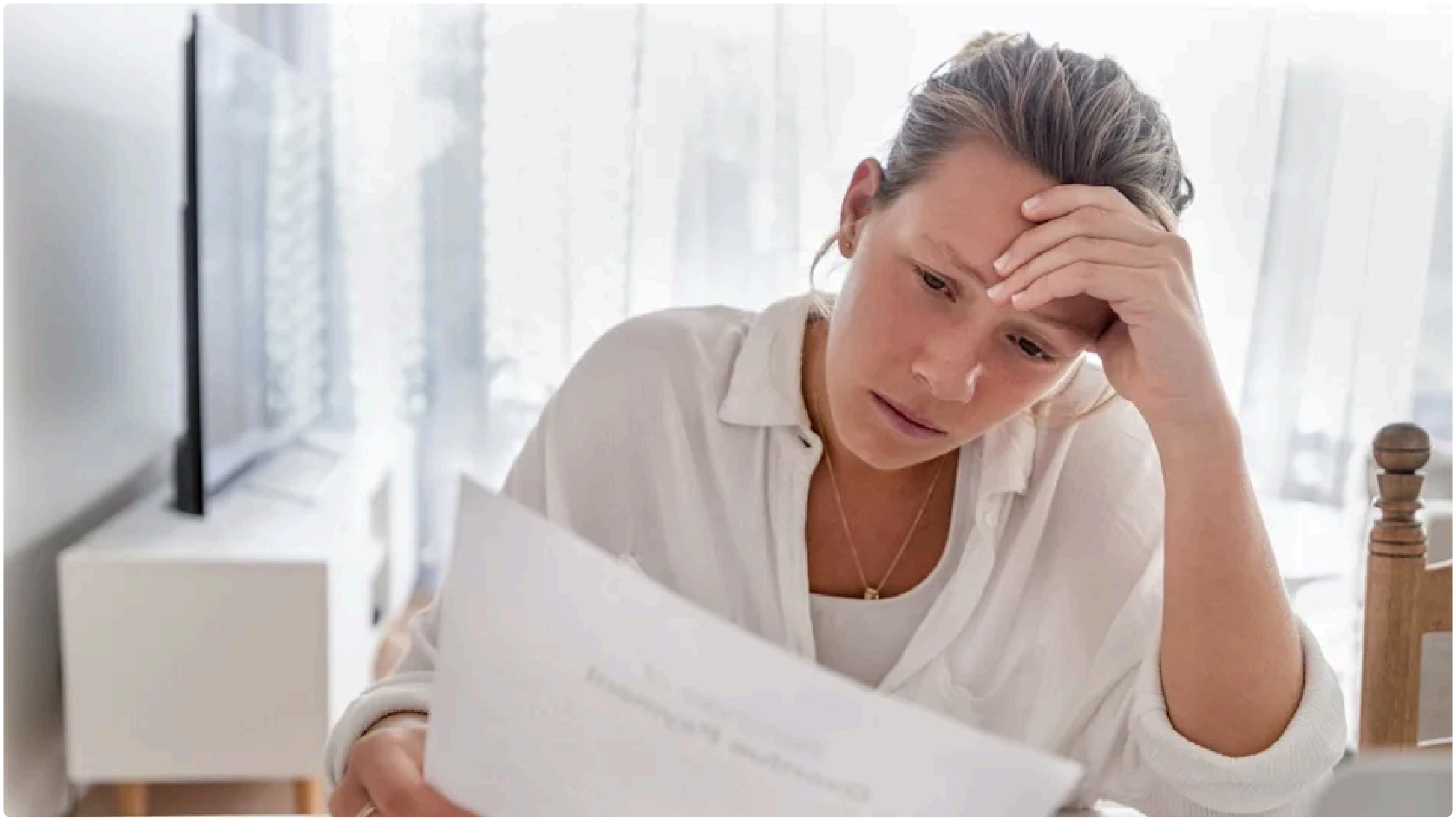

Australians have been refunded for misleading energy plans. Picture: iStock

Thousands of Australians will get a $60 refund from Origin Energy after the energy retailer overcharged 4500 customers.

According to the ACCC, some households who signed up to Origin's "ongoing savers" residential electricity plan were charged more than those on the "basic" energy plan.

This investigation began as part of the ACCC's response to Choice complaints that raised concerns about energy providers falsely representing value to consumers through confusing plan names.

Origin Energy will refund $270,000 after overcharging 4500 customers. Picture: Supplied

Commissioner Anna Brakey said Origin's ongoing savers plan didn't have the value the name suggested.

"Energy plans are complex, and the mix of usage and supply charges makes it difficult for many consumers to assess potential savings," Ms Brakey said.

"Retailers should provide clear and accurate information about their plans to help consumers make informed decisions."

Origin Energy has been asked to refund $270,000 to more than 4500 customers, with the average household set to receive about $60 in remediation.

Impacted customers can arrange for a refund or a credit.

Impacted Australians will get $60 back on their plans. Picture: iStock

Origin said only a small amount of customers were impacted customers.

"We sincerely apologise to customers impacted by this mistake," it said in a statement.

"Around 4500 customers, or 0.5 per cent of customers on the plan, paid an average total of $28 more than they should have. We have since made improvements and are in the process of refunding these customers an average amount of around $60."

Loyalty doesn't pay

The ACCC also broadly warning customers that their loyalty only benefits the power providers, urging everyone to check for a cheaper deal.

The consumer watchdog said households could also call their existing retailer and ask for a better deal.

Retailers are legally required to provide information about how the price of an existing plan compares with the regulated safety net price.

"We strongly encourage all consumers to use available government energy comparison sites to try to find the best available energy deal for their circumstances, as there are large differences between the cheapest and most expensive plans," Ms Brakey said.

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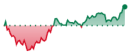
SPCX	S...		118.24	+2.98 (+2.59%)
^AORD	A...		8,941.90	-76.20 (-0.84%)
TEAM	At...		80.15	-5.25 (-6.15%)
WOW.AX	W...		39.30	+0.38 (+0.98%)
CBA.AX	C...		173.73	+1.43 (+0.83%)

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