



20 May 2020

MEDIA RELEASE

Partnership providing virtual support during COVID-19

The Energy & Water Ombudsman NSW (EWON) is partnering with Hunter Water and Kurri Kurri Community Services to deliver its first virtual Bring Your Bills day and community expo, to support our community during COVID-19.

With the additional financial challenges faced by many during this unprecedented time, the event on Wednesday 27 May, will help connect people by phone and/or video with agencies to provide support with their energy and water bills, as well as a range of other community support services.

Energy & Water Ombudsman NSW, Janine Young said the virtual Bring Your Bills day is timely because customers will be starting to receive their first energy bills since the COVID-19 lock down started.

“Vulnerable customers were struggling to pay their energy bills well before the pandemic. Now more people may experience affordability issues as household incomes fall and energy use increases, with families working and schooling from home as winter sets in,” Ms Young explained.

Hunter Water’s Account Assistance team will be available for confidential phone and video appointments to discuss individual accounts and provide advice about payment options.

“We recognise this is a very challenging time for some of our customers and we want to do what we can to support them and alleviate any bill stress they may be experiencing,” said Executive Manager Customer Strategy and Retail, Victor Prasad.

“Hunter Water recently launched ‘We’re all in this together’ campaign to raise awareness of the range of assistance measures we have available. This includes extensions on accounts to give customers more time to pay their bills and interest free payment relief, as well as support for tenants to offset their water usage costs.”

In addition to providing support with energy and water bills, there will be agencies available to provide assistance with legal matters, phone and internet bills, and council rates, as well as counselling services.

The event will be held on Wednesday 27 May between 9am and 3pm. Appointments can be made by calling Kurri Kurri Community Services on 02 4937 4555.