



## Gas & Electricity

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## Energy supply during Covid19

Supply will continue unaffected, although prices may go up or down.

In the unlikely event of a supplier going out of business, supply will continue regardless and 'Ofgem' will work on behalf of the customer to continue supply with an appropriate, alternative supplier. Original Contracts should be honoured with an option to switch to another provider without charge.

Following Government instructions to remain at home and help fight Covid19, most energy suppliers have agreed not to switch off supply.

## Not self-Isolating - Where to top up your meter

If your local top up shop closes, [Paypoint.com](https://www.paypoint.com) and [Payzone.co.uk](https://www.payzone.co.uk) list alternative vendors online.

[Post Office](#) also provide top ups for the following:

Avid Energy	Bizz	Better Energy	Bristol Energy
British Gas	Bulb Energy Ltd	Corona Energy	E (Power)
EDF Energy	E.ON	Effortless Energy	Electricity Plus
ENGIE	Firmus Energy	First Utility	Flo Gas
Go Power	Good Energy	Green Energy UK	Garsington Energy
Green Star Energy	Haven Power	Hudson Energy	I Supply Energy
Just Energy	Nabuh Energy	Npower	Octopus Energy
Omni Energy	Opus Energy	Orbit Energy	OVO Energy
Power NI	Places for People Energy		PP Energy
The Renewable Energy Co.		Robin Hood Energy	
Scottish Power	Solarplicity Energy	Spark Energy	SSE*
SSE Airtricity	SSE Airtricity Gas	Together Energy	Unit Energy Ltd
Toto Energy	Utilita	Yu Energy	

## **Self-Isolating – what to do and how to top up you meter**

The Government is working with all suppliers to provide help for those self-isolating due to Covid19. Every supplier should have a top up scheme, so contact your supplier directly

On the next page you will find a list of suppliers contacted by 'Moneysavingexpert', which explains what they are offering at this time and their best contact number.

All providers contacted recommend the following advice:

- Top up a little extra than normal to get you through 'lockdown'
- Ask a trusted friend, neighbour or family member to help prepare and live comfortably through isolation
- Check the providers' website frequently and contact them if struggling.

Many providers are working through guidance and will be in touch with their customers as soon as possible.

Supplier	What they are doing	Contact
British Gas	<b>14 day top up available if running out of credit</b> Not yet sending out top-up cards or keys loaded with credit. Call and they will try to find a case-by-case basis solution	0333 202 9802
EDF	<b>14 day top up available if running out of credit</b> Can post top-up cards or keys loaded with credit to your home. Can deliver 'preloaded' cards and keys if self-isolating – this balance will then be collected back at a "suitable rate" later	0333 200 5100
E.on	<b>14 day top up available if running out of credit</b> If your electricity meter falls below 50p of emergency credit, or you're off supply for gas, E.on can send a card or key in the post, or send an engineer round to top up for you.	0345 052 0000
Npower	<b>14 day top up available if running out of credit</b> Not yet sending out top-up cards or keys loaded with credit. <i>*Working through its guidance to customers</i>	0800 073 3000
Scottish Power	<b>14 day top up available if running out of credit</b> <i>*working through its guidance to customers</i>	0800 027 0072
SSE	<b>14 day top up available if running out of credit</b> <i>*working through its guidance to customers</i>	0345 026 2658
Bulb	<i>Can post top-up cards or keys loaded with credit to your home</i>	0300 303 0635
Co-op Energy	<i>*working through its guidance to customers</i>	0800 093 7547
E Energy	<i>*working through its guidance to customers</i>	0800 012 4510
Green Network Energy	<i>*working through its guidance to customers</i>	0800 520 0202
Omni energy	<i>No facility to send out top-up cards or keys loaded with credit. Emergency credit available to maintain supply.</i>	0113 457 3219
Ovo	<i>*working through its guidance to customers</i>	0330 102 7517
Robin Hood Energy	<i>Not yet sending top up cards or keys loaded with credit</i> <i>*working through its guidance to customers</i>	0800 030 4567
Utilita	Main focus is remote top up through smart prepayment. Company has called all customers aged 80+	0345 207 2000
The Utility Warehouse	<i>*working through its guidance to customers</i>	0333 777 0777

## **Disconnected – debt and prepayment meters**

Failure to resolve an issue with your supplier within 28 days may result in disconnection of supply.

You will be contacted in advance about the disconnection.

Call and ask your supplier about your options. If the issues are not resolved,

Contact Citizen Advice - **0808 223 1133**.

During government instructions to remain at home and help fight Covid19, most energy suppliers have agreed not to switch off supply.

You will not be disconnected if on the 'Priority Service Register' between 1<sup>st</sup> October and 31<sup>st</sup> March

## **Power cut – Damage to supply/ blackout**

Check if you should be on the 'Priority Service register'

**Call free-phone '105'**

**Smell gas** - – call 24 hour Gas Emergency hotline – 0800 111 999

## **Priority Service Register**

The register ensures the most vulnerable are prioritised for supply and other services, including repairs by Western Power Distribution in the event of a power cut and general assistance with your supply, readings and meter advice.

Debt will not affect your eligibility.

You are eligible for the 'Priority Services Register' if you:

- are of pensionable age
- are disabled or chronically sick
- have a long-term medical condition
- have a hearing or visual impairment or additional communication needs
- are in a vulnerable situation.
- Have a child under the age of 5 (some restrictions)

### **How to apply:**

Contact your energy supplier when you first apply.

Contact your new supplier as and when you switch.

## **Energy efficiency and safety**

By law, your home requires a mandatory gas safety check each year.

This is part of your tenancy agreement and ensures your supply is safe, secure and efficient - which will help keep you and your wallet safe!

The Council repairs team will contact Council tenants in advance for any checks.

Failure to book an appointment and allow a service check can result in an abatement notice.

If someone calls unannounced, you should always contact Cardiff Council.

Always ask to see Council ID and always be sure you are talking to a Council employee before you let them in. Consider calling us on 029 2087 2087 if unsure

Install fire alarms and carbon monoxide alarms – available in DIY stores and most supermarkets. These cost around £15.

### **Gas danger signs**

- Gas flames burning orange or yellow instead of the normal blue
- Soot stains on or above appliances
- Coal or wood fires that burn slowly or go out.
- Smell gas – call 24 hour Gas Emergency hotline – 0800 111 999

## Help with mould and condensation

This can be a common problem in winter but may occur as we all stay at home more.

Advice to combat this includes:

- Keeping the home vented – open windows where safe and keep the air flowing through the home
- Keep air vents clear of all obstacles
- Remove mould by wiping down wood and walls with a 'fungicidal wash' which carries a 'Health and Safety Executive approved number (HSE)
- Avoid drying cloths in the home
- Use a drying rack instead of radiators or dry on an outdoor washing line.
- Consider drying on clothes hangers and hang from door frames or curtain poles above a slightly opened window
- Consider a tumble dryer as this proves almost as cheap as heating on radiators!
- Close internal doors when cooking
- Put lids on pans
- Only boil water you need – do not over fill pots and kettles
- Open windows while bathing and leave open for at least 20 mins after.
- Wipe down surfaces of condensation, especially after bathing
- Limit showers to around 4 mins
- Add