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Company cuts power bill spending by \$8700 by shopping around



SAVING MONEY: Orange businessman Mark Thompson.

Orange businessman Mark Thompson has saved \$8700 on his power bills by shopping around.

Mr Thompson, who runs engineering firm Orange Precision Metalcraft, said his bill was almost cut in half after using a new comparison deal being promoted by the NSW Business Chamber.

"Energy costs have been horrific," he said.

Mr Thompson said they moved into their Leewood Drive premises four years ago and signed a deal with a major retailer that should have brought energy costs down to 21 cents a kilowatt hour.

"But the prices then started to go through the roof and the next minute we are paying 36 cents a kilowatt hour," he said.

Mr Thompson said last year's bill was about \$22,500.

"This year we're expecting a bill of about \$13,800. So we've come essentially from 39 cents a kilowatt hour back down to 24 cents per kilowatt hour. That's a saving of about \$8700," he said.

Western NSW Business Chamber regional manager Vicki Seccombe said the NSW Business Chamber had launched its 5in5 campaign to help businesses and residents cut their power bills.

She said people needed to go online to the NSW Business Chamber's website to try the free service which compares rates offered by various power companies.

"Approximately 70 per cent of large market [energy] contracts end on December 31 and if a business lets their contract lapse it will go into default rates, which could mean paying as much as 40 cents a kilowatt at peak," she said.

"Also contracts priced in December often carry higher rates so we are encouraging businesses to act before December so as to avoid the peak pricing period."

Ms Seccombe said a St Vincent de Paul report had identified regional and rural NSW residents were hit hardest by power bills.

"We are keen to ensure we are helping our region's businesses and residents," she said.

"We are facing one of the most challenging times in the Australian electricity market.

"Higher prices are placing an enormous strain on business viability and household budgets. The current situation is unacceptable and unsustainable."

She said when they trialled the comparison scheme they discovered 80 per cent of businesses that signed up were not on the best deal.

Ms Seccombe said the chamber believed companies could save about an average of about \$1800 on their annual energy bills.