

# Switched On

## Keep Warm, Save Money

A guide to your gas and electricity



# Your Gas or Electricity Account

## Bills

- Always open your bills and check them. Get someone to read them with you if you are not sure what things mean.
- If there is anything wrong with your bill let the gas or electricity company know as soon as possible. See page 4 for tips on how to do this.
- If it does not ask you to pay an amount then it is a statement, not a bill.
- Keep all your bills in one place in case you need them later.

## Meter Readings

- Learn how to read your gas or electricity meter. Ask someone to show you how to do it.
- If your bill is estimated, your gas or electricity company has guessed how much gas or electricity you have used. Take a meter reading.
- Call your gas or electricity company to tell them what the reading is.
- If somebody comes to read your meter you should let them in. But ask them to show you proof of identity first.
- When you move in or out of a property, always note down your gas and electricity meter readings.



## Payment plans

- If you have a payment plan for your gas or electricity you have to stick to it.
- If you can't make your payments tell your gas or electricity company straight away.

## A typical gas or electricity bill

These are the things you can expect to see on your gas or electricity bill.

## Name/Address

Check that your name and address are right.

Mr. A. Smith  
21/2 Any Street  
Anytown  
AN23 2ST

### Customer Helpline/Contact Number

This is usually found on the left hand side of the front page of your bill.

Customer Helpline:  
0155 606 2000

## Billing Dates

If you have just moved in, check that the bill does not cover any dates when you were not living in the house.

Your Electricity/Gas Bill  
Bill Period 1/1/2018 - 1/4/2018

## Meter Serial Number

The meter serial number on the bill should be the same as the number printed on your meter. If the number on your bill is different call your gas or electricity company to give them the right number.

Meter P123456S

Previous  
12345

Present  
13345E

Units  
1000

Pence  
Per Unit  
15.27p

Total

£152.70

## Standing or Fixed Charge

You need to pay this even if you have not used any gas or electricity.

Fixed Charge 98 days @ 26.01p  
VAT @ 5%

£25.49

£8.91

**Meter Point Reference Number or M Number (gas only).** This is usually

printed near the bottom of the bill, sometimes on the back page.

Brought Forward Balance  
Payments  
Amount To Pay

£300.00

£55.00

**£432.10**

**Supply or MPAN number (electricity only).** This is usually printed in two boxes on the bill, starting with a large S. If you have storage heaters you can have two different supply numbers.

M Number 1234567899

S	01	838	101
	18	0002 1928	285

## Your gas or electricity company

The name of your gas or electricity company is usually at the top of your bill.

### Account or Customer Reference Number

This is usually at the top of your bill.

### Estimated Readings (E)

Meter readings are often estimated. If the 'present reading' has an E at the end, take a meter reading and call your gas or electricity company to give the reading to them as soon as possible.

### Amount Used

The amount of gas or electricity that you have used is usually shown on the bill next to the meter readings.

### The brought forward balance

If you did not pay all of your last bill the money you still owe is included in the total amount due.

## Payments

Payments that you have made are usually shown on the bill. Check them against your receipts.

## Total Due

This amount is how much you need to pay. Check what it says. If the total to pay has a minus sign (-) next to it, or the letters CR, you do not need to pay anything.

## Talking to your gas or electricity company



- Get ready to make the call to your gas or electricity company. You will need:
  - ☐ The customer helpline/contact phone number (this is on your bill, see pages 2 and 3)
  - ☐ Your name and address
  - ☐ Your account number (this is on your bill)
  - ☐ A meter reading (see front page)
  - ☐ Think about what you want to say before you make the call and write it down.
- You may have to listen to a recorded message before you speak to an advisor. Listen to what it says and do what it tells you.
- At the end of the call check what has been agreed with the advisor.
- Write down the date, the name of person you spoke to, and what they said will happen.

## If you have a problem

- Phone the company and tell them about the problem (follow the steps above).
- If they do not put things right get help. You can get help from your energy advisor or Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB).
- If they still do not put things right you can complain. Ask your gas or electricity company or your energy advisor how to make a complaint.

## Useful Contact

Call Changeworks' Affordable Warmth Services - freephone from a landline or mobile on **0800 870 8800**

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# Gas Radiator Central Heating

**This guide helps you set the controls on your gas central heating.  
This means that you will get the heat you need and still save money.**

## How gas central heating works

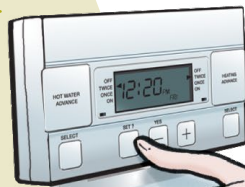
A boiler uses gas to heat water. The hot water is pumped around your radiators and heats each room. The boiler also heats the hot water that comes out of your taps.

Your gas central heating is controlled by:

- A timer or programmer
- Thermostats

### Timers & Programmers

Your timer or programmer switches your heating and hot water on and off at times that suit you.



### Thermostats

Thermostats keep the boiler, radiators and hot water as hot or as cold as you want them.

There are four kinds:

- Boiler thermostat
- Room thermostat
- TRVs
- Hot water tank thermostat

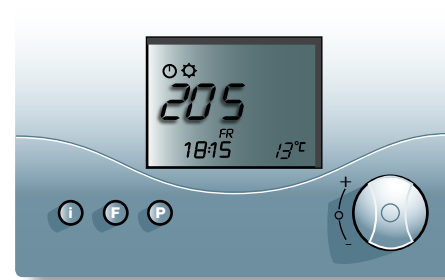


## A typical gas central heating system

### 1 Boiler Thermostat

The boiler thermostat controls the heat of the water going from the boiler to the radiators and hot water tank. It also stops the boiler from overheating.

The boiler thermostat is usually marked '1-9' or 'min-max'.



**How to use it:**  
Set the boiler thermostat to maximum.

### 2 Room Thermostat

The room thermostat controls the heat in your whole home. When your home is cold the thermostat tells the boiler to heat the radiator. When your home is warm enough it tells your boiler to stop heating the radiators.

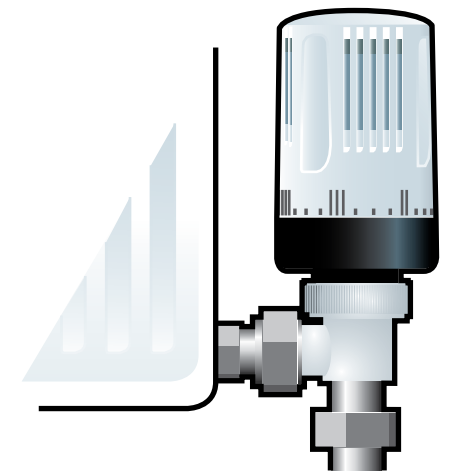


**How to use it:**  
Set the room thermostat between 18-21°C  
**Do not use the room thermostat to turn the heating on or off. Use your programmer.**

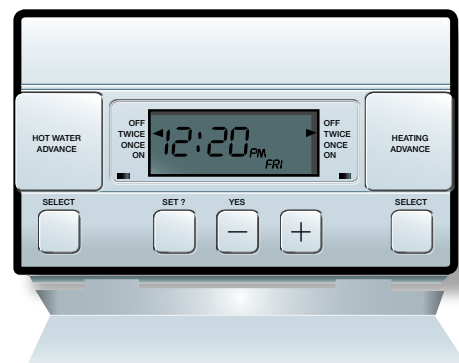


### 3 TRV

A TRV is a thermostat on a radiator. They let you control the heat in each room.



