



Customer Charter

Table of Contents

| | | |
|-----------|---|-----------|
| 1. | About PowerNet Ltd | 2 |
| 1.1 | Who We Are | 2 |
| 1.2 | What We Do | 2 |
| 1.3 | Our Vision and Values..... | 3 |
| 2. | Our Customer Charter..... | 4 |
| 2.1 | Purpose of the charter | 4 |
| 2.2 | What you can expect from us..... | 4 |
| 2.3 | What we ask from you | 5 |
| 3. | Safety and our shared obligation..... | 5 |
| 3.1 | Keeping our communities safe | 5 |
| 3.2 | Medically dependent customers..... | 5 |
| 3.3 | General safety guidelines | 5 |
| 3.4 | Your safety when working near cables and lines..... | 6 |
| 4. | Your electricity supply | 7 |
| 4.1 | Reliability of power supply | 7 |
| 4.2 | Quality of supply | 8 |
| 4.3 | Planned power interruptions | 9 |
| 4.4 | Unplanned power interruptions | 10 |
| 5. | Your property | 11 |
| 5.1 | Access to your premises | 11 |
| 5.2 | Disconnections and Reconnections | 12 |
| 5.3 | Service lines..... | 13 |
| 5.4 | The electricity meter | 13 |
| 5.5 | Trees and powerlines..... | 14 |
| 6. | Service levels | 15 |
| 7. | Complaints and disputes | 15 |
| 7.1 | How to raise complaints..... | 15 |
| 7.2 | Dispute resolution process..... | 16 |
| 7.3 | Independent resolution service | 16 |

1. About PowerNet Ltd

1.1 Who We Are

PowerNet is an asset management company responsible for managing and maintaining a portfolio of electricity distribution assets throughout New Zealand. Based on the regulatory value of networks we manage, PowerNet is the equivalent to the fourth-largest electricity management company in New Zealand.

Our team of over 300 people are based in Invercargill, Lumsden, Gore, Balclutha, Te Anau, Frankton, Palmerston, Ranfurly and Stewart Island. We proudly support homes, businesses, and communities by delivering safe, efficient and reliable electricity to our southern communities.

1.2 What We Do

We manage the following electricity networks on behalf of the network owners:

- The Power Company Limited (TPCL)
- OtagoNet Joint Venture (OJV)
- Lakeland Network Limited (LNL)
- Electricity Invercargill Limited (EIL)

We also manage the network and provide operational services for the Stewart Island Electrical Supply Authority (SIESA), owned by the Southland District Council.

In June 2024, PowerNet entered into a Management Agreement with Ruakura EDB Limited Partnership (Ruakura Energy) to manage the electricity distribution network for the Ruakura Superhub in the Waikato region.

Together, these networks supply power to over 77,500 customers across Southland, Queenstown Lakes, Central Otago, West Otago, and Stewart Island. Our electricity network includes:

- 14,362 kilometers of power lines and cables
- 14,362 lines and cables
- 74 substations
- 16,454 transformers



1.3 Our Vision and Values

Our vision is to be the energy partner of choice. We focus on delivering reliable, efficient, and valued services that customers trust and recommend.

We are committed to continuous improvement, refining our work processes, embracing innovation, and building new capabilities to meet future energy needs.

Our people are at the heart of this. Through a shared way of working, we support each other to grow, improve, and deliver better outcomes for our communities.

Our vision

Energy partner of choice

Our purpose

Safe, Efficient, Reliable Power to Communities

Critical success factors

Safety always
Customer focus
Continuous improvement
Passionate and empowered people
Courageous leadership

Values

Up front and honest
Make a difference
Do it once, do it right
Back each other
Take positive action

2. Our Customer Charter

2.1 Purpose of the charter

This charter outlines important things that we all need to do to deliver safe, efficient and reliable power to our southern communities. In this document, you will find information on your legal rights, obligations and how to give us feedback, as well as our rights and obligations as your electricity distributor.

2.2 What you can expect from us

We are committed to:

- Delivering safe, efficient and reliable electricity to your home or business.
- Responding to electricity faults 24/7.
- Letting you know in advance about planned power outages (through your electricity retailer).
- Keeping you informed during unexpected power interruptions.
- Fixing electricity network faults as quickly and safely as we can.
- Respecting your property if and when we need to access it.

