

# On the wire

The Customer Newsletter of Nelson Electricity Ltd • Issue 2 • March 2003



## NEL – who we are and what we do for you

Nelson Electricity Ltd (NEL) is the company that delivers electricity to you on behalf of your energy retailer (e.g. TrustPower, Meridian). We are responsible for managing and operating the electricity distribution network in the central Nelson City area. It's our role to deliver a safe and reliable power supply to the approximately 7000 residential connections and 1500 commercial and industrial connections located in a concentrated area of 24 square kilometres.

By way of brief background, NEL was formerly the Municipal Electricity Department or NCC Electricity Department. When the 1998 Electricity Industry Reform Act required that all electricity companies split into either the supply business (generating and/or retailing electricity) or the delivery business (operating the local electricity network), NEL decided to focus on its electricity delivery business. The electricity retailing side of the business was sold to TrustPower Limited.

NEL is jointly owned by Network Tasman and Marlborough Lines. The day-to-day operations are managed by a small team of executives, and all maintenance and capital work is outsourced to approved contractors by way of contestable tendering of works.

## Low Residential Fixed Line Charge Option

In May 2002 NEL introduced a new pricing option for residential consumers with low electricity use - Residential Economy.

If you use less than 600kWh per month or 8,000kWh per year, you might consider switching to this line charge option by contacting your electricity retailer.

If you have any questions about line charges please email us at [enquiry@nel.co.nz](mailto:enquiry@nel.co.nz) or telephone (03) 546 0486.

### RESIDENTIAL LINE CHARGES FROM 1 MAY 2002

Price Option	Unit Charges	Line Charges
<b>STANDARD Fixed</b>	cents/day	63.000
<b>Variable General</b>	cents/kWh	3.572
<b>Controlled Night Rate</b>	cents/kWh	1.968
	cents/kWh	1.025
<b>ECONOMY Fixed</b>	cents/day	15.000
<b>Variable General</b>	cents/kWh	6.280
<b>Controlled Night Rate</b>	cents/kWh	3.380
	cents/kWh	1.700

## Continuing Investment in Network Reliability and Performance

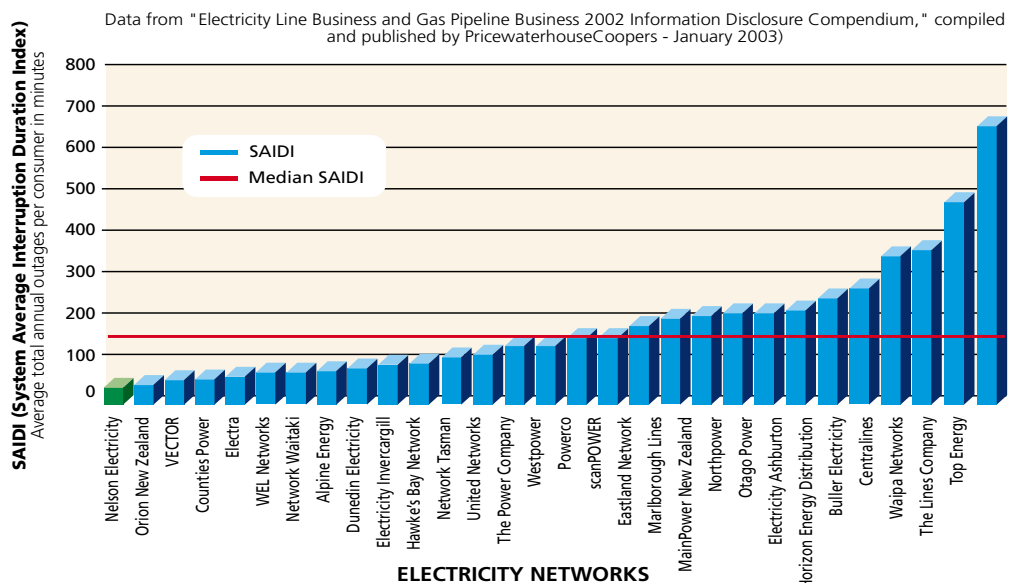
By any standard of comparison, Nelson Electricity has one of the most reliable electricity networks in New Zealand. For example, recent industry disclosure statistics reveal that Nelson Electricity currently has the lowest annual power outage time per consumer. As shown in the graph presented below, the country's average annual duration of power interruptions per consumer is approximately 150 minutes. Nelson Electricity achieved the top reliability ranking of all 29 line companies with an average total annual outage of less than 40 minutes per consumer.

This excellent result is, in part, a reflection of our continual investment in the network. The company

maintains an on-going process of maintenance and enhancement to improve reliability and quality of supply for our consumers.

Planning to accommodate the region's future electricity requirements is also a key area of focus. To this end Nelson Electricity is currently working with other electricity network companies operating in the top of the South Island in a co-operative planning programme designed to ensure there is enough electricity available to our regions to cater for long term growth requirements.

### NEW ZEALAND NETWORK RELIABILITY



## Resolving Disputes

Nelson Electricity is committed to providing you with a high standard of service and a reliable power supply. However, there may be a time when you are unhappy with our service. If this is the case you should contact us directly - either by telephone on (03) 546 9256 or, particularly if your complaint is of a detailed nature, it can be useful to provide written details of your complaint by writing to us at: Nelson Electricity Limited, PO Box 7083, Nelson.