**How to use it:**  
Turn the TRV down when you are not using the room.

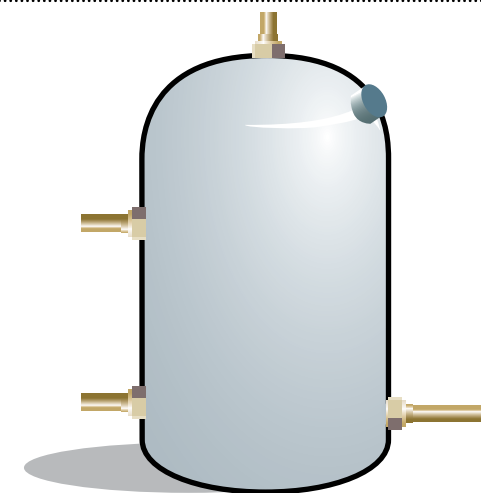


### 5 Timer or Programmer

Your timer or programmer switches your heating and hot water on and off at times that suit you. By using your programmer you only use the gas you need.

**How to use it:**

- Set the clock to the right time
- Programme your heating to come on when you are in the house. Programme it to go off when you are out or when you are asleep. For many people, it is enough to heat the home for a few hours in the morning and for a bit longer in the evening. If you feel cold, turn your heating on.
- Programme your hot water to come on when you need it.



**How to use it:**  
If your hot water tank has its own thermostat you should set it at 60°C.

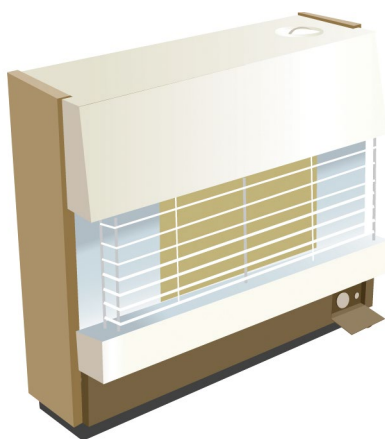
### 4 Hot Water Tank Thermostat

The gas boiler is sometimes connected to a hot water tank and this heats your hot water.

## Different kinds of boiler

### Gas Fire with Back Boiler

If you have a gas fire with a back boiler it will look like this. You will find the boiler thermostat under a panel below the gas fire.



### Combi Boiler

If you have a combi boiler it will look like this. A combi boiler does not use a hot water tank. The boiler heats up water when you turn on the hot water tap.



## Gas Safety

Gas is very safe to use for heating your home. But, if you smell gas, call National Grid on **0800 111 999** to report it.

If you rent your home, your landlord has to arrange a gas safety check each year.

If you own your home, you can get a gas safety check. Contact a Gas Safe Register (Corgi) engineer (ask to see their Gas Safe Register ID card) or speak to your energy advisor.

## Useful Contacts

Changeworks' Affordable Warmth Services  
**0800 870 8800**

National Grid **0800 111 999**

Home Energy Scotland  
**0808 808 2282**

Check your engineer is Gas Safe registered.

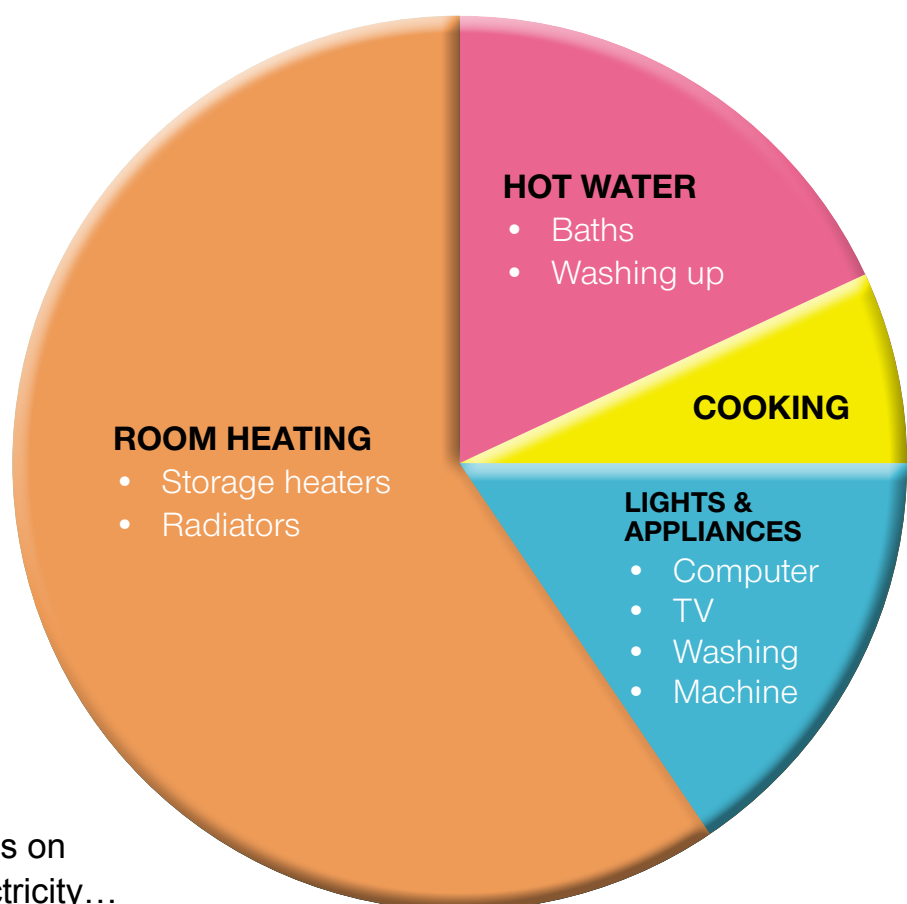
**[www.gassaferegister.co.uk](http://www.gassaferegister.co.uk)**  
or **0800 408 5500**

# Save Money on your Gas and Electricity

There are three ways to spend less on your gas and electricity:

1. Use less gas and electricity
2. Get cheaper gas and electricity
3. Find out about what benefits or grants you can claim

Here is how most people use gas and electricity in their homes



Look inside to see our top tips on how to use less gas and electricity...



# Use less gas and electricity

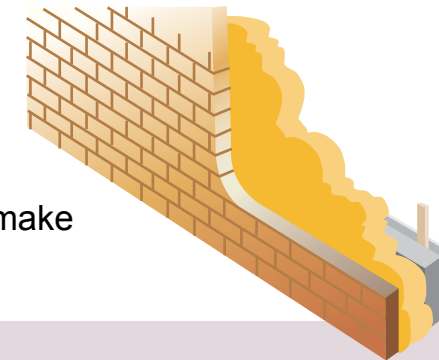
## Loft space

- Make sure your loft is insulated. Phone **0808 808 2282** to find out more information about this.



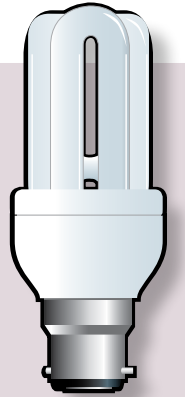
## Exterior wall

- If you have cavity walls, make sure they are insulated.

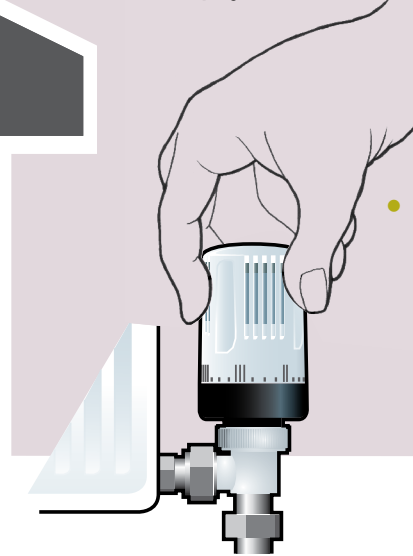


## Bedroom

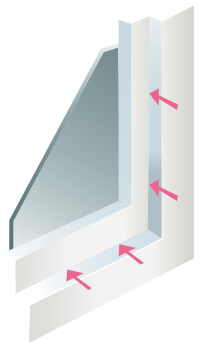
- Switch off lights in empty rooms



- Know how to use your heating properly – see Gas Radiator, and Storage Heater sheets

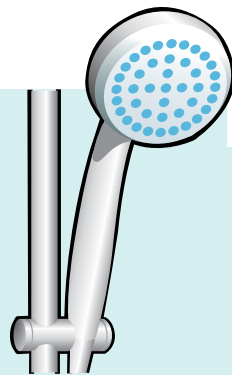


- Make sure windows and doors are draught proofed.