- Meeting our Guaranteed Service Standards commitments and providing compensation if we don't.
- Communicating with you clearly and promptly.
- Protecting your privacy and keeping your personal information secure.
- Taking your feedback seriously and addressing complaints in a fair and impartial manner.

2.3 What we ask from you

To help us keep the network running smoothly and safely, we ask you to:

- Use electricity only for the property it's supplied to.
- Give us safe and easy access to your property when we need it for inspections, maintenance, or repairs.
- Let us know about any hazards or access issues, like locked gates, dogs, or construction work.
- Look after the power lines you own on your property, keep trees clear and avoid activities that could damage lines.

3. Safety and our shared obligation

At PowerNet, safety always comes first. Keeping our communities, employees, and contractors safe is paramount in everything we do. We are committed to maintaining the highest safety standards across our network and ensuring that anyone who works on, or comes near, our electricity assets is protected from harm.

3.1 Keeping our communities safe

We have strong safety procedures and policies in place to protect the public and those working on our network. We regularly inspect and maintain our equipment and work to increase awareness about electricity safety in the communities we serve. Our Safety Management System (SMS) is at the core of our approach. This system meets the requirements of NZS 7901:2014 – Electricity and Gas Industries – Safety Management System for Public Safety. It is audited every year to ensure it remains effective and relevant.

3.2 Medically dependent customers

If you or someone in your household relies on electricity to power critical medical equipment, planning ahead is important in case of a power outage. What you need to do:

- In an emergency, if the power is out and you are at risk, call 111 immediately for help.
- Let your electricity retailer know immediately; they will register you as a medically dependent customer.
- Talk to your healthcare provider about creating an emergency plan in case of a power outage. This could include having a backup power supply (e.g. a battery or generator) or arranging to stay somewhere with a reliable power supply.

3.3 General safety guidelines

PowerNet urges you to always respect electricity. We cannot see, hear or smell electricity and if not handled with extreme caution, it can cause harm or even death. To ensure safety:

- Stay clear of fallen power lines:
 - ✓ Always assume fallen or broken power lines are live.
 - ✓ Keep well away and call PowerNet immediately on 0800 808 587.
- If your vehicle hits a power pole:
 - ✓ Stay in your vehicle if it's safe to do so.
 - ✓ Call 111 for emergency services and PowerNet.
- Report electrical hazards:
 - ✓ If you notice anything unusual, such as flickering lights, sparks, or damaged power equipment, contact us promptly.
- Avoid DIY electrical work:
 - ✓ Never try to fix electrical issues yourself.
 - ✓ Always hire a licensed electrician to carry out any electrical work.

3.4 Your safety when working near cables and lines

Working near power lines or underground cables can be dangerous. Keeping your distance could save your life.

Overhead power lines

If you are building, digging, or using machinery near power lines, you must keep a safe distance to avoid serious injury or electrocution.

- You must follow the New Zealand Electrical Code of Practice (NZECP 34:2001).
- Stay at least four meters away from power lines.
- Safe distances depend on the voltage, so check before you start.

If you need to work closer than these limits, you will need close approach approval from us.

Digging near underground cables

Before you dig or excavate, you must find out if there are underground cables on your property or worksite:

- Contact BeforeUdig at www.beforeudig.co.nz to request underground service plans.
- PowerNet can also help by:
 - ✓ Providing maps showing positions of buried cables.
 - ✓ Locate and mark the ground on site to indicate the estimated location of cables.
 - ✓ Provide advice if you are unsure.

Before using mechanical excavators, carefully expose the cables by hand digging or hydro excavation and visually see the cables to be avoided.

Transporting large loads near power lines

If you need to move large items (e.g. houses, relocatable buildings, or tall equipment) that could touch power lines, you must:

- Apply for high load approval. We may require you to take a specific route or have our line crew escort you to lift power lines safely. This service may involve a fee depending on the work required.

Temporary power disconnections

If you need power turned off to safely carry out work near power lines or cables:

- Contact PowerNet as early as possible. We require at least 3 business days' notice for a simple disconnection. For larger shutdowns affecting multiple properties, we need at least 20 working days' notice to ensure customers are informed.

