



YOUR HOME ENERGY CHECKLIST

National Energy Action is the national charity helping you with energy bills. This leaflet will guide you through the financial help available and practical steps you can take to help keep your home feeling warmer and your energy more affordable.



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SPEAK TO YOUR ENERGY SUPPLIER

If you are struggling to keep on top of your energy bills, or you are starting to fall behind on payments and getting into debt, it is really important to speak to your supplier as soon as possible. They will be able to check whether you are on the best deal, talk to you about your energy use and let you know about any schemes or support they might have available to help.

IF YOU ARE IN DEBT WITH YOUR ENERGY SUPPLIER, THEY ARE REQUIRED TO HELP YOU SET UP AN AFFORDABLE REPAYMENT PLAN. THE SOONER YOU CONTACT THEM, THE QUICKER THEY CAN HELP YOU.

You may be able to access hardship funds to help with repaying your debt, so talk to your local advice agency or contact **Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline on 0808 223 1133.**

**TEXTPHONE
USERS CALL**

18001 0808

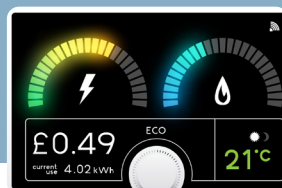
223 1133 (call charges may apply) or visit your local Citizens Advice.

Switching supplier is an option, but please keep in mind that you may have to pay an exit fee.

TAKE REGULAR METER READINGS

Taking regular meter readings and submitting them to your energy supplier helps keep your bills accurate. If you receive a bill and it has an 'E' marked against the meter reading, this means it has been estimated by your supplier and may not be accurate. Estimated readings can lead to large, unexpected bills so you should regularly submit your accurate readings.

You can also ask your supplier if you can have a **smart meter** installed. A smart meter lets your supplier take automatic readings. The in-home display can help you keep track of your costs.



PRIORITY SERVICES REGISTER (PSR)

The **Priority Services Register** includes people who are of pensionable age, have children under five, a disability or long-term medical condition. Being on the register means that you will be prioritised in the event of a power cut, and you'll receive additional non-financial services such as password security or information in different formats. It's really important that both your supplier and Distribution Network Operator (DNO) know if you are in a vulnerable situation.

You can find details of your network operator on your energy bill or online.

Go to **www.energynetworks.org/customers/find-my-network-operator**.

All energy suppliers and network operators maintain their own registers but with your consent they can share information with each other, so you don't have to register separately.

You can also apply to be on the Priority Services Register at **www.thepsr.co.uk**.

STAY SAFE AT HOME

CARBON MONOXIDE IS A DEADLY GAS THAT CANNOT BE SEEN, SMELT, OR TASTED. THE COMMON SIGNS ARE:

- **Gas flames burning orange or yellow instead of blue**
- **Soot stains on or above the appliance**
- **Coal or wood fires that burn slowly or go out**

Gas appliances such as fires, boilers and cookers should be regularly serviced by a qualified engineer. They must be Gas Safe registered and show proof. You can also install a Carbon Monoxide alarm. They cost around £15 DIY stores and supermarkets and could save lives. If you rent, by law landlords must carry out an annual safety check and give you a Gas Safety Certificate. If you're a homeowner and on certain benefits you may be eligible for a free annual gas safety check. If you smell gas call the **24-hour Gas Emergency Hotline on 0800 111 999**. Go to **www.energy-uk.org.uk/customers/carbon-monoxide**.

DON'T MISS OUT ON MONEY

Make sure you are claiming all the benefits you are entitled to. This is known as 'income maximisation'. Not only could it increase your income, it could unlock access to other benefits. It is a common myth that you must be out of work to be eligible – there are many in-work benefits too, so it is worth doing a check online. It only takes around 10 minutes to check www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators.

Call charges

0800 and 0808 numbers are free from landlines and mobiles. Standard rates apply for 01, 02 and 03 numbers (typically 9p-13p per minute from landlines and 3p-55p from mobiles depending on your network). They're usually included in free call packages. See www.gov.uk/call-charges.

If you would like extra support with checking your entitlement or making a claim, contact your local Citizens Advice or call the **Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline on 0808 223 1133 (Textphone users call 18001 0808 223 1133)** (call charges may apply). You can also call National Energy Action for a full benefit entitlement check via National Energy Action's **Benefits Advice and Support Service. Call 0800 138 8218.**



National Energy Action has partnered with Sign Video to offer a Video Relay service for BSL users **National Energy Action Advice Sign Video Live – 08003047159 – <https://neaadvice.signvideo.net>**

You may be able to get help with essential costs from your local council. This is sometimes known as 'the **Household Support Fund**'. This could help if you're struggling to afford energy and water bills.