## Bathroom

- Use showers instead of baths
- Take shorter showers



## Kitchen

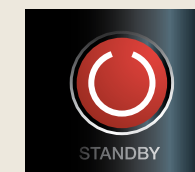
- Wait until you have a full load of washing before using your washing machine
- Set your machine to between 30 and 40 degrees



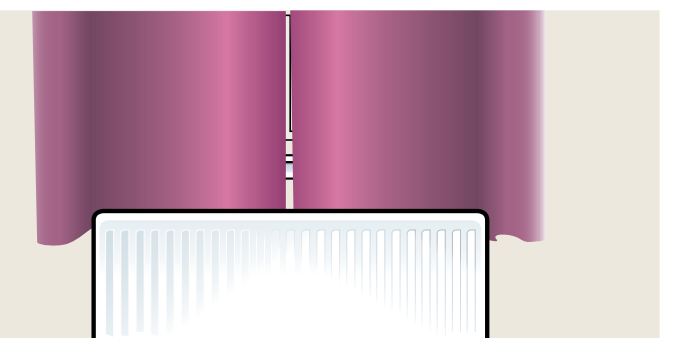
## Living Room



- Look for this logo when you buy new appliances



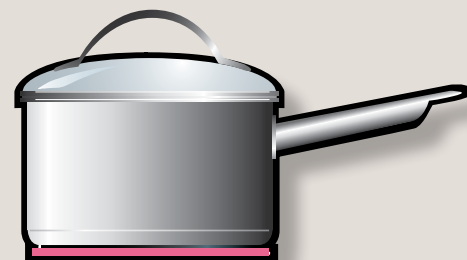
- Turn electrical appliances off – don't leave them on standby.



- Close your curtains at night
- Don't block your heaters.



- Only fill the kettle with as much water as you need



- Cook with lids on pans and match the hob ring size to the pan size

## Get cheaper gas and electricity

If you are having trouble paying for your gas and electricity here are some things you can do:

- Find out if your gas and electricity company can give you a cheaper rate
- Find out if you can save money by changing how you pay - see 'Ways to Pay...' advice sheet.

**Speak to your gas and electricity company**

- Find a cheaper gas and electricity company

**Check online or phone your gas and electricity company to see what they can offer**

## Find out about what benefits or grants you can claim

- Make sure you are getting all the benefits you can claim. Speak to your local **Citizens Advice Centre** or **energy advisor** - see the Useful Contacts below.
- Grants are available for insulation and new heating systems.
- Phone **Changeworks' Affordable Warmth Services team** on **0800 870 8800**

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## Useful Contacts

Changeworks' Affordable Warmth Services **0800 870 8800**  
National Debtline **0808 808 4000**

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# Your Electricity Pre-payment Meter

1. A key meter is an electricity pre-payment meter.

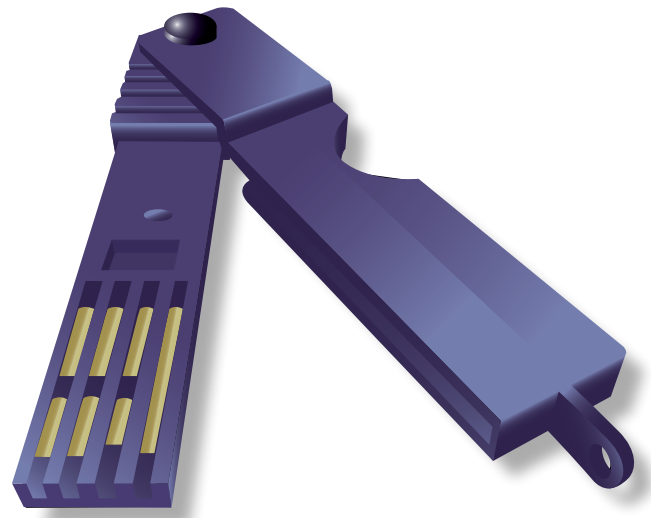
2. You need to put money on to your key at a PayPoint.



3. When you put your key into the meter your electricity will flow.

4. Key meters let you pay for electricity as you use it.

# How to pay



1. Each meter has its own key.

2. The key needs to be topped up with credit.

3. You can do this by going to any shop or post office where you see the PayPoint sign.

4. Hand your key to the assistant and ask for the amount of credit you want to buy. For example, £5 or £10.



5. Keep the receipt.



6. Put the key into the key slot on your meter.

7. Leave the key in the meter, or somewhere safe.

## IMPORTANT!

- You can only use **your** key in **your** meter.
- Without your key you cannot top up your meter.



## The information on your key meter

The **blue button** on your key meter lets you move between different screens. The screens are labelled from **A** to **T**. By pressing the blue button you can move through all the screens. Ask your energy advisor for the advice sheet on information screens.

### Important screens

DISP	CHARGE/WEEK
F	£005.62

Screen **F** shows you how much the meter will take each week for:

- Debt repayment (if you have any)
- Standing charges (if you have any)

DISP	DEBT
S	£038.92

Screen **S** tells you how much total electricity debt you have.

DISP	DEBT	CHARGE/WEEK
T	£003.35	

Screen **T** tells you how much of your debt you are paying off each week.

- If you are on benefits and owe money, the amount you pay to reduce your debt could be set as low as £3.75\* a week.

### Emergency credit

Your key meter has £5 emergency credit on it. This can be used if you run out of money, but you have to pay it back. Look at **Screen A** on your meter:

DISP	DEBT
A	£003.01 <b>E</b>

If you see a flashing **E** here it means you are running out of credit.

DISP	DEBT
A	£004.50 <b>E</b>

If the **E** is not flashing your meter is using emergency credit.

- If you let your emergency credit run out, your electricity will turn off. This is called **self – disconnection**.
- Even when you have self – disconnected your electricity you will still have to pay for your standing charges and any debt. This means that the money you owe will still build up even though the electricity is off.

**REMEMBER!** When you top up your key you have to pay back the emergency credit and any charges that have built up first.

\* Correct at time of printing

## Moving into a new house

There is a key meter in the house.  
Is there a key?

**YES**

- Put the key into the meter.
- Check screens **S** and **T** for any debt.
- Is there any debt on Screen **S** or **T**?

**NO**

- Phone your electricity company.
- They will arrange for you to get a new key from a local shop.

**YES**

- Phone your electricity company.
- They will arrange to reset your meter back to zero at a local shop.

**NO  
DEBT**

- You can use the key to top up.
- Phone your electricity company and tell them you are a new customer.

## Useful Contact

Changeworks' Affordable Warmth Services  
**Freephone 0800 870 8800**

## Moving out of a house

- Leave the key for the meter in the property.
- Phone your electricity company and tell them that you are moving.

## Important Information

**Contact your electricity company if:**

- Your key is broken
- You lose your key
- Your meter says **Error**

If you are away from your home for a long time, the meter can still build up charges. Normally you have to pay these before you can use electricity. Speak to your electricity company or energy advisor about paying for these charges over a longer period of time.

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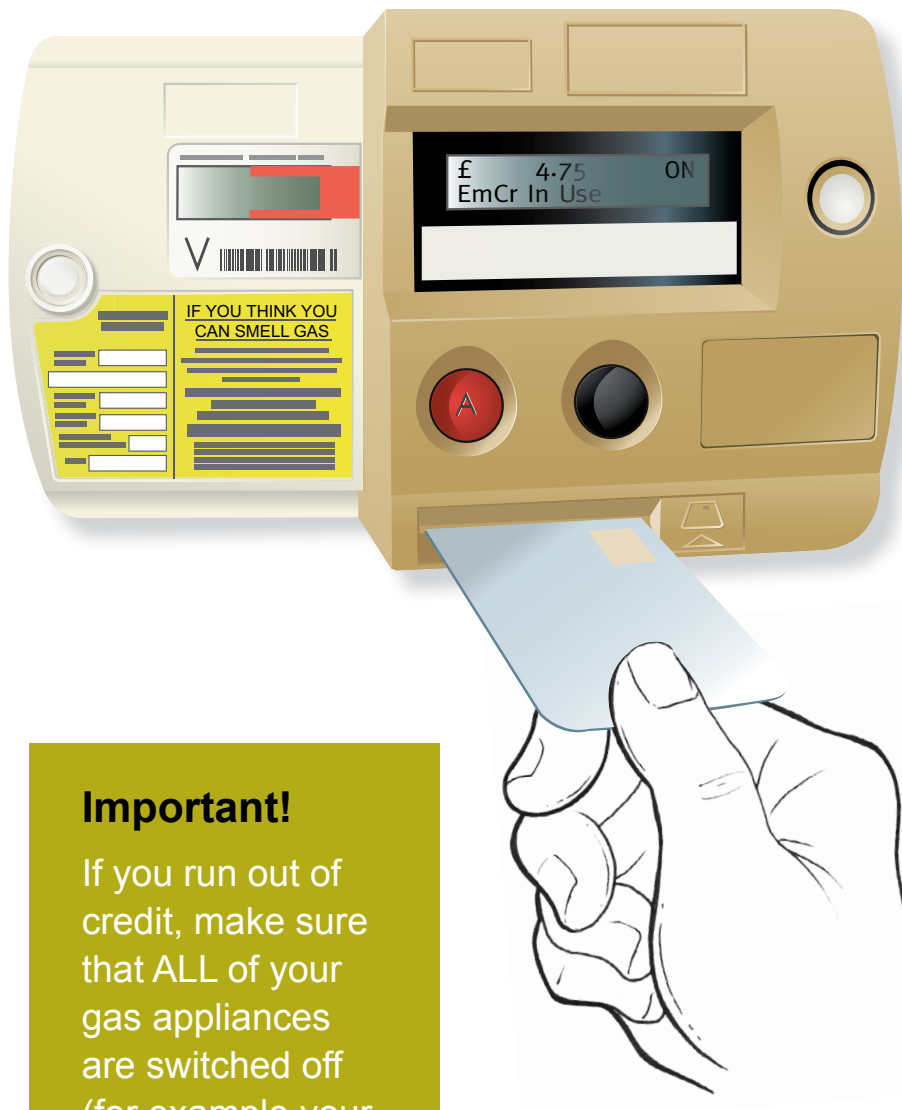
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# Your Gas Pre-payment Meter



## Important!

If you run out of credit, make sure that ALL of your gas appliances are switched off (for example your gas cooker).

1. Gas pre-payment meters let you pay for gas as you use it. They are sometimes called Quantum meters.

2. To use your meter, you will need a payment card.

3. If you have just moved in, ask your gas company to send you a new card.

4. You need to put money onto your card at a PayPoint.

5. When you put your card into the meter your gas will flow.

# How to pay



1. Each meter has its own card.

2. The card needs to be topped up with credit.

3. You can do this by going to any shop or post office where you see the PayPoint sign.

4. Hand your card to the assistant and ask for the amount of credit you want to buy.  
For example, £5 or £10.



5. Keep the receipt.



6. Put the card into the card slot on your meter. The screen will change (see your energy advisor for more information).

7. Leave the card in the meter, or somewhere safe.

## IMPORTANT!

- You can only use **your** card in **your** meter.
- Without your card you cannot top up your meter.



## The information on your meter

If you do not press any buttons on your meter, the screen will display the amount of credit you have on the meter, **or** the amount of emergency credit you have left.

The **orange button** on your meter lets you move between numbered screens. Press and hold the orange button until you hear a beep. Each time you want to go to the next screen, press the orange button.

Ask your energy advisor for the advice sheet on information screens. Here are the important ones.

17 Standing Chrg  
£5.67

Screen **17** shows you how much the meter will take each week for:

- Debt repayment (if you have any) eg. £1.92\*\*
- Standing charges (if you have any) eg. £3.75

27 GD Remaining  
£ 176.30

Screen **27** tells you how much total gas debt you have.

26 GD Week Max  
£ 3.75

Screen **26** tells you how much of your debt you are paying off each week.

If you are on benefits and owe money, the amount you pay to reduce your debt could be set as low as £3.75\* a week.

### IMPORTANT!

If you have debt on your meter, top it up every Wednesday.

## Emergency credit

Your gas pre-payment meter usually has £5 of emergency credit on it. This can be used if you run out of money, but you have to pay it back.

£ 4.72 ON  
EmCr In Use

When you are using emergency credit, your screen will say 'In Use'. It will look like this.

If you let your emergency credit run out, your gas will turn off. This is called **self – disconnection**.

Even when you have self – disconnected your gas, you will still have to pay for your standing charges and any debt. This means that the money you owe will still build up even though the gas is off.

### REMEMBER!

When you top up your card you have to pay back the emergency credit and any charges that have built up first.

\* Correct at time of printing

\*\*Standing charges vary

## Moving into a new house

There is a gas pre-payment meter in the house. Is there a card?

### YES

- Put the card into the meter.
- Check screens **26** and **27** for any debt.
- Is there any debt on Screen **26** or **27**?

### YES

- Phone your gas company.
- They will arrange for someone to reset your meter within 24 hours.

### NO

- Phone your gas company.
- They will arrange for you to get a new card to be sent to you.

### NO DEBT

- You can use the card to top up.
- Phone your gas company and tell them you are a new customer.
- They will send you a new card.

## Moving out of a house

- Leave the card for the meter in the property.
- Phone your gas company and tell them that you are moving.

## Important Information

### Contact your gas company if:

- Your card is broken
- You lose your card
- Your meter says **Error**

If you are away from your home for a long time, the meter can still build up charges. Normally you have to pay these before you can use gas. Speak to your gas company or energy advisor about paying for these charges over a longer period of time.

## Useful Contact

Changeworks' Affordable Warmth Services

**Freephone 0800 870 8800**

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# Gas and Electricity Debt

This advice sheet explains:

1. How to deal with gas and electricity debt
2. How to get the best solution from your gas or electricity company

## IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER:

- It is very common to get into debt with gas and electricity bills
- Cutting your gas or electricity off is the **last resort** for your gas or electricity company. They prefer to fit a prepayment meter instead of cutting you off.
- If you find yourself in debt, phone your gas or electricity company as soon as possible to work out a payment plan that you can afford.
- Under Scottish Law, no-one can take things like your television to pay for a debt. They might send letters that say they will, but **they cannot do it.**



Turn over the page to find out what you can do about your debt.

# What to do about your debt

## REMEMBER!

Ignoring the debt could make the debt increase. If a prepayment meter is fitted there may also be added charges for warrants and locksmiths.

If you are in debt, contact your gas or electricity company as soon as possible to make sure that this does not happen.

Is the gas or electricity debt for where you live now?