4. Your electricity supply

At PowerNet, we are committed to providing a safe, reliable and efficient electricity supply to all our customers. While we aim for consistent power delivery, there are times when interruptions may occur due to maintenance, weather, wildlife, equipment failure, or unforeseen events. This section explains how we manage your electricity supply and what you can expect from us.

4.1 Reliability of power supply

We measure reliability using two key industry standards:

- SAIDI (System Average Interruption Duration Index): This tracks the average length of time customers are without power over a year.
- SAIFI (System Average Interruption Frequency Index): This measures how often power is interrupted on average per customer each year.

We set reliability targets for each network we manage; however actual results may vary depending on location and other factors. These targets are outlined in our Asset Management Plans (AMPs), which explain how we plan to maintain and improve reliability across our networks. You can view the latest AMP for your network on our website: www.powernet.co.nz

Number of unplanned interruptions

The number of unplanned outages you may experience depends on your location:

- Urban Areas: Typically, 1 to 2 unplanned outages per year.
- Rural Areas: Typically, 3 to 5 unplanned outages per year.

Urban networks generally experience fewer outages because they are more compact and easier to access. Rural networks are more exposed to environmental factors, such as storms and vegetation, and often cover longer distances, increasing the potential for interruptions. Trees and branches are a major cause of outages, especially during storms. We regularly inspect and clear vegetation near

power lines, but property owners also play a part (See the Trees and Power Lines section on page 14).

Time to restore power

We know being without power can be disruptive, so we aim to get the lights back on as quickly and safely as possible. How long it takes to restore power depends on where you live and the network you are connected to.

| Network | Area type | Typical restoration time |
|---|---|---------------------------------|
| The Power Company Limited (TPC) | Town areas (e.g. Invercargill, Gore, Winton, Te Anau, within 50 km/h zones) | Within 4 hours of notification |
| | Semi-rural and rural areas | Within 8 hours of notification |
| OtagoNet Joint Venture (OJV) | Town areas (e.g. Balclutha, Palmerston, Ranfurly, within 50 km/h zones) | Within 6 hours of notification |
| | Semi-rural and rural areas | Within 12 hours of notification |
| Lakeland Network Limited (LNL) | All areas | Within 4 hours of notification |
| Electricity Invercargill Limited (EIL) | All areas | Within 4 hours of notification |

What might cause delays?

Sometimes, it may take longer to get power back on if there is:

- Severe weather, such as storms or flooding.
- Damage to multiple power poles or lines.
- Restricted access to the fault site (e.g. remote areas, unsafe conditions).
- Major emergencies or force majeure events.

Service Guarantee Payment

If we do not meet these timeframes and factors outside our control don't cause the delay, you may be eligible for a Service Guarantee Payment. For more details, see Service Guarantee Payments in Section 6 (page 14).

4.2 Quality of supply

We aim to supply electricity to your home or business at a steady and safe voltage. Our standard supply voltage is 230 volts $\pm 6\%$, which means it should stay between 216.2 volts and 243.8 volts at your property.

Why voltage may fluctuate

Sometimes you might notice lights flickering or dimming. This can happen for a few reasons:

- Trees or branches touching power lines, especially in high winds.
- Wildlife like birds or possums getting into electrical equipment.
- High demand in your area, or large appliances switching on and off.
- Electrical faults on the network.

These small dips or flickers are usually nothing to worry about, they are part of normal network operation. However, if you have ongoing concerns about voltage or supply quality, contact us and we will investigate.

Protecting your appliances

While we do our best to keep the supply steady, fluctuations can still happen, especially during storms or faults. To protect your electrical appliances, we recommend:

- Using surge protectors for devices like TVs, computers, and fridges.
- Turning off sensitive appliances during a power cut to avoid damage when power is restored.
- Having your home's wiring checked regularly by a qualified electrician.
- Considering insurance to cover damage to appliances in case of power issues.

4.3 Planned power interruptions

Sometimes we need to turn the power off to carry out maintenance, upgrades, or other work to keep the network safe and reliable. These are called planned power interruptions. We understand this can be disruptive, so we inform you in advance. We aim to keep the power off for as little time as possible.

