

## Westpower Consumer Survey Results – a message from your community owned electricity distribution company Westpower

We recently surveyed 500 of our consumers to find out how much they understood about Westpower's line charges. The results provided an insight into what consumers understand well and the types of information we should be reminding consumers about.

Westpower is an electricity distribution business owned by the West Coast Electricity consumers. We deliver the electricity you buy from your electricity retailer (Trustpower, Contact, Pulse, Meridian etc) to your door through our power lines.

### How is Westpower paid for delivering your electricity?

Included in the bill you pay to your retailer is a charge to cover the cost of the poles and wires used in delivering that electricity. Your retailer collects that charge and pays it to Westpower.

**Westpower's residential consumers pay an average of \$2.35 per day for the use of those poles and wires. The majority of people surveyed thought this was good value for money.**

Most respondents (92%) felt that they were happy to continue to pay about the same or a bit less to have the power go off about the same number of times across the year.

### How is the line charge made up?

For residential and small business consumers we calculate the line charge as a mix of a small flat daily charge and a charge based on the volume of electricity you consume. The largest portion of the bill is the amount that varies depending on how much electricity you use.

**The majority of consumers didn't realise that their line charge varied depending on how much electricity they used. The vast majority felt that they would prefer to pay a fixed amount for their**

**line charge, or for it to vary only a little. They said that this would make it easier for them to budget.**

### What does this mean for future electricity line charges?

The results of the survey have provided an insight into consumers expectations of electricity line charges.

The Electricity Authority, who regulate line charges, are encouraging us to ensure that our charges are "cost reflective" and "service based". We need to do our best to balance our consumers wishes (i.e. fixed charges at current rates) against the requirements of the regulations we are required to work within.

Our next steps will be to model the types and mixes of charges we could use to achieve cost reflective prices, while also meeting the expectation of consumers.

### Other things the survey told us.

We also asked some questions about **Electric Vehicles and Solar Panels**. Interestingly most people surveyed told us that they would either definitely not or probably not purchase an electric vehicle, but if they did they would be happy for Westpower to control when the vehicle could be charged in return for a cheaper rate.

With regard to our question about the reasons why consumers were not installing solar panels on homes, the main reasons cited were cost, followed by a lack of understanding of the benefits and a view that they did not pay back enough of the investment.

### Tell us what you think.

**If you have a view you would like to share with us regarding the results of the survey or your electricity line charges generally, please email us at [survey@westpower.co.nz](mailto:survey@westpower.co.nz)**

## Discount to Consumers

West Coast Electric Power Trust Chairman Ian Hustwick and Westpower Chairman Mike Newcombe have confirmed that in December this year Westpower will share a discount of \$3m with its consumers. Mr Newcombe said that the Directors were pleased to be able to increase the discount from last year's level of \$2m.

## Westpower at a Glance

Westpower's Contracting and Consultancy businesses, who operate under the ElectroNet brand, are currently moving further into the North Island. This move not only takes us closer to our existing customers, but extends our ability to operate successful and profitable businesses whose profits are returned to the West Coast.

Christchurch based electrical engineering consultancy Mitton ElectroNet, which has an established branch in Wellington, is in the process of opening an office in Auckland.

On the contracting side an ElectroNet depot is currently being established in New Plymouth, in response to a second major substation build being undertaken for an electricity generator along with opportunities to support other existing customers in the central North Island.

The group of companies currently trades as follows:

