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Over 50% of Wellington households switch electricity providers

New figures from the Electricity Authority estimate over half of Wellington households have switched electricity providers in the last five years. The figures show last



year over 42,000 Wellington households switched providers, and could have saved \$34,381,466 or an average annual saving of \$177.

Electricity Authority Chief Executive Carl Hansen is pleased so many local consumers are exploring their options. "Wellington has the third highest switching rates in the country. The region has also seen the average savings available increase by 33 percent, which is great news for consumers" says Hansen.

"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. "We encourage all consumers to shop around.

"In the Wellington region alone we saw three new retailers enter the market last year, offering locals more options than ever before. The new brands available to Wellington residents are Flick Energy, Opunake Hydro and King Country Energy. Local consumers now have up to 19 brands to choose from, depending on their network."

"Its 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.

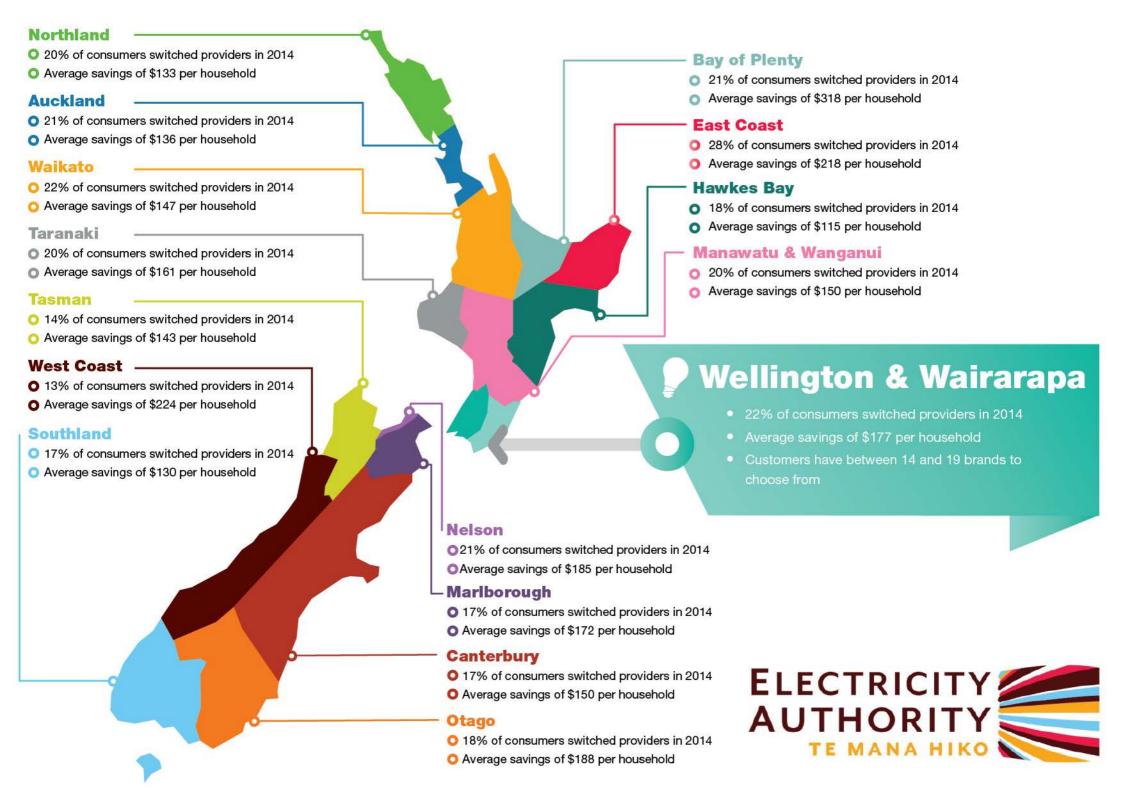
"As winter really starts to take a hold, now is the right time to check your plan," says Hansen. "Even if you've switched providers in the past, we encourage all consumers to regularly check, as offers change. Heading to the *What's My Number* website makes this easy."

"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 <u>survey</u> 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.

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Additional statistical breakdowns

Sub region	Switches	Switch rate	Average annual savings (\$)	Potential savings (\$)
Wairarapa	3,795	19%	\$166	\$3,294,422
Kapiti and Horowhenua	6,413	16%	\$75	\$2,923,242
Wellington	34,299	23%	\$194	\$29,022,417