YES

This is called  
**PRIORITY DEBT**

**This needs to be sorted out quickly**

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

**Your gas or electricity company will want their money as soon as they can get it.**

- They must work out a **payment plan** with you.
- You should have as much time to pay the debt back as it took you to build it up.
- If you are on Income Support, Pension Credit, Employment and Support Allowance, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance or Universal Credit your repayments can be set as low as around £3.75\* per week.

### WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

- Talk to your gas or electricity company. If you need help call an energy advisor or speak to someone you trust. See the Useful Contacts on page 4.
- Ask them about ways to pay back the debt. Tell them what you can afford per week.
- Do not ignore it as you may make things worse.

NO

This is called  
**NON PRIORITY DEBT**

**This could be debt from a previous home**

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

**This is money you might owe from another home you have lived in.**

- This will not cause problems with the gas or electricity you are using now.
- You will be able to pay this back in amounts that you can manage.
- You might get a call from a debt collection agency.
- Remember, they cannot take things from your home to repay debt, but it might affect your ability to get credit in the future.

### WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

- Talk to a money advisor. See the Useful Contacts on page 4.
- A money advisor can help you to set up a payment plan.
- They should also contact the debt collection agency for you.
- They can also help you with any other debts.



## Different ways to repay your debt

### 1. Payment plan

Speak to your gas or electricity company and agree an amount to pay for the gas and electricity you are using now. Agree an amount to add on top to pay for the debt. This could be paid through direct debit or a payment card. These payments can be every two weeks or every month.

### 2. Prepayment meter

You can pay for gas and electricity before you use it by putting money onto a key or card. The meter can be set up to take money for the debt through the week. If you run out of credit on your meter, your supply will stop.

Read the advice sheet on **prepayment meters** for more information.

### 3. Fuel Direct

The benefits agency can talk to your gas and electricity companies for you. Money for the gas and electricity you are using now will be taken off your benefits. They will also take around £3.75\* a week off your benefits towards the money you owe.

## Other ways to get help

Some gas and electricity companies have money to clear your debt for you, giving you a chance to start again. Ask your gas and electricity companies about this or speak to your energy advisor (see the numbers opposite).

## Useful Contacts

Changeworks' Affordable Warmth Services	0800 870 8800
Home Energy Scotland	0808 808 2282
Fuel Direct for pension credit	0800 731 0469
Fuel Direct other benefits	0800 169 0310
Citizens Advice Direct	0808 800 9060
National Debtline	0808 808 4000

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# Different ways to pay for your gas and electricity

Here are the different ways you can pay for your gas or electricity:

- Monthly cash
- Quarterly billing
- Payment plan
- Fuel Direct
- On-line
- Direct Debit
- Prepayment meters



Mr. A. Smith  
21/2 Any Street  
Anytown  
AN23 2ST

Gas or Electricity Company Name

Customer Helpline:  
0155 606 2000

Your Electricity/Gas Bill  
Bill Period 1/1/2011 - 1/4/2011

Meter P123456S

Previous  
12345

Present  
12345E

Units  
1000

Pence  
Per Unit  
9.0p

Total  
£90

Fixed Charge 98 days @ 25.3p  
VAT @ 5%

£24.79  
£5.74

Brought Forward Balance  
Payments  
Amount To Pay

£300.00  
£55.00  
£365.53

M Number 1234567899

S

01  
18

838  
0002 1928

101  
285

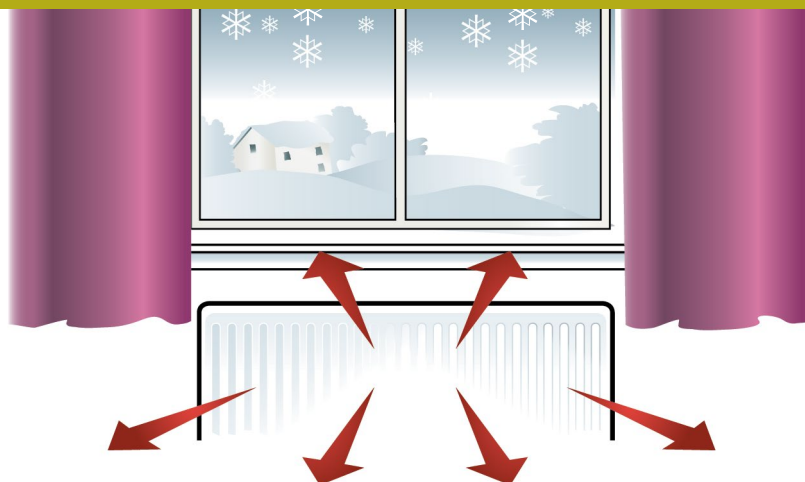
This advice sheet gives you some things to think about before you decide which way you want to pay.

# Ways to pay

Way to Pay	It's a good way to pay if...	Can you spread your costs over the year?	Can you get a cheaper price by paying this way?	What are the good things about paying this way?	What are problems with paying this way?
<b>Direct Debit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You have a regular income and a bank account.</li> <li>You like to budget your money each month.</li> </ul>	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your payments are the same every month.</li> <li>Your gas or electricity company should review the amount you pay every 12 months.</li> <li>It's one of the cheapest ways to pay.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you use more gas or electricity than you have paid for, you will pay more the next year.</li> <li>The money will come out of your bank account for this even if you have no money in it (so your bank may charge you a fee).</li> </ul>
<b>Payment Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You want to pay every two weeks or every month.</li> <li>You don't have a bank account.</li> <li>You are repaying gas or electricity debt.</li> <li>You find it easier to pay at post offices or pay points.</li> </ul>	Yes	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You have small set payments on a regular basis. This makes it easier to budget.</li> <li>This payment method can be used to pay back gas or electricity debt.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you use more gas or electricity than you have paid for, the amount you pay will be increased the next year.</li> <li>If you do not pay on time, your payment plan will be cancelled. It will be difficult to set up another payment plan if this happens.</li> </ul>
<b>Fuel Direct</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are in debt with your gas or electricity, and are on certain benefits (Income Support, Pension Credit, Employment and Support Allowance, or Income-based Job Seekers Allowance).</li> <li>You find it difficult to manage your money.</li> </ul>	Yes	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Payments come directly out of your benefit, before you receive it. The payment covers your current gas or electricity use and also pays off part of your unpaid bill.</li> <li>You will not pay more than around £3.75* each week towards your debt (if you have gas and electricity debt, around £7.50* will be taken towards debt each week).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you use more than what the benefits agency and your gas or electricity company have agreed, you may end up in more debt.</li> <li>You do not receive a bill and so it is difficult to keep track of what you are using.</li> <li>You might not get the cheapest price for your gas or electricity.</li> </ul>
<b>Online</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You have a regular income and bank account.</li> <li>You like paying by direct debit.</li> </ul>	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Online prices are usually the cheapest prices available for gas and electricity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you use more gas or electricity than you have paid for, you will pay more the next year.</li> <li>The money will come out of your bank account for this even if you have no money in it (so your bank may charge you a fee ).</li> </ul>
<b>Quarterly Billing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You can manage to pay higher bills in winter.</li> </ul>	No	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You pay for the amount of gas or electricity you have used, after you have used it.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is difficult to budget with this payment option, as there is a big difference between what you pay in summer and what you pay in winter.</li> <li>Gas and electricity companies may guess what you have used if they cannot get a meter reading. Make sure you phone your gas or electricity company if this happens, and give them an up-to-date meter reading.</li> </ul>
<b>Prepayment Meters</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are in debt with your gas and electricity.</li> <li>You find it difficult to budget your money.</li> </ul>	No	Possibly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is no longer the most expensive payment method.</li> <li>Your meter can be set to pay off your debt at a low amount (and can be as low as £3.75* a week).</li> <li>Some people find it easier to budget with this payment method. You can't use gas or electricity that you haven't paid for.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This can be expensive in winter.</li> <li>If you do not top up your meter, your supply will stop.</li> <li>Some gas or electricity companies may set your debt repayments too high. If you cannot afford the amount they have set, phone them and ask them to lower it.</li> </ul>
<b>Monthly Cash</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are a Scottish Power customer.</li> </ul>	Yes	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This payment method is good for people who find it difficult to manage their money.</li> <li>Your payments are the same every month.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you use more gas or electricity than you have paid for, your payments will go up.</li> </ul>

## Important advice

You will use more gas or electricity in the winter, so your bills will be higher than they would be at other times of the year.



Here are some common things that can go wrong when paying for your gas or electricity:

- **Expensive plans:** If you don't arrange your preferred way to pay with your supplier, they will put you on the most expensive payment plan.
- **Missing payments:** If you agree a payment plan, and don't make the payments, your plan will be cancelled. It will be difficult to set another plan up with your gas or electricity company.
- **Using direct debit:** If there is not enough money in your account for a direct debit the bank will charge you.
- **Using a meter:** If you do not top up your meter, your supply will stop. Make sure you top up weekly so this doesn't happen.

## Useful Contacts

Changeworks' Affordable Warmth Services	<b>0800 870 8800</b>
Home Energy Scotland	<b>0808 808 2282</b>
Fuel Direct for Pension Credit	<b>0800 731 0469</b>
Fuel Direct other benefits	<b>0800 169 0310</b>
Citizens Advice consumer helpline (charges apply)	<b>0345 404 0506</b>

**Remember**  
If your circumstances change ask if there is a cheaper way to pay.

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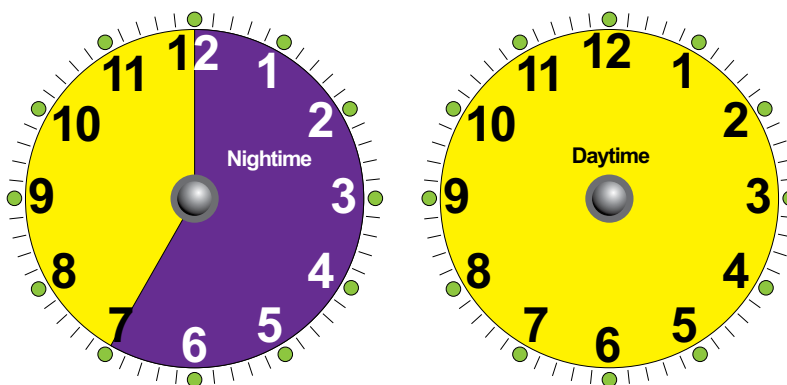




# Your Storage Heater

## What are storage heaters?

Storage heaters are the cheapest type of electric heating if they are used correctly. Your storage heater should give you up to 10 hours of heat during the day. Storage heaters may look big but they are much cheaper to use than bar fires or other heaters.

- Storage heaters switch on at night when electricity is cheapest. This is called **off-peak** electricity.
- The electricity heats up bricks inside the storage heater
- The bricks store up the heat and release it during the day



-  Storage heaters store heat when electricity is cheaper
-  You can use up to 10 hours of heat during these hours

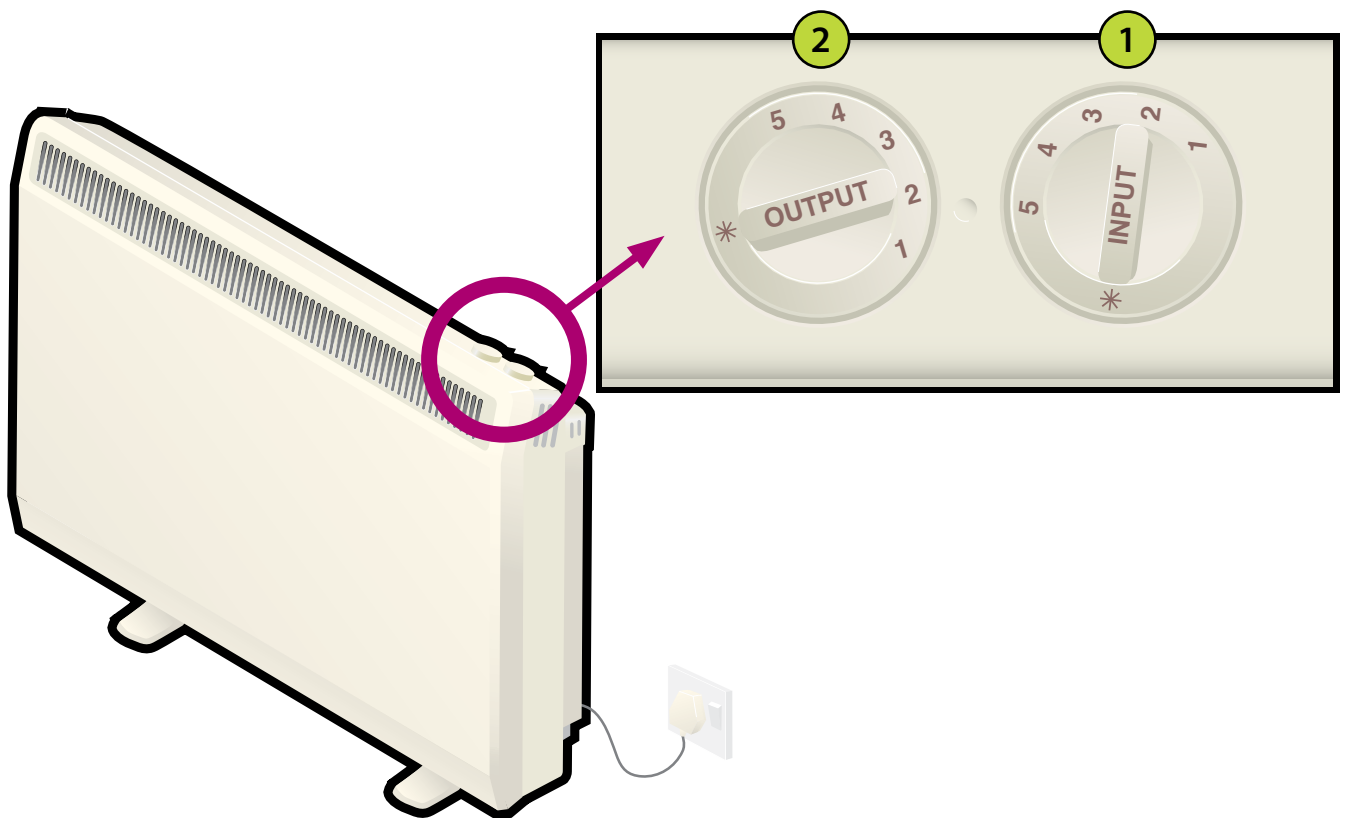
## How are storage heaters controlled?

Storage heaters are switched on and off at the wall.

There are two controls on most storage heaters - an **INPUT** control and an **OUTPUT** control.

Turn over the page to see how your storage heater controls work.

# A typical storage heater and its controls



- 1 The **INPUT** control tells the heater how much heat to store up during the night.

You change the setting on the control depending on how much heat you will need tomorrow.

- If you think it will be a cold winter day tomorrow, set it on **Medium** to **High** (3 to 5).
- If you think it will be a mild day tomorrow, for example an autumn or spring day, set it on **Low** to **Medium** (1 to 3).
- If you think you are **not getting enough heat**, turn your **input** control **up**.
- If you are **getting too much heat**, turn your **input** control **down**.
- The higher the setting, the more electricity you will use.
- If there is no **input** control, the heater will decide how much heat to store by itself.

- 2** The **OUTPUT** control tells the heater how much heat to let out into the room by opening and closing a vent inside the heater.

Your control might say **BOOST** or **Room Temperature** instead of **OUTPUT**. The settings can sometimes be shown as numbers 1 to 6, or even 1 to 9. Sometimes they may be shown as dots.

#### This is what the settings do:

**1**

The vent will not open and no heat will come out

**2**

The vent is opened and closed by a thermostat. The vent closes when the heater stores up heat. It opens to let the heat out gradually through the day. It closes again at night to store up more heat.

**3** or higher

Heat is let out into the room faster and the heater will get cold more quickly. The vent closes when the heater stores up heat, and opens again to let the heat out afterwards.

#### IMPORTANT!

Once the heater is cold, you won't get more heat from it until the next day.

#### REMEMBER!

##### Safety

Do not put ornaments or clothing on top of the heaters. If you do you could cause a fire, or break your heater, because they get very hot.

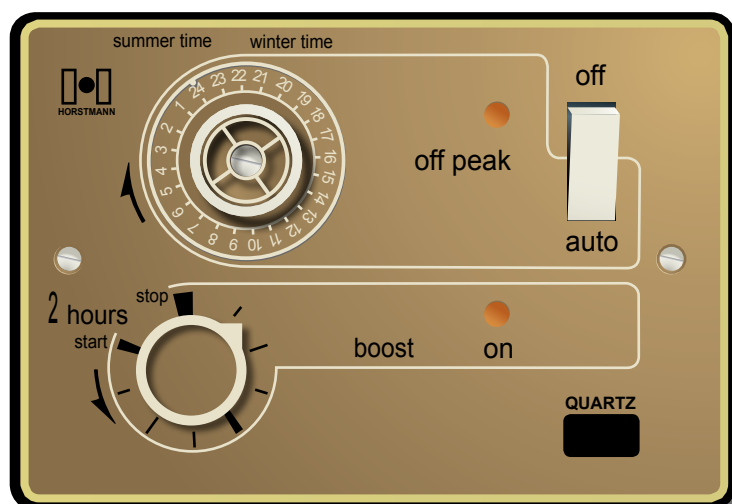
##### New heaters

New storage heaters let out smoke when they are first installed. This is only for the first few nights. Keep your windows open when this happens.

##### WEATHERCALL® customers

If you have WEATHERCALL®, keep your input setting at maximum. With WEATHERCALL®, Scottish Power controls the amount of heat that goes into your storage heaters depending on the weather. There will be more heat when it's cold and less when it's warm. If you are not sure whether you have this or not, speak to your electricity company or your energy advisor.

## Hot water heating with off-peak electricity



### Where is the timer?

In your kitchen or in a cupboard near the hot water tank.

### How does it work?

At night the timer will switch on the immersion heater in the hot water tank. This is when electricity is cheaper.

### What if I use all the hot water?

If you need extra hot water during the day you can use the boost control.

If you have storage heaters you should also be able to use cheaper electricity to heat your hot water. **Make sure that the clock on your timer is set to the correct time.**

### REMEMBER!

Heating water up during the day can be much more expensive.

### Useful Contact

Changeworks' Affordable Warmth Services  
**Freephone 0800 870 8800**

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To speak to us directly, call  
Changeworks' Affordable  
Warmth Services team  
free on  
**0800 870 8800.**

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Citizens Advice Direct	<b>0808 800 9060</b>
National Debtline	<b>0808 808 4000</b>



# Priority Service Register

We all rely on electricity and water day to day for various activities, but for some, a power cut or water supply outage can be particularly distressing and difficult.

That's where the Priority Services Register comes in. Provided by energy companies and network operators, the register helps provide extra help and support to vulnerable customers.

## The register can help those who:



**Use medical equipment/aids reliant on electricity and/or water**



**Are blind or partially sighted**



**Are deaf or hard of hearing**



**Have a chronic illness**



**Live with children under 5**



**Have a disability**



**Are over 60**



**Have anxiety, depression or any other mental health condition**



**Temporarily need extra support**



**Need documents translated into another format or language**

# What support can you get?

- Free to join
- Adapted communications
- Password scheme
- Dedicated teams and phone numbers
- Financial help
- Help with meters and moves to pre-payment meters
- Gas safety checks
- Power cut advice
- Pre storm warnings
- Planned supply interruption notifications
- Welfare during outages

	Distribution Network Operator	Water Supplier	Gas Distribution Network	Energy Supplier
Adapted communications (Large print, braille, audio, alternative languages)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Financial assistance (eligibility criteria applies)				✓
Comprehensive welfare provision including mobile generation, meals, charging points, accommodation, on the ground support (community advisors)	✓		✓	
Carbon Monoxide safety checks			✓	✓
Free gas safety checks (eligibility criteria applies)				✓
Planned supply interruption notification	✓	✓		✓
Identification and password scheme	✓	✓	✓	✓
Alternatives offered during supply issues or outages e.g. bottled water, hot plates, fan heaters, temporary supply	✓	✓	✓	
Specialist teams with dedicated phone numbers	✓	✓	✓	✓
Warm Home Discount				✓
Fuel poor network extension scheme (Gas only)			✓	
Fuel poverty & Energy efficiency advice	✓		✓	✓
Quarterly meter readings & meter moves for pre-payment meters				✓
Water efficiency help		✓		

# How do you register?

How you register will depend on who your Distribution Network Operator is. This is different in different parts of the country.

## If you live in Central or Southern Scotland

You can register for the priority service register by:

- Phoning 0330 10 10 167
- Visiting the Scottish Power Energy Networks website - [spenergynetworks.co.uk/priorityservices](https://spenergynetworks.co.uk/priorityservices)

## If you live in Northern Scotland

You can register for the priority service register by:

- Phoning 0800 294 3259
- Visiting the Scottish & Southern Electricity Networks website - [ssen.co.uk/power-cuts-emergencies/priority-services](https://ssen.co.uk/power-cuts-emergencies/priority-services)

## If aren't sure who your Distribution Network Operator is

In Scotland there are two different Distribution Network Operators.

If you live in an area shown on the map as red (North) your District Network Operator is SSE Hydro.

If you live in an area marked on the map as green (South), your District Network Operator is SP Energy Networks.

If you aren't sure which Distribution Network Operator covers your area you can check online by visiting:

[www.powercut105.com/findoperator](https://www.powercut105.com/findoperator)

## Looking for more support?

Find out more about the Priority Service Register and other free support services available via our website.

[www.changeworks.org.uk](https://www.changeworks.org.uk)

You can also call 0800 870 8800.



## Your Guide to Smart Meters

### What is a smart meter?

A smart meter is a new kind of electricity and gas meter.

Unlike the older, traditional meters, it sends meter readings directly to your electricity and/or gas supplier. The supplier doesn't need to visit your house to do a meter reading, and you don't need to take a reading yourself. This means there are no more estimated bills and means you will only be charged for the amount of energy you use, avoiding billing errors.



Both electricity and gas meters can be smart.

The smart meter (*photo left*), replaces your traditional electricity and/or gas meters and sends regular meter readings to your supplier. This will usually be located as a replacement to your current meter in a cupboard or close to an entrance.

When you have a smart meter installed, you should also get an in-home display (*photo right*); this shows you how much electricity and gas you are using and how much it's costing you and can be plugged into somewhere that suits you, and where you can see it easily.



### Why are smart meters being rolled out?

Smart meters are part of the plan to improve the efficiency of the national energy network. By knowing more about how much energy is being used at different times, suppliers can match supply to demand more effectively. This means suppliers may offer lower-priced 'time of use' tariffs during periods when they know fewer people are using electricity. There are also other benefits for householders which are outlined below.

