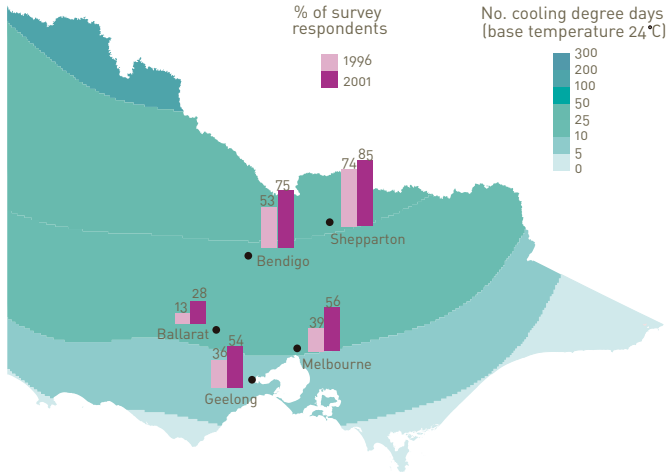


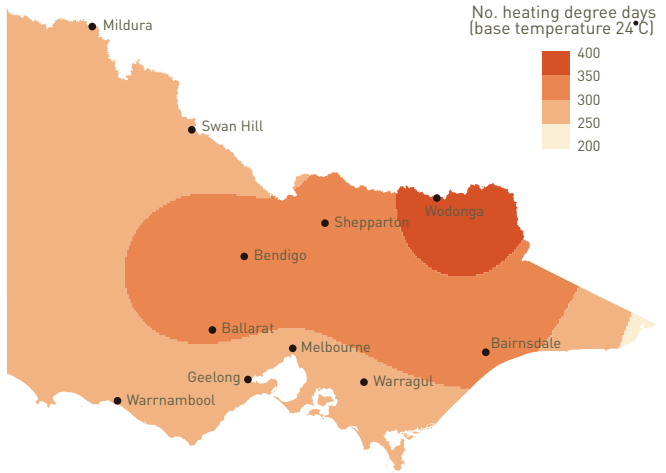
Energy consumption and climate

Cooling days* in January and air conditioning usage for selected cities¹



* Cooling degree days are a measure which combines average temperature data for January with a measure of human "comfort" temperature.

Heating degree days* in July¹



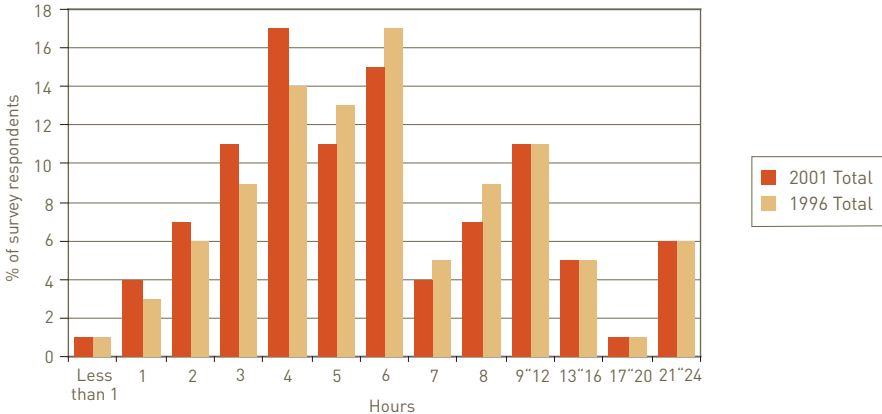
* Heating degree days are a measure which combines average temperature data for July with a measure of human "comfort" temperature.

Heating and cooling

A large proportion of domestic energy use is for heating and cooling. The Victorian climate is conducive to higher heating demand compared to most of Australia. The average number of 'heating days' (an indicator which combines temperature data with a human 'comfort' measure) also shows variation within the state with areas in the north east experiencing higher number of days for which heating might be used.

However, climate alone does not determine energy demand. For example, the use of air conditioners has increased over the past decade without any major change in the number of cooling days measured. In 1996, 13% of households used their air conditioner at least once a day in summer. By 2001 this had risen to 26% and more than half of Victoria's households had air conditioning in their home according to a Department of Human Services survey (56% in Melbourne and 61% in the regional cities surveyed). Increasing use of air conditioners has created historically high peak electricity use in summer in recent years and this in turn has contributed to pressure on energy generation capacity during summer months.¹

Usage (Hrs) of main heater in colder months¹



Sources ¹Australian Bureau of Meteorology 2005; DHS 2002 *Victorian Utility Consumption Survey*