You do not have to be getting benefits to get help from your local council. If you do get benefits, they will not be affected

if you get a payment from a Household Support Fund scheme. Councils decide how to run their schemes. There may be differences in:

- eligibility criteria
- if or how you need to apply
- who money is given to

Check with your local council. Find the contact details here: www.gov.uk/find-local-council.

ENERGY DISCOUNTS AND PAYMENTS

WARM HOME DISCOUNT

The Warm Home Discount changed slightly in England and Wales in 2023, meaning the rebate is automatically paid to eligible customers. This is different in Scotland where an application process still applies for those people in Core Group 2 (known as Broader Group in Scotland).

In England and Wales, you will receive an automatic payment if you meet the required criteria:

CORE GROUP 1

Individuals of pensionable age and in receipt of pension credit

CORE GROUP 2

Individuals dependent on means-tested benefits and with high energy costs. Eligible benefits are:

- **Income-related Employment and Support Allowance**
- **Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance**
- **Income Support**
- **Housing Benefit**
- **Universal Credit**
- **Child Tax Credits**
- **Working Tax Credits**
- **Pension Credit Savings Credit (PSCS)**

The UK government will make an annual assessment as to whether your home meets the 'high cost' criteria, meaning that your eligibility may change year on year. You will get a letter from your supplier before January of the qualifying year if you are eligible for the scheme or might be eligible but need to provide more information. If you have any questions about Warm Home Discount, speak to your supplier. If you think you should be eligible and have not received a letter by early January, then contact the **Warm Home Discount Scheme Helpline on 0800 030 9322** Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm.

WINTER FUEL PAYMENT

Pensioners now need to be in receipt of certain means-tested benefits in order to receive the Winter Fuel Payment. Currently, 880,000 eligible people of pension age do not claim pension credit.

You can get a Winter Fuel Payment for winter 2024 to 2025 if: you were born before 23 September 1958; you live in England or Wales; and you get one of the following:

- **Pension Credit**
- **Universal Credit**
- **Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)**
- **Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)**
- **Income Support**

Visit www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment/eligibility

Over
880,000
ELIGIBLE
PENSIONERS

don't currently
claim their
pension credit.

Check if you or
someone you know
is missing out.

Go to www.gov.uk/pension-credit or talk to a
benefits adviser.

COLD WEATHER PAYMENT

Some households could be eligible for a Cold Weather Payment of £25 per qualifying week. This is paid automatically to those on certain benefits when the average temperature in their area is recorded as, or forecast to be, zero degrees Celsius or below for seven consecutive days. You'll get £25 for each seven-day period of very cold weather between 1 November and 31 March.

£25
per
qualifying
week

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

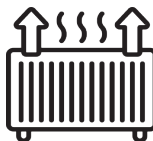
The more efficiently you use energy, the less you need to use to keep warm, safe and healthy at home. Go to www.nea.org.uk/get-help or ask our advisers for our leaflets including energy saving tips.

Loft and cavity wall insulation can make a big difference to bills, as can replacing an inefficient boiler. You may be eligible for free or discounted insulation or heating measures. Contact your energy supplier to see if you qualify for the Energy Company Obligation (ECO). Ask your council about other local schemes. Go to www.gov.uk/government/collections/find-energy-grants-for-you-home-help-to-heat.

Making your home as energy efficient as possible is the best way to reduce your costs and keep your home feeling warmer. There are some low-cost, quick-win actions you can take yourself such as:



Draught-proof doors and windows – get products at your local DIY store.



Radiator reflectors can help direct more of the heat into the room.



Close curtains at dusk to keep more heat in.

If you rent your home, then by law your landlord must ensure it is safe and habitable. If you are worried it's not, contact your local authority's Environmental Health team who can require your landlord to make improvements out of their own funds.

The Welsh government's Warm Homes Programme is designed to provide free home energy efficiency improvements for low-income households, living in the least efficient homes in Wales. Each home will be individually assessed. Energy efficiency measures could include insulation, low carbon heating and renewable technologies. You can find more ways to save energy in your home online at www.gov.uk/improve-energy-efficiency.

WHAT TO DO IF YOUR ENERGY SUPPLIER GOES OUT OF BUSINESS

If your energy supplier goes out of business, the regulator Ofgem will automatically move you to a new supplier within a few weeks. Don't try to make any changes to your energy supply until your account is moved to a new supplier. You might find it harder to get any money you're owed if you switch before this happens. Wait for your new supplier to contact you.