## Should I get a smart meter?

A smart meter could **help you make better decisions** about how you use energy. It will show you which activities use the most energy, so you can make simple changes to help **save energy and pay less on your electricity and/or gas bills**.

If you want to switch electricity and gas supplier, the data collected by your smart meter can help you find the cheapest tariff for your energy use and in some cases can make the switching process easier.

A smart meter may be right for you if you want:

- ✓ To remove the hassle of taking meter readings
- ✓ To see a visual display of your electricity and/or gas usage
- ✓ More accurate bills
- ✓ To top-up your prepaid meter remotely, by phone, online or through an app.

## Do I have to have one?

No. Energy suppliers have an obligation to offer everyone a smart meter, but you do not have to accept one.

However, if your meter is faulty or needs replacing you may find that the replacement will need to be a smart meter unless your property is not suitable. This is because many suppliers now only have a limited stock of traditional, older meters as the new meters produced will all be smart meters.

## Are there different types of smart meter?

Yes. Some people may still have the first version of smart meters which are called SMETS 1 meter. SMETS stands for Smart Metering Equipment Technical Specifications. These don't use a standardised system for sending meter readings to electricity and/gas suppliers, so if you switch suppliers, your new supplier won't be able to get readings. You'll need to provide regular readings, wait for a meter reader or have estimated bills.

Any new installations will now be SMETS 2. These meters can give readings to any electricity and/or gas supplier. In rural areas, SMETS 2 meters can tell the energy network if there is a power cut. Eventually all meters will be upgraded remotely or replaced by a SMETS 2 meter, you should ask your supplier for a replacement or upgrade if you still have SMETS 1; they can also confirm which type you currently have.





## What happens when my smart meter is installed?

When someone comes to install your smart meter, they must:

- ✓ Explain how the smart meter works and tell you how you can use it to make better use of your energy.
- ✓ Tell you if your meter can be read by a different supplier, if you decide to change your energy supplier
- x Not sell you anything while they are in your home<sup>1</sup>.

The cost of getting a smart meter installed is covered by everyone's electricity and gas bills. You won't pay any extra. Your supplier should discuss a new energy tariff with you if you have a smart meter installed as it may give you access to a wider range of options.

## Is my personal data safe?

A smart meter will tell your electricity and/or gas supplier about how you use your gas and electricity, but you control how your data is used:

- You can choose how often your smart meter sends information to your energy supplier (at least once a month, but no more than once every half hour)
- Suppliers may not use your data for marketing without your permission
- Suppliers may not see the detailed data shown on your in-home display without your permission.

## Can I get a smart meter if:

### **I don't have internet?**

Yes. Smart meters communicate with suppliers using a secure network like the one used by your mobile phone. However, if your mobile phone connection is weak, you should check with your supplier whether a smarter meter will work properly.

### **I rent a property?**

If you pay the electricity and/or gas bills and they're addressed to you, you can decide whether to get a smart meter. However, you may wish to speak to your landlord first. If your landlord pays the energy bill, it's up to them to decide whether to put in a smart meter.

### **I am on an Economy 7 / Economy 10 / ComfortPlus / Total Heat Total Control tariff?**

Possibly. If your property is all-electric, it is likely that you will have a restricted/complex meter with two or more meter readings and are charged a different rate for your electricity at off peak times or for a supply for your electric heating and hot water. At the moment, it is unlikely that you will be able to request a smart meter as the technology has not yet been developed for these restricted meters, but it is hoped that these will be available soon. You should contact your supplier for more details.

### **I have a prepaid meter?**

Yes. Smart meters may make prepayment tariffs cheaper in future. Smart meters will also allow new ways to top-up your meter by phone, online or through an app and save the need to go to a shop to add credit to your key or card.

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<sup>1</sup> As explained in the Ofgem Smart Meter Installation Code of Practice (SMICoP)

## **I've got solar panels?**

Some solar-panel owners have had problems getting smart meters put in. If you're getting a smart meter installed, make sure your energy supplier is aware you have solar panels.

## **I have a smart meter:**

### **Why do I still have an estimated bill?**

It may take a while for the readings to be submitted automatically to the supplier. Allow up to a few weeks for the system to start working. If you still receive estimated bills after this, your meter may not be working properly, and you should contact your energy supplier.

If you pay by direct debit or an annual payment plan, your supplier estimates how much electricity and/or gas you'll use over a year and splits this into 12 equal amounts. You will receive monthly statements (not bills) showing your exact energy usage. These payment amounts will be reviewed regularly now that your supplier can see exactly how much energy you have used. The payment amounts may change if your usage goes up or down or if the price of energy changes, but your supplier should also inform you of this in advance.

### **Why have I received a huge bill ('back-billing')?**

If you had estimated bills before getting a smart meter, you may get a 'back-bill' if the amount of electricity and/or gas you used is higher than the amount you paid for. Depending on the circumstances, suppliers can't back-bill further back than 12 months and should offer a payment plan.

### **I think my smart meter readings are inaccurate**

If you think your readings are wrong, it is best to take manual, regular (weekly) meter readings and you can cross-check these against your bills or discuss these with your supplier. Taking a meter reading from your smart meter can vary, so it is best to check this website for guidance on how to read yours:

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/scotland/consumer/energy/energy-supply/your-energy-meter/how-to-read-your-smart-electricity-meter/>

If you doubt your meter readings you should contact your supplier, who can carry out checks. They can also pass your complaint on to the power grid operator. You can ask your supplier to inspect the meter, but note that if results show that your meter is working correctly, you may have to pay for the inspection.

You can also buy an energy monitor to check your electricity meter, such as Owl or Efergy, however these may not be as accurate as an inspection carried out by your supplier.



**If you have questions about your smart meter, your readings, or your bill, you should contact your electricity and/or gas supplier or contact Changeworks for further advice and support.**

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# Carbon Monoxide and Gas Safety

## What is carbon monoxide?

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colourless, odourless, tasteless, poisonous gas produced by incomplete burning of carbon-based fuels (including gas, oil, wood, petrol and coal).

Because you can't see it, taste it or smell it, it is highly dangerous and in certain conditions can kill quickly and without warning.

## Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning



Headaches



Nausea



Dizziness



Breathlessness



Collapse



Loss of consciousness

## The signs of CO

- Flames on most heating appliances should be crisp and blue. Yellow or orange flames should be checked by a professional
- Look for staining, sooting or discolouration on appliances
- Look for increased condensation
- The pilot light blowing out frequently

If you're concerned there is CO present in your home, or notice symptoms of CO poisoning, contact the National Gas Emergency Service on **0800 111 999** immediately.

# How to stay safe from the dangers of CO

- Get coal, oil and natural gas appliances checked annually by a qualified professional
- Fit an audible carbon monoxide alarm and always follow the manufacturer's instructions
- Regularly test your carbon monoxide alarm in line with the manufacturer's instructions and replace the batteries/alarm as and when required
- Ensure there is adequate ventilation for appliances and don't block air vents
- Turn off the appliance and seek immediate assistance if you suspect CO or your CO alarm sounds
- Don't ever bring a BBQ or portable heater into an enclosed space without proper ventilation

## Gas Emergency

SGN provide the National Gas Emergency response in your area. If you report a gas escape or a CO concern their engineers provide a 24 hour service and attend to make the situation safe.

### Follow these six steps if you smell gas:

✓ Do open windows and doors to help ventilate the gas

✓ Do turn off the gas supply at the meter and make sure any gas appliances are turned off

✓ Do call the National Gas Emergency Number on 0800 111 999. Lines are open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year

✗ Don't smoke or use any naked flames

✗ Don't touch any electrical switches. Turning a switch on or off could ignite a gas leak

✗ Don't enter a cellar if you smell gas, even if your gas meter is located in the cellar



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