

Dear EECA,

I welcome the green paper “Unlocking the potential of flexible energy use through residential appliances” and fully support accelerating demand flexibility to build a resilient, affordable, and near-100% renewable electricity system by 2030.

New Zealand already generates 80–85% renewable electricity, but to reach 95–100%, we must manage increasing demand from electrified transport and heating. Without smart solutions, we risk relying on fossil-fuel generation during dry years or peak times—undermining climate goals and affordability.

Smart technologies—like EV chargers, heat pumps, and water heaters—can shift energy use to times of high renewable supply (e.g., midday solar or windy periods), reducing grid strain and avoiding costly infrastructure upgrades.

To ensure this transition is effective and equitable, I urge EECA to:

1. Mandate smart functionality in all new appliances through updated MEPS, ensuring they can respond to grid signals.
2. Prioritise low-income and rental households with co-funded retrofit programmes, so no one is left behind.
3. Accelerate V2G (vehicle-to-grid) and time-of-use tariff trials, turning EVs into grid assets.
4. Integrate flexibility into building codes, requiring smart-ready homes in all new builds.
5. Launch public education campaigns to explain how flexibility lowers bills and emissions.

The time for voluntary action has passed. With Cabinet already advancing energy efficiency standards, stronger regulation and targeted support are now essential to achieve a truly clean, clever, and fair energy future.

Ngā mihi,  
Graham Cowle MSS  
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Manuwatu