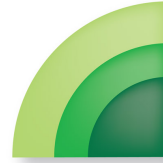




## Border Mail (Albury Wodonga)

Thursday 7/08/2008

Page: 17  
Section: General News  
Region: Albury-Wodonga VIC, AU  
Circulation: 25499  
Type: Regional  
Size: 156.78 sq.cms.



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# Energy price site is out

**ELECTRICITY**  
By SARAH DEAN

RIVERINA electricity supplier Country Energy is refusing to be part of a new website which is designed to allow consumers to compare gas and power prices across Australia.

Switchselect.com lets householders swap utilities suppliers and receives an administration fee if consumers take up its service.

It has found Wodonga and Wangaratta families with two children are paying \$1373 annually for 7500kW-a-day-usage, almost \$200 more than what they would be forking out in parts of Sydney.

But residents in Albury trying to use the website will find their postcode is invalid when they attempt to discover their costs after Country Energy declined to be involved.

"Some companies have asked to be taken off the website," said website co-founder Leon Hayes.

A Country Energy spokeswoman yesterday declined to say why the company had asked to be withdrawn.

"If any of our customers has a query about their account and our prices

then we encourage them to call us and we will help them," the spokeswoman said.

But Mr Hayes said Country Energy had told him it wanted to wait and watch how the website works.

"We are working closely with Country Energy to make sure we get the right content to be able to put it on the website," he said.

"Some customers are on what they call an obsolete tariff which means if they were to leave the obsolete tariff they might end up paying more with another company.

"Only Country Energy knows those details so it's up to us to have a proven system that allows us to understand those tariffs."

Mr Hayes said with Australians hurting under mortgage stress he believed people wanted the best deal for their money.

"We estimate a family of two adults and two children could potentially save at least \$150 a year on its power bills by shopping around," he said.

"At a time when consumer confidence is dropping rapidly and petrol prices are skyrocketing, it's vital that people shop around."