

A rising star of hope



Quick & Easy Chocolate Mousse



Here to Help...



Reach for the stars



To manage the future take a look at the past

Take a short trip down memory lane and be reminded how much the world has changed. 10 years ago your home appliances might have included a PC, television, washing machine, microwave, fridge, VCR, DVD, mobile phone, a Hi-fi system and an air conditioner.

Now, in 2011, everything looks a little

different. You are more likely to have two LCD televisions, a DVD player, two game consoles, three mobile phones, two laptops, a PC, cable television, an entertainment system, washing machine and dryer, a dishwasher, microwave, air conditioner, a fridge and a freezer. And your energy use has gone up accordingly.

Between rising tariffs and our changing lifestyle, there is one fact that remains constant - power consumption still remains in the hands of householders. And that's the good news. Because even while our needs do change, simple measures can help better manage your energy costs through your use.

Synergy Service Standard Payments

Did you know that if your energy retailer fails to meet certain standards of service, you may be eligible for a service standard payment?

Synergy has a range of 'Service Standard Payments' that can be made to customers where our service delivery falls short of our Code of Conduct obligations.

Synergy's Service Standard Payments cover the following events:

Reconnections: Customers can claim from Synergy payments of \$60 a day for each day a reconnection is delayed beyond regulated timeframes, by Synergy or Western Power, up to a maximum of \$300.

Wrongful disconnection: In the event a customer's energy supply is wrongfully disconnected by Synergy or Western Power, Synergy is required to make payment to a customer of \$100 per day for each day the customer remains wrongfully disconnected.

Customer service: If a customer's written complaint is not acknowledged within 10 business days or responded to within 20 business days, a customer can claim a \$20 payment from Synergy.

Western Power Service Standard Payments

Did you know that you may be eligible for a service standard payment if Western Power is unable to meet certain standards of service?

Western Power has a range of payments that can be made to residential customers if its service falls short of legislated standards.

These payments include:

- A \$20 payment if a written complaint or query is not responded to within 20 business days.
- A \$20 payment when 72 hours advance notice of a power outage hasn't been issued.
- An \$80 payment if the electricity supply to your home was interrupted for more than 12 continuous hours.

For more information about your eligibility and how to apply for payments go to www.westernpower.com.au



It is a common misconception that appliances in standby mode do not consume power. Nothing could be further from the truth. Like a running tap requires water, an appliance in standby mode requires power. If you want to bring down costs, simply turn your appliances off at the wall.

There are many other ways to reduce energy consumption in the home. The Future Energy Alliance, a proactive partnership between Synergy and Western Power, was set up to help you do just that. Together we've launched the SwitchtheFuture campaign to give you a better understanding of energy efficiency, the savings you can make by being more energy efficient at home and to help you reduce your energy consumption. To find out more, visit our tips page at switchthefuture.com.au and click on the 'tips' tab in the menu.

switchthefuture.com.au

FUTURE ENERGY ALLIANCE

synergy energy solutions you can use

WIN 1 OF 10 HOYTS MOVIE VOUCHERS FOR A YEAR!

For your chance to win* 1 of 10 HOYTS movie passes valid for a year, simply answer the following two questions. You'll find the answers to these questions within this newsletter.

1. Name the two (2) companies that form the proactive Future Energy Alliance partnership.
2. What are the minimum & maximum star ratings under the standard star rating system?

Go online to enter at synergy.net.au/win before 14 February 2012 and follow the prompts.

Good Luck!

* Competition terms & conditions apply. Visit synergy.net.au/competitions for details.

Energy Efficiency over Summer

Here are a few simple tips to help keep your energy consumption down during the hot Summer months.

- Use a clothesline or rack instead of a dryer. The sun is free!
- Shade your windows with awnings or shutters, to help prevent the sun's rays heating your windows.
- Close blinds and curtains during the day to prevent heat entering your house. When the temperature drops in the evenings, make use of natural ventilation by opening windows.
- If you use your air conditioner, set the temperature at 24°C. Each degree you lower your thermostat to make your home colder, your energy consumption increases by about 10%.

- Keep your air conditioner filter clean and remember to turn off cooling systems overnight or when you are out and about.
- Have a BBQ on summer days or nights, and avoid increasing the room temperature inside your house by not cooking on the stove.
- Plant deciduous trees near windows to block out the summer sun.



