



Hardship Utility Grant Scheme (HUGS)

The State Government is committed to assisting vulnerable Western Australian families and individuals. The Hardship Utility Grant Scheme (HUGS) started in August 2008 and supports people in financial hardship to pay their utility accounts, maintain connection to essential services (electricity, water and gas services) and avoid eviction.

When people have the intention, but not the financial capacity to pay their utility accounts without affecting their ability to meet their family’s basic living needs, they are considered to be in ‘utility’ financial hardship.

It is recognised that services, such as electricity, water and gas, are essential to the living standards of our community. Any deterioration of living standards can have potential direct impact on the health and wellbeing of both individuals and families.

Between August 2008 and December 2016, HUGS has provided 144,561 grants with a total value of \$54.1 million to help Western Australians in hardship pay their utility bills.

Statistics:

Electricity: A total of 101,588 grants to the value of \$41.12 million have been provided to customers facing hardship to provide assistance with electricity bills (Horizon Power and Synergy) since HUGS commenced in August 2008.

Year	Synergy		Horizon Power	
	Number of Approved Grants	Value of Approved Grants (to the nearest \$100 dollars)	Number of Approved Grants	Value of Approved Grants (to the nearest \$100 dollars)
2008 Total (Aug– Dec)	1,011	\$ 316,000	44	\$ 15,700
2009 Total	3,642	\$ 1,220,800	328	\$ 150,600
2010 Total	5,399	\$ 1,897,900	796	\$ 426,700
2011 Total	10,948	\$ 4,180,600	1,318	\$ 765,600
2012 Total	12,466	\$ 4,431,100	1,060	\$ 581,600
2013 Total	15,323	\$ 5,606,000	1,697	\$ 1,029,000
2014 Total	16,592	\$ 6,426,200	1,855	\$ 1,135,900
2015 Total	11,779	\$ 4,741,700	1,529	\$ 982,200
2016 Total	14,180	\$ 6,122,300	1,621	\$ 1,066,100
Total	91,340	\$ 34,962,600	10,248	\$ 6,153,400

Water: A total of 6,215 grants to the value of approximately \$2.19 million have been provided to customers in utility hardship to provide assistance with water bills (Water Corporation, Busselton Water and Aqwest) since HUGS commenced in August 2008. Water Corporation joined HUGS in April 2009. Busselton Water joined HUGS in April 2010. Aqwest joined HUGS in November 2010.

Year	Water Corporation		Busselton Water	
	Number of Approved Grants	Value of Approved Grants (to the nearest \$100 dollars)	Number of Approved Grants	Value of Approved Grants (to the nearest \$100 dollars)
2008 Total (Aug– Dec)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2009 Total	8	\$ 3,700	N/A	N/A
2010 Total	82	\$ 32,000	0	0
2011 Total	571	\$ 211,100	3	\$ 600
2012 Total	808	\$ 277,500	4	\$ 1,500
2013 Total	927	\$ 292,900	2	\$ 300
2014 Total	1,183	\$ 380,000	7	\$ 1,400
2015 Total	1,594	\$ 557,800	12	\$ 2,500
2016 Total	925	\$ 400,100	12	\$ 3,100
Total	6,098	\$2,155,100.00	40	\$9,400.00

Year	Aqwest	
	Number of Approved Grants	Value of Approved Grants (to the nearest \$100 dollars)
2008 Total (Aug– Dec)	N/A	N/A
2009 Total	N/A	N/A
2010 Total	1	\$ 100
2011 Total	5	\$ 1,100
2012 Total	8	\$ 2,200
2013 Total	9	\$ 1,600
2014 Total	13	\$ 3,400
2015 Total	19	\$ 6,000

2016 Total	22	\$ 7,700
Total	77	\$22,100.00

Gas: A total of 36,759 grants to the value of \$10.82 million have been provided to customers in utility hardship to provide assistance with gas bills (Alinta Energy, Esperance Gas Distribution Company (previously known as Worley Parsons) and Kleenheat Gas since HUGS commenced in August 2008. Alinta joined HUGS in August 2009, Esperance Gas Distribution Company in November 2011 and Kleenheat Gas in November 2013.