How we will let you know

- We provide at least 10 working days' notice of a planned power interruption by notifying your electricity retailer, who will pass the details on to you.
- In some cases, we may deliver a notice directly to your property.

What the notice will tell you

- The date and time of the outage.
- How long it's expected to last.
- Why the power is being turned off.
- An alternative date in case the work is delayed (e.g. due to bad weather).

On the day

- We will do our best to complete the work on time, but sometimes things don't go to plan. If the work takes longer than expected, we will keep working until it's done safely.
- Sometimes, planned work is cancelled at short notice, often because of bad weather. We may not always be able to let you know directly, so check our website on the morning of the outage: www.powernet.co.nz/outages

Getting ready for a planned outage

- Switch off appliances like stoves, ovens, and heaters before the power goes off, this helps prevent accidents when power is restored.
- Always treat power lines and appliances as live, as power could be restored earlier than expected.
- If you rely on medical equipment, make sure you have a backup power supply or a plan to stay somewhere safe.

4.4 Unplanned power interruptions

Sometimes the power can go out suddenly without warning. This is called an unplanned power interruption. It can affect just a few properties or a large area, depending on the cause.

What causes unplanned outages?

Power can go out for several reasons, including:

- Severe weather – strong winds, heavy rain, or lightning.
- Trees or branches falling onto power lines.
- Wildlife (e.g., birds or possums) making contact with equipment or power lines.
- Car accidents damaging power poles.
- Unexpected equipment faults.

How we restore power

Our crews respond quickly to find the fault and safely restore power. Restoration times depend on the location and cause; it's usually faster in town areas but can take longer in rural or remote areas, especially if access is difficult or there's widespread damage.

How we will keep you informed

As soon as we are aware of a power outage affecting a wider area or multiple customers, we will:

- Update our website at www.powernet.co.nz/outages
- Include an estimated restoration time and cause, if known.
- Record a voice message on our outage line with information about affected areas and expected restoration times.
- Update our website when power is restored.

How to report an outage

If your power goes out:

- Check our website
- Call our Customer Call Centre on 0800 808 587 if your area is not listed.
- If your area is mentioned in our phone message, we already know about the outage, and you don't need to stay on the line.
- If your area is not mentioned, stay on the line to speak with our Customer Call Centre.

Staying safe during an outage

- Turn off stoves, heaters, and appliances to avoid fire risks when power is restored.
- Keep fridge and freezer doors closed to keep food cold for as long as possible.
- Have a torch and spare batteries handy, candles can be a fire risk.
- Stay clear of fallen power lines, assume they are live and call us immediately.
- If you rely on medical equipment, call 111 if your health is at risk.

5. Your property

5.1 Access to your premises

Sometimes, we need to access your property to inspect, maintain, or repair the electricity network. This ensures a safe and reliable power supply for you and your community.

When we need to enter your property, we will:

- Provide reasonable notice, at least 10 working days before entry for maintenance work.
- Contact you by phone or in person if we need to inspect or operate our equipment.
- Behave professionally and respectfully while on your property.
- Restore any area we have disturbed once our work is complete.

You can help by:

- Keeping entry points clear and accessible (e.g. gates, driveways).
- Letting us know if there are locked gates, security systems, or safety hazards (e.g. dogs, ongoing construction).
- Allowing us safe and unhindered access when required.

Emergency access

If there is a fault or urgent safety issue, we may need to enter your property without prior notice. In these cases, we will take all reasonable steps to notify you as soon as possible.

Connections

If you are building a new home, setting up a business, or upgrading your electricity supply, you must complete a new or altered power connection application form on our website www.powernet.co.nz/get-connected/. Your electrician will usually submit this on your behalf, as they have the technical knowledge to complete the form correctly.

Getting connected – what to expect

The process is straightforward, but getting the process started early is a good idea to avoid delays. Here is how it works:

- Complete an Installation Connection Application Form.
- We will check if our network can handle the power supply you need. If upgrades or extra work are required, we will send you a quote outlining the costs.