SEE OVER FOR MORE



Reach for the stars

When you're choosing an electrical appliance for your home, you should consider which one would most likely keep your energy bills down. It's good to know how to compare one appliance with another and determine which is the most energy efficient.

Star Ratings provide us with easy ways to compare the energy efficiency of different devices. It's a simple and fair way of comparing the energy consumption of products that perform similar tasks. The more stars an appliance has, the higher its energy efficiency.

Under the current system for most products, the standard star rating system has a minimum of 1 star and a maximum of 6.

Since April 2010, the star rating system for refrigerators and air conditioners has allowed eligible products to earn up to 10 stars, which recognises highly efficient products as well as manufacturer advancement.

The higher the energy efficiency of a product, the cheaper it will be to run in your home relative to less efficient appliances. Another point to keep in mind is the size of the appliance. A larger air conditioner with a high star rating, for example, may still use more energy and cost more to run than a smaller unit. So choose the right size for your home and your family.

To find out more about the cost of running appliances, check out our interactive energy calculator at synergy.net.au/calculator

A rising star of hope

Bringing joy to a child can be a rewarding experience and Synergy feels extremely privileged to be partnered with the Starlight Children's Foundation.

As one of the Foundation's largest sponsors, Synergy is proud to be the first major sponsor of the Starlight Express Room at Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH).

This medical-free retreat is designed to create stimulation and smiles. Here, children are entertained with an assortment of activities, toys, arts & crafts, board games, video games and movies. It's a place where they can

forget their immediate challenges and instead focus on just having fun.

With thousands of children being admitted to PMH every year, the Starlight Express Room has given many young patients and their families the chance to escape for a while.

And Synergy encourages its staff to volunteer from time to time by helping out in the Starlight Express Room.

If you'd like to learn more about how Synergy stays involved, please visit our website at

synergy.net.au/sponsorships

Quick & Easy Chocolate Mousse

Serves: **8 people**

Ingredients:

- 450g dark chocolate (containing less than 60% cocoa)
- 1 litre thickened cream
- 4 egg yolks



1. Melt the chocolate in a dry bowl over a pot of boiling water. Don't let any water get into the chocolate.
2. Once the chocolate has completely melted remove from the stove and set aside for no longer than 3 minutes. The chocolate needs to cool, but only slightly.

3. Whisk the cream in a separate bowl until soft peaks form.
4. Whisk the egg yolks into the melted chocolate, followed by half the whisked cream. Make sure the chocolate, egg yolks and cream are well combined.
5. Using a large spoon, carefully fold in the remaining cream, working quickly to maintain an airy texture.
6. When complete, pour the chocolate mousse into individual cups/glasses or into one bowl.

Hints:

1. To save yourself some time, you can make the chocolate mousse one day before.
2. Top the chocolate mousse with cream, chopped nuts, shaved chocolate or fruit.

Here to help...

We recently chatted with Rick, a field-based credit management officer, who joined Synergy in February 2011 and has grown to become an important and valued member of the Credit Management team. The team includes phone (office based) and face-to-face (field based) credit officers who support Synergy's customers in financial hardship, to manage payment of their energy accounts. The team can also provide specialist case support to Synergy's customers in extreme hardship situations.

Here is some insight into Rick's role....

"Every day I visit customers to chat about payment plans, possible assessments for referral to HUGS (the Hardship Utility Grant Scheme) and to provide help and support. I see every customer encounter as a new opportunity to reach out and give someone that extra lift, and to make

a difference. The Credit Management team is a family of very positive people. We all want the same thing, happy customers and a happy work environment."

Synergy has a range of options to assist customers who are experiencing genuine payment difficulties and financial hardship. If you require assistance it is very important that you contact Synergy at your earliest opportunity when you first experience payment difficulties or financial hardship.

If you need any assistance from Synergy or have any queries relating to payment plans or HUGS please visit synergy.net.au/doc/keeping_connected.pdf to view our "Keeping Connected" brochure. You can also call 1800 208 254 (mobiles charged at applicable rates) or 13 13 53 (within Western Australia) 7am to 7pm (WST), Monday to Friday (except on public holidays).

A recent survey conducted by Synergy found that...



Northern suburbs residents are more likely to leave appliances on when not in use. They're also more likely to leave the air conditioner on all night.



Eastern suburbs residents are more likely to leave appliances on standby and use the clothes dryer on sunny days.



63% of Western Australians within the state's main grid believe in global warming and climate change; the sceptics are more likely to be men.

Derived from February 2011 Omnibus survey.