In all such cases, Nelson Electricity will try to resolve the issue quickly. It is our aim to either reach a solution or (if the problem is more complex) provide you with an update within seven working days of receiving your complaint. If your complaint is not resolved within this time, we will inform you of the reason for the delay and work to a resolution within 20 working days.

If after this time we are still unable to reach a satisfactory resolution then you have the option of contacting the Electricity Complaints Commission.

The Electricity Complaints Commissioner Scheme was set up in 2001 as a one-stop shop where consumers can obtain help with settling complaints with their electricity company and its primary function is to facilitate resolution between the power company and the consumer if all other means of resolution have failed.

The Commissioner can consider only complaints arising from acts or omissions that first occurred on or after 1 October 2001. Her jurisdiction is also limited to claims of \$10,000 or less, unless the company agrees to extend this amount. The Commissioner cannot review and comment on the charges for services.

It is important to note that the Scheme requires consumers to first take their complaints to the company and it requires that we try to resolve them in the first instance using our in-house complaints process.

*PLEASE NOTE: If your enquiry or problem relates to invoicing or bill payments for electricity supply, you will need to contact your electricity retailer.*



electricity complaints commission

Electricity Complaints Commission  
PO Box 6144  
Marie Square  
WELLINGTON  
0800 22 33 40  
info@electricitycomplaints.co.nz  
www.electricitycomplaints.co.nz

*We hope that you have found this issue of "On the Wire" interesting and informative. If there are any specific topics you would like to see addressed in future issues, or you simply have comments about the newsletter in general, drop us a line at PO Box 7083, Nelson.*

## Profile

### Phil Goodall

Commercial Manager,  
Nelson Electricity Ltd



"I'm responsible for the day to day management of Nelson Electricity. My role is to co-ordinate the provision of business and management services for Nelson Electricity including asset management, network operations, line pricing, customer relations, asset valuation, financial reporting and all statutory obligations.

I've been involved in the electrical industry for more than 17 years, and during that time witnessed enormous change as successive governments have attempted to reform the industry to ensure the consumer gets a fair deal on electricity.

A fair deal can be quantified not only in terms of price but also in terms of the quality of supply. We are proud of our record on both counts. As a result of passing on the efficiency gains of the business to our customers, Nelson Electricity's line charges have fallen in real terms since 1998. Over the years our charges have always compared very favourably with those of other electricity networks in New Zealand; consistently falling within the average price range. At the same time we have continued to maintain one of the highest levels of network reliability and performance in New Zealand.

It is our continuing goal for this achievement to be maintained."

## Working Towards Cleaner Air

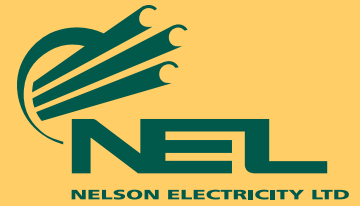
Recent publicity has highlighted the high level of Nelson City's air pollution. Nelson Electricity is currently working with the Nelson City Council to assist with the development of solutions that will help to improve the quality of our air over the long-term.

One joint initiative has targeted houses along the proposed Southern Link Road route, offering a line charge rebate for conversion from solid fuel heating to electricity, which is a low pollution heating option.

We are actively exploring other options with Council and have pledged our support to help meet Nelson's air quality objectives.

## Contact us

Nelson Electricity Limited  
63 Haven Road, PO Box 7083, Nelson, New Zealand.  
Phone (03) 546-9256, Fax (03) 546-0487  
Email enquiry@nel.co.nz  
Website www.nel.co.nz



## Check Before you Dig

Underground power cables pose a significant hazard for anyone digging in the immediate vicinity. There is a risk of serious injury if you strike a cable, and cable damage will more than likely cause loss of supply, not just to your property but also to neighbouring properties.

So if you're planning an excavation - whether on the road reserve or your own property e.g. digging post-holes for a new fence, it's important to ensure that you know exactly where the underground power cables are located.

All consumer enquiries about the location of cables or requests to have a contractor come and locate the cables for you should be directed to (03) 546 0486.

## Please Keep Your Trees Trimmed

Remember - if you are a tree owner, it is your responsibility to keep your trees appropriately trimmed.

Trees interfering with power lines are a potential source of electricity outage so it is in the interests of all to minimise the risk by ensuring that trees are not grown too close to power lines and that they are professionally trimmed.

This last point is especially important. Trimming trees that are located near power lines is potentially dangerous so we advise that you contract professional tree trimmers to do the job for you.

Where a tree poses such a hazard that it has to be removed Nelson Electricity will either assist with a portion of the felling costs of the tree or we will provide a replacement tree that grows to a lower height.

Nelson Electricity runs a tree trimming audit programme and advises tree owners of problem trees that need trimming. Tree owners are reminded that if they do not trim their trees within an appropriate timeframe then Nelson Electricity will organise the trees to be trimmed at the owner's expense.

A recent accident involving a child who fell from a tree into a power line, highlights the potential dangers of climbing trees that are located near power lines.