

# State Underground Power Program (SUPP) Frequently Asked Questions

## What is SUPP?

The State Underground Power Program (SUPP) replaces overhead power lines with underground power infrastructure. The Program is a partnership between the State Government, Western Power and local government and is administered by Energy Policy WA (formerly known as the Public Utilities Office).

## Why am I getting underground power?

A survey of property owners in the Collier, Manning and South Perth project areas was undertaken by the Public Utilities Office (now Energy Policy WA) in August 2016. The survey provided an indicative cost for each property and gave the opportunity to vote yes or no for SUPP.

Survey results from the Collier/Manning/South Perth areas indicated strong support for underground power and the areas were subsequently nominated and approved for State Underground Power Program (SUPP) Round Six.

## What if I don't want underground power?

The results of the abovementioned survey indicated that a representative majority of property owners are in favour of the proposal to install underground power and accepting the cost of the installation.

It is not possible for an individual property owner to 'opt out' of the project as all overhead distribution power lines will be removed.

## Your connection

### Will the underground power go all the way to my meter box?

Yes. The contractor carrying out the work will install a new private underground cable within each property and connect it to the meter box when the street main cable has been energised. The property owner becomes the owner of the private underground cable from the point that it leaves the pillar and is responsible for any future repair or relocation if required.

### What if I already have underground power to my property?

All properties are checked for the type of existing connection. Where underground connections between the front of the property and the meter box already exist, the charge will be discounted according to the type of connection.

The property owner will also be required to contribute to the network infrastructure cost referred to as the network charge.

### Will my power supply be interrupted during the project?

Yes. There will be a short period of outage when your property is converted from overhead supply to underground supply. Generally four to five hours is allowed for the changeover, however the actual outage time is often much shorter. You will be notified in advance when the changeover outage is planned.

### What if I need power on constantly because of a medical condition?

If a person who is registered as having a medical condition which necessitates constant power supply resides in your property, they will be given special consideration when the changeover is programmed. The resident or their carer will be contacted so that arrangements can be made to carry out the changeover without risk to the affected person's health or welfare.

### Will I get a new electricity meter?

No. Power will be supplied to the existing meter via underground cable. Unless the meter is malfunctioning, it will not be replaced as part of the project.

### Where will the green dome go?

The location of the green dome is determined during the design process. Green domes are located in a front corner of the property, just inside the front boundary adjacent to a side boundary. Usually every second property has a green dome installed, with two adjoining properties being served by the one dome.

## Financial information

### How much will I have to pay?

Your rate notice will detail the exact cost for underground power for your property.

The 2021/22 annual budget was presented to Council for adoption at the June Ordinary Council meeting where Council endorsed to include the State Underground Power Project service charge as part of the rate notice.

While the overall costs of the project have increased significantly since the initial estimate, at the September 2020 Meeting, the Council accepted a \$2.2 million COVID-19 financial relief package from Western Power for the Collier and Manning project areas. This package means that the **average** cost per single residence has remained the same as indicated in the 2016 survey.

### Can I pay by instalment?

Yes. Your service charge will be levied in five equal annual instalments and will be automatically included in your rate notice each year.

### When is my first instalment due?

Your first annual instalment is due by 7 September 2021. If the annual underground power instalment is not fully paid along with rates, waste and ESL charges on the 1st due date (7 September 2021) as per the rates notice, it will be subject to the same instalment system applied to all the charges listed on the annual rates notice.

### Are there any discounts for Pensioners or Seniors?

Pensioners and seniors who currently receive a rebate on their Council rates may be entitled to a rebate against their underground power charge in accordance with the State Government Pensioner and Seniors Rebate Scheme.

More information about the Scheme can be found on the [Department of Finance website](#).

### What if I can't afford to pay my underground power invoice?

Payment options will be detailed on your rate notice. If you are unable to meet these options please contact the City to discuss the matter further.

### What if I don't want to pay?

As with Council rates, the underground power service charge is a charge on the property. Outstanding charges on a property would be recoverable in court in the event that you choose not to pay. This is in accordance with section 6.56 of the Local Government Act 1995.

### What if I sell my property before I have paid my invoice in full?

As with outstanding rates, any amount outstanding (including instalments not levied) for your underground power service charge would be payable on settlement if the property is sold.

### Does the cost include the connection to my meter box?

Yes, the cost will include a new underground property service cable from the green dome near the front of your property to your meter.

### I already have underground power from the front of my property to my meter box, do I still have to pay?

All properties are checked to see if they have a suitable connection. Where connections between the front of the property and the meter box are already wholly or partially underground, the connection fee will be discounted according to the type of existing connection.

## General information

### Will the new street lights go in the same positions as the old ones?

Not necessarily. Street lighting has been designed in accordance with the current Australian Standard, so some new light poles will be positioned taking into account the location of existing infrastructure and street trees within the road reserve.

### When will the old poles and wires be removed?

This will be the last stage of works. The old poles and wires will be taken away after all properties have been connected to the underground power supply and testing has been carried out.

All overhead distribution cables will be removed and all timber power poles except those carrying transmission (high voltage) lines will be removed. Transmission lines will not be underground as part of the State Underground Power Program.

### How can I find out more?

For questions related to the timing of the projects, site reinstatement or construction related activities, please contact Western Power at [undergroundpower@westernpower.com.au](mailto:undergroundpower@westernpower.com.au).

For information about payment and billing, please contact the City on 9474 0777 or email us at [enquiries@southperth.wa.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@southperth.wa.gov.au).

Please visit the City's website for frequently asked questions and background information or **Sign up for the City's eNewsletter**.