- You should contact an electricity retailer to set up an account. You will need this before we can connect your power.
- Your electrician will install the wiring and ensure everything is ready for connection. Once the meter is installed and your site is ready, we can connect your power.

How long will it take?

Timeframes depend on a few things, like:

- How complex the connection is.
- Whether we need to upgrade lines or transformers.
- Whether your site is ready.

To help things go smoothly:

- Apply as early as possible.
- Make sure your site is ready, and your electrician's work is complete.
- Stay in touch with us so we can keep you updated.

5.2 Disconnections and Reconnections

There are different types of disconnections and reconnections, depending on whether you are moving house, doing work on your property, or permanently removing the power supply. Here is what you need to know:

Moving in or out of a property

Contact your electricity retailer if you are moving house and need power disconnected or reconnected. They will arrange this for you.

Permanent disconnections

If you are removing a building or no longer need power at a property:

- Give us at least 10 business days' notice so we can safely disconnect the supply.
- The property owner needs to authorise this work before we start by completing our Authority to remove power permanently form www.powernet.co.nz/disconnecting-your-power/

Temporary disconnections (for work on your property)

If you are working near power lines or cables, such as roofing, painting, tree trimming, or digging, you may need the power disconnected for safety.

- Give us at least three business days' notice before you start.
- If the work involves high-voltage lines, we may need up to 25 business days' notice to notify affected customers.
- Call our Customer Call Centre on 0800 808 587

Reconnections

When it is time to reconnect your power:

- Give us at least three business days' notice.

- Your electrician needs to check that your property's wiring is safe.
- You must set up an electricity account with a retailer before we can restore supply.

If the power has been off for more than 6 months, you will need a Registered Electrical Inspector to check that everything is safe. The inspector will issue a Certificate of Verification for your electricity retailer. If the power has been off for more than 12 months, you must submit a new connection application through our website.

5.3 Service lines

Ownership and responsibility

The power lines and equipment on your property, including poles, cables, and fuses, are known as service lines (sometimes called mains). As the property owner, you are responsible for maintaining and repairing these lines. Your responsibility usually extends up to the isolating fuse on your boundary or to the nearest pole at the edge of your property.

Faults and repairs

If a fault happens on your service line (within your property boundary):

- You are responsible for organising and paying for repairs, including any call-out charges.
- PowerNet or your chosen contractor will keep you informed throughout so you can make the best decisions.

Power lines can be dangerous. Stay well clear if you notice damage. If you are unsure about the ownership or maintenance of lines on your property, call PowerNet, and we will help you work it out.

5.4 The electricity meter

The electricity meter measures how much power you use, so you are accurately billed for the electricity supplied to your property.

Who owns the meter?

Ownership depends on the network you are connected to:

Electricity Invercargill Limited (EIL) and The Power Company Limited (TPC):

- There are multiple Meter Equipment Providers (MEPs) operating on the EIL and TPC networks, including IHub, NGCM, and FCLM. These meters are retailer-owned and are managed by the retailer or their contractors. In addition, there are MEPs such as EIL, TPC, and SMCO that are owned by EIL and TPC but are managed by PowerNet on their behalf.

Lakeland Network (LNL):

- PowerNet is installing meters for customers who do not have smart meters. LNL owns these meters, and PowerNet manages them. Meters for customers with other retailers will be upgraded later as part of an ongoing rollout.

OtagoNet Joint Venture (OJV):

- OJV does not own meters. Your electricity retailer is responsible for metering under New Zealand regulations. Retailers often contract metering service providers to install, maintain, and check meters.

Smart and traditional meters

Most properties now have smart meters that send readings remotely to electricity retailers. Some homes may still have older meters that require manual readings. If you are unsure about your meter type or want more information, check your electricity bill or contact your retailer.

If you think the meter isn't working properly, the first step is always to contact your electricity retailer.

5.5 Trees and powerlines

Trees growing too close to power lines can cause power outages and pose a serious safety risk. Strong winds or storms can bring branches into contact with lines, interrupting power or causing lines to fall, creating a hazard.

We manage trees and vegetation on our network in accordance with the Electricity (Hazards from Trees) Regulations 2003. These regulations set out the responsibilities of PowerNet and tree owners for keeping trees clear of power lines.