In the meantime:



Take regular meter readings and a photo of them if you can.



Keep any old bills you have – these can help prove your payment history, credit balance or debt.



Download any bills from your app if you have an online-only account



Make a note of your account balance – you'll find this on your most recent statement.

Your new supplier will write to tell you when your new account has been set up. You should contact your new supplier if you don't hear from them within two weeks. Your new supplier will also put you on a new tariff so speak to them to make sure it's their cheapest deal. You can switch without paying an exit fee if you're not happy with your new supplier or tariff.

For more information visit: www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/energy/energy-supply/problems-with-your-energy-supply/check-whos-taken-over-your-energy-supply.

USEFUL RESOURCES AND HELPLINES

Below you can find a list of the organisations mentioned throughout the leaflet and some other organisations that might be able to help you:

CONSUMER

CITIZENS ADVICE CONSUMERSERVICE

Citizens Advice
Consumer Advice Line:
0808 223 1133.

You can call the
Citizens Advice
consumer line for help
and support with debt,
income maximisation
or about your energy
bills or visit **www.
citizensadvice.org.
uk.**

If you can't hear or
speak on the phone,
you can type what you
want to say: **18001**
then **0808 223 1133.**

DEBT OR MONEY WORRIES

If you are struggling with debt,
it can be difficult to know where
to get help that you can trust.

The Money Helper website,
www.moneyhelper.org.uk
has a list of free debt advice
services that may be able to
help including:

STEPCHANGE DEBT CHARITY

www.stepchange.org.uk
0800 138 1111

PAYPLAN

www.payplan.com
0800 280 2816

NATIONAL DEBTLINE

www.nationaldebtline.org
0808 808 4000

BENEFIT ENTITLEMENT

You can complete a quick benefits check at home using
www.entitledto.co.uk or **www.turn2us.org.uk**

If you want some help with checking your entitlement or making
a claim, then contact your local Citizens Advice or
phone Adviceline (England) on **0800 144 8848** or Advicelink
(Wales) **0800 702 2020.**

LIGHTNING REACH

The secure Lightning Reach portal allows you to find and apply for support from multiple providers, quickly and easily. Use the **National Energy Action** referral link: www.lightningreach.org/application-portal?referral=nea.

EMERGENCY FOOD AND CRISIS SUPPORT

Your local authority should be able to direct you to available crisis support.

To find your nearest food bank visit Find a Food Bank from Trussell at www.trussell.org.uk/emergency-food/find-a-foodbank.

You will usually need to get a food voucher from a local agency or, alternatively, contact the free helpline on **0808 208 2138**

to speak with a trained Citizens Advice adviser.

If you have a smart phone, apps like **OLIO** and **TooGoodToGo** will let you know if there is food being sold at low cost near to you.



ENERGY EFFICIENCY

GOV.UK. Recommendations that could make your property cheaper to heat (England and Wales). Visit www.gov.uk/improve-energy-efficiency for more information.

ENERGY SAVING TRUST offers guidance on ways to save energy around the home. Visit their website www.energysavingtrust.org.uk.

National Energy Action's **ENERGY ADVICE AND SUPPORT SERVICE** is available on **0800 304 7159**.

More useful resources and helplines

SAFETY

IF YOU SMELL GAS or suspect a gas leak, call the **NATIONAL GAS EMERGENCY SERVICE** 24 hours a day on **0800 111 999**. If you are D/deaf or hard of hearing a text phone service is available on **18001** then **0800 371 787**.

IF YOU HAVE A POWER CUT call the national power cut line on **105**.

Most fire services offer a **SAFE AND WELL VISIT**, also called a **HOME FIRE SAFETY VISIT**, especially for people who might be at higher risk such as people with health conditions or young children in the home – contact your local fire service for more information. They will check your home for any fire risks and offer advice and guidance on how to reduce those risks.

IF YOU ARE STILL STRUGGLING, CONTACT NATIONAL ENERGY ACTION'S ENERGY ADVICE AND SUPPORT SERVICE ON 0800 3047159 OR WWW.NEA.ORG.UK/GET-HELP.

You can translate National Energy Action's website and leaflets into over 160 languages - and get text-to-speech in over 100. You can also adapt text for neurodiversities, including ADHD and dyslexia, and visual impairments.



Accessibility
& Language

Use our Recite Me button on www.nea.org.uk

National Energy Action is the national
fuel poverty charity, helping everyone to have a warm, safe
and healthy home. Go to **www.nea.org.uk**.