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West Coast households missing out on power savings

The West Coast has the lowest electricity switching rates in the country, despite having some of the highest potential savings available, according to new figures released by the Electricity Authority.

The figures estimate last year just under 2,000 households switched providers and could have saved \$3,327,877 or an average annual saving of \$224.

Electricity Authority Chief Executive Carl Hansen is urging West Coast residents to make the most of the high potential savings, and check their deal. "Despite having the lowest electricity consumption in New Zealand, the West Coast also has high savings available. We encourage all households to take advantage of this," he says.

"The New Zealand electricity market is very competitive. There is a wide range of deals and plans available to suit different families and lifestyles," he says. "There are up to nine different retail brands to choose in the West Coast, including one new provider which entered the market last year.

"It's important consumers realise that their choice of retailer makes no difference to the reliability of their electricity supply – those outcomes are affected by the performance of their local distribution network and by Transpower, and is the same regardless of which retailer consumers choose."

Across New Zealand we continue to see high switching rates. New figures from the Electricity Authority show that over 385,000 households switched electricity providers in 2014. If all eligible Kiwi households had switched to the cheapest electricity provider during the year they could have collectively saved \$281 million or an average of \$162 per household.

"As winter really starts to take a hold, now is the right time to check your plan," says Hansen. "Even if you've switched providers in the past, we encourage all consumers to regularly check, as offers change. Heading to the *What's My Number* website makes this easy."

"Checking your deal doesn't mean you have to change plans, and it doesn't have to be about finding the cheapest provider. Sometimes it's just a matter of knowing what alternative services are being offered and what other incentives might be right for you," Hansen says.

Changing electricity suppliers is very straightforward. A recent Electricity Authority [survey](#) of consumers showed that 90% found it easy. Once you have identified the potential savings on What's My Number you can simply click through to Consumer NZ's Powerswitch website to compare your options and start the switching process. Alternatively, you can call the new provider who will manage the change for you.

What's My Number is run by the Electricity Authority in partnership with Consumer NZ, and puts choice in consumers' hands by helping them to shop around. To find out if you're getting the best deal for your power, visit www.whatsmynumber.org.nz.

ENDS

Northland

- 20% of consumers switched providers in 2014
- Average savings of \$133 per household

Taranaki

- 20% of consumers switched providers in 2014
- Average savings of \$161 per household

Tasman

- 14% of consumers switched providers in 2014
- Average savings of \$143 per household



West Coast

- 13% of consumers switched providers in 2014
- Average savings of \$224 per household
- Customers have between 8-9 brands to choose from

Southland

- 17% of consumers switched providers in 2014
- Average savings of \$130 per household

Auckland

- 21% of consumers switched providers in 2014
- Average savings of \$136 per household

Waikato

- 22% of consumers switched providers in 2014
- Average savings of \$147 per household

Bay of Plenty

- 21% of consumers switched providers in 2014
- Average savings of \$318 per household

East Coast

- 28% of consumers switched providers in 2014
- Average savings of \$218 per household

Hawke's Bay

- 18% of consumers switched providers in 2014
- Average savings of \$115 per household

Manawatu & Wanganui

- 20% of consumers switched providers in 2014
- Average savings of \$150 per household

Wellington & Wairarapa

- 22% of consumers switched providers in 2014
- Average savings of \$177 per household

Nelson

- 21% of consumers switched providers in 2014
- Average savings of \$185 per household

Marlborough

- 17% of consumers switched providers in 2014
- Average savings of \$172 per household

Canterbury

- 17% of consumers switched providers in 2014
- Average savings of \$150 per household

Otago

- 18% of consumers switched providers in 2014
- Average savings of \$188 per household

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Additional statistical breakdowns

Sub region	Switches	Switch rate	Average annual savings (\$)	Potential savings (\$)
Buller	577	14%	\$222	\$888,064
Central West Coast	1,354	12%	\$225	\$2,438,567