PowerNet's responsibilities

We are committed to keeping the network safe and reliable. Our team:

- Inspects the network regularly to identify trees growing too close to power lines (within the Growth Limit Zone).
- Issues a Cut/Trim Notice if a tree is growing too close to power lines. We may offer to cover the cost of the first cut or trim of the vegetation found to be within the Growth Limit Zone.
- Follows up to ensure compliance with the Cut/Trim Notice and the Regulations.

Your responsibilities as a property owner

As a property owner, you are responsible for maintaining trees on your property and keeping them clear of power lines. If you receive a Cut/Trim Notice, you must:

- Arrange for the tree to be cut or trimmed within the timeframe specified (usually 45 days).
- Ensure work is done safely, never attempt to trim trees near power lines yourself. Always hire a qualified tree contractor to carry out work safely. If you'd like help to find a qualified contractor, visit our website www.powernet.co.nz/electricity-safety/trees/ to find a list.
- If a tree poses an immediate danger (e.g., touching a power line or causing sparks), call PowerNet immediately on 0800 808 587.

Immediate hazards

If a tree is an immediate safety risk or threatens the power supply, PowerNet may trim or remove it without prior notice. In some cases, the property owner may be charged for this work and any associated debris removal.

6. Service levels

Service Guarantee Payment

We aim to deliver safe, efficient and reliable electricity and restore power as quickly as possible when faults occur. Sometimes, we may not meet the service levels we set. If this happens, you may be eligible for a Service Guarantee Payment as a goodwill gesture. You may qualify for a payment if we do not restore power within the timeframes outlined in the “Time to restore power” section for your area and network (e.g. 4, 6, 8, or 12 hours depending on location and network). Payments are made to your electricity retailer, who is responsible for passing the credit on to you.

Payment amounts

If you are eligible due to an unplanned power interruption where the service level is not met, the payment is:

- \$40 per each customer connection (up to 63 Amps).
- \$100 per each customer connection (greater than 63 Amps).

Payments are subject to a general limit of liability and are intended as a goodwill gesture, not as compensation for loss or damage.

When payments do not apply

There are some situations where a payment will not be made, including when:

- There is substantial third-party damage or weather-related damage to the network (e.g. affecting three or more poles on a line).
- The outage is caused by the Transmission Provider (e.g. Transpower).
- The delay is due to a Force Majeure Event (e.g. natural disasters, extreme weather beyond our control).
- Our crews are prevented from making repairs (e.g. police restricting access after a car accident).
- The fault is on your property, or you or your contractor caused the fault.

7. Complaints and disputes

7.1 How to raise complaints

We aim to provide great service, but we understand that sometimes things may go wrong. If our service does not meet your expectations, we want to address your concerns promptly and fairly.

How to contact us

Phone:

- Monday to Friday, 8 am to 5 pm: Call 03 211 1899
- After Hours (24/7 Faults): Call 0800 808 587

Email: CustomerRelations@powernet.co.nz

Post: PO Box 1642, Invercargill 9840

7.2 Dispute resolution process

When you make a complaint, we will:

- Acknowledge your complaint within two working days of receiving it.
- Aim to resolve your complaints within five working days. If your complaint is complex and requires more time, we will provide an estimated timeframe and explain the reason for the delay within seven working days.

7.3 Independent resolution service

If we cannot resolve your concern, you can access a free and independent service through Utilities Disputes Ltd under the Electricity Complaints Scheme.

When to contact Utilities Disputes Ltd:

- You are dissatisfied with our decision, or any settlement offered.
- Your complaint remains unresolved 20 working days after we received it, and we have not provided a valid reason for the delay.
- It has taken longer than 40 working days to resolve your complaint.
- We have indicated that we won't take further action on your complaint.
- Delaying further would cause you unreasonable harm or be unjust.

Contact details for Utilities Disputes Ltd:

Phone: 0800 22 33 40

Email: info@utilitiesdisputes.co.nz

Website: www.utilitiesdisputes.co.nz

Post: PO Box 5875, Lambton Quay, Wellington 6140

PowerNet will review this Customer Charter annually and update it if any improvements are identified.