

Get help with your energy bills and supply



citizens
advice

If you're struggling to pay your energy bills

You should contact your supplier to arrange a payment plan – they have to help you find a way to pay.

If you have a prepayment meter and can't afford to top it up, contact your supplier. Ask for temporary extra credit – you'll need to pay this back when you next top up.

If you're not happy with your supplier's response, contact the Citizens Advice consumer service for help.

Citizens Advice consumer service

English helpline: 0808 223 1133

Welsh helpline: 0808 223 1144

Textphone: 18001 + helpline number

You might be able to get grants or benefits to help if you're struggling with energy bills.

Winter Fuel Payment

This could help you with the costs of keeping warm in winter.

You can usually get a Winter Fuel Payment if you've reached your State Pension age.

To find out how much you could get and how to claim, visit www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment. You can also call the Winter Fuel Payment helpline on 0800 7310160.

Cold Weather Payments

These could help you with extra heating costs when it's very cold.

You'll get a payment each time the average temperature in your area is recorded as, or forecast to be, zero degrees celsius or below for 7 consecutive days.

You'll qualify if you already get one of the following:

- Pension Credit
- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Universal Credit
- Support for Mortgage Interest

To find out more, visit www.gov.uk/cold-weather-payment or contact your local Citizens Advice.

Warm Home Discount Scheme

This gives you £140 off your electricity bill between September and March. You can get it if you're either:

- getting the guarantee credit part of Pension Credit
- on a low income

Contact your supplier to see if you qualify. Not all suppliers offer the Warm Home Discount Scheme.

For more information, visit www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme. You can also contact your local Citizens Advice.

Grants to help with energy bills

You might be able to get help from the British Gas Energy Trust – you don't need to be a British Gas customer. To apply, you must:

- have had money advice before applying
- have a net income below £13,260 per year
- prove your debt has built up because of a severe health or life-changing condition

To find out more, visit www.britishgasenergytrust.org.uk. You can also call the British Gas Energy Trust on 01733 421021.

You might be able to get a grant from your supplier. Not all suppliers offer them, so check with your supplier.

If you apply for a grant, you'll have to give details of your financial situation. It might be worth getting someone to help with your application. You can contact your local Citizens Advice for help.

Extra help you can get from your supplier

If you're classed as vulnerable you might be able to get extra help. You could be classed as vulnerable if you:

- have reached your State Pension age
- are disabled or have a long-term health condition
- have mental health problems
- have sight or hearing difficulties
- don't speak or read English well
- live with a child under 5 or are pregnant

You can also be temporarily eligible, for example if you're recovering from a hospital stay, bereavement or redundancy.

If you think you're eligible, contact your supplier and ask them to add you to their 'priority services register'.

Your energy network will also have a priority services register. You can ask them to add you to it, or ask your supplier to contact them for you. The energy network manages the electricity cables or gas pipes going into your home.

If you're on the priority services register, you can get extra help for free.

Improved access to your meter

If you have a prepayment meter and it's difficult to access, you can ask your supplier to move it or replace it with a normal meter. If you have a normal meter you can't access, you can ask your supplier to take meter readings for you.

Password protection scheme

You can agree a password with your supplier or energy network to use when they visit you. This means you'll always know they are genuine.

Bill nominee scheme

You can ask for your bills to be sent to a friend, relative or carer so they can help arrange payment.

Extra support during interruptions and power cuts

Tell your energy network if you rely on gas or electricity to:

- use medical equipment
- store medicines (for example, in a fridge)
- stay warm

You can get extra support, like alternative cooking facilities or heating, when your energy supply is interrupted. This applies to planned interruptions and unexpected power cuts.

Help if you have hearing or sight difficulties

Your energy supplier or energy network can provide:

- large print, Braille or talking bills
- accessible ways for you to make complaints and enquiries

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