Year	Alinta Energy		Esperance Gas Distribution Company	
	Number of Approved Grants	Value of Approved Grants (to the nearest \$100 dollars)	Number of Approved Grants	Value of Approved Grants (to the nearest \$100 dollars)
2008 Total (Aug– Dec)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2009 Total	844	\$ 240,900	N/A	N/A
2010 Total	2,185	\$ 586,500	N/A	N/A
2011 Total	3,322	\$ 891,700	N/A	N/A
2012 Total	5,110	\$ 1,402,200	6	\$ 1,900
2013 Total	5,635	\$ 1,497,700	10	\$ 2,600
2014 Total	5,453	\$ 1,515,600	9	\$ 2,900
2015 Total	5,895	\$ 1,906,600	5	\$ 1,100
2016 Total	7,378	\$ 2,482,200	18	\$ 6,800
Total	35,822	\$10,523,400.00	48	\$15,300.00

Year	Kleenheat Gas	
	Number of Approved Grants	Value of Approved Grants (to the nearest \$100 dollars)
2008 Total (Aug– Dec)	N/A	N/A
2009 Total	N/A	N/A
2010 Total	N/A	N/A
2011 Total	N/A	N/A
2012 Total	N/A	N/A
2013 Total	5	\$ 1,700

2014 Total	138	\$ 45,100
2015 Total	260	\$ 88,900
2016 Total	486	\$ 149,000
Total	889	\$284,700.00

Regional breakdown: The number of grants is provided below for each calendar year since HUGS commenced in August 2008. It lists each regional area.

2008 (August – December only)	Region	Number of Approved Grants	Value of Approved Grants (to the nearest \$100 dollars)
	Gascoyne	3	\$ 1,000
	Goldfields-Esperance	13	\$ 4,000
	Great Southern	76	\$ 21,500
	Kimberley	23	\$ 9,200
	Metropolitan	57	\$ 15,800
	Midwest	41	\$ 13,100
	Peel	671	\$ 211,600
	Pilbara	1	\$ 400
	South West	122	\$ 38,300
	Wheatbelt	48	\$ 17,000
Total	1,055	\$ 331,900	

2009	Region	Number of Approved Grants	Value of Approved Grants (to the nearest \$100 dollars)
	Gascoyne	30	\$ 11,200
	Goldfields-Esperance	109	\$ 39,900
	Great Southern	218	\$ 70,300
	Kimberley	104	\$ 49,800
	Metropolitan	372	\$ 121,400
	Midwest	165	\$ 61,300
	Peel	3,129	\$ 1,014,200
	Pilbara	103	\$ 52,800
	South West	405	\$ 133,900
	Wheatbelt	187	\$ 61,100
Total	4,822	\$ 1,615,900	

Note: Peel is over-represented due to system error.

2010	Region	Number of Approved Grants	Value of Approved Grants (to the nearest \$100 dollars)
	Gascoyne	52	\$ 22,200
	Goldfields- Esperance	184	\$ 68,000
	Great Southern	249	\$ 88,200
	Kimberley	318	\$ 173,300
	Metropolitan	5,122	\$ 1,661,100
	Midwest	308	\$ 121,900
	Peel	926	\$ 291,500
	Pilbara	273	\$ 169,300
	South West	782	\$ 250,000
	Wheatbelt	249	\$ 97,400
	Total	8,463	\$ 2,942,900

2011	Region	Number of Approved Grants	Value of Approved Grants (to the nearest \$100 dollars)
	Gascoyne	185	\$ 77,800
	Goldfields- Esperance	387	\$ 156,800
	Great Southern	585	\$ 220,900
	Kimberley	500	\$ 305,500
	Metropolitan	10,500	\$ 3,665,700
	Midwest	549	\$ 239,900
	Peel	1,359	\$ 487,800
	Pilbara	427	\$ 286,600
	South West	1,175	\$ 404,000
	Wheatbelt	493	\$ 205,300
Total	16,160	\$ 6,050,300	

2012	Region	Number of Approved Grants	Value of Approved Grants (to the nearest \$100 dollars)
	Gascoyne	188	\$ 77,600
	Goldfields- Esperance	491	\$ 179,000
	Great Southern	596	\$ 210,800
	Kimberley	401	\$ 244,300
	Metropolitan	13,361	\$ 4,351,500
	Midwest	698	\$ 278,800
	Peel	1,519	\$ 496,900
	Pilbara	333	\$ 199,600
	South West	1,383	\$ 471,100
	Wheatbelt	492	\$ 188,500
	Total	19,462	\$ 6,638,100

2013	Region	Number of Approved Grants	Value of Approved Grants (to the nearest \$100 dollars)
	Gascoyne	176	\$ 75,000
	Goldfields- Esperance	667	\$ 259,700
	Great Southern	610	\$ 235,200
	Kimberley	709	\$ 477,200
	Metropolitan	15,916	\$ 5,215,500
	Midwest	880	\$ 353,500
	Peel	1,563	\$ 521,700
	Pilbara	583	\$ 368,000
	South West	1,675	\$ 581,300
	Wheatbelt	828	\$ 342,200
	Total	23,607	\$ 8,429,300

Please Note: Gascoyne and Midwest Regions were combined from July 2014 to align with the Local Regional Development Areas.

2014	Region	Number of Approved Grants	Value of Approved Grants (to the nearest \$100 dollars)
	Goldfields-Esperance	770	\$ 299,700
	Great Southern	690	\$ 273,600
	Kimberley	826	\$ 565,300
	Metropolitan	17,187	\$ 5,974,000
	Midwest-Gascoyne	1,032	\$ 448,400
	Peel	1,322	\$ 469,000
	Pilbara	600	\$ 376,100
	South West	1,794	\$ 656,900
	Wheatbelt	1,021	\$ 444,400
Total	25,242	\$ 9,507,400	

2015	Region	Number of Approved Grants	Value of Approved Grants (to the nearest \$100 dollars)
	Goldfields-Esperance	785	\$ 311,958
	Great Southern	523	\$ 213,217
	Kimberley	634	\$ 448,233
	Metropolitan	14,247	\$ 5,194,976
	Midwest-Gascoyne	771	\$ 345,784
	Peel	1,324	\$ 502,560
	Pilbara	548	\$ 372,965
	South West	1,512	\$ 568,469
	Wheatbelt	749	\$ 328,615
Total	21,093	\$ 8,286,777	

2016	Region	Number of Approved Grants	Value of Approved Grants (to the nearest \$100 dollars)
	Goldfields-Esperance	686	\$299,100
Great Southern	484	\$206,500	
Kimberley	736	\$519,300	
Metropolitan	17176	\$6,713,500	
Midwest-Gascoyne	981	\$432,800	
Peel	1655	\$681,500	
Pilbara	513	\$362,200	
South West	1886	\$767,400	
Wheatbelt	658	\$306,200	
Total	24,775	\$10,288,500.00	

Disclosure

The data provided in this report is taken from multiple sources including the HUGS database and previous reports supplied by the Department. The details in this report are a correct reflection of the data at the time the report was generated. 'Data cleansing' to increase the accuracy of the information in the HUGS database may alter the results of reports generated at a later date. This report may contain confidential information and is intended for the exclusive use of authorised persons only.

The above represent the total number of successful applications provided, not the total number of individuals who received a HUGS grant. Individuals can receive more than one grant in a calendar year and therefore may be represented more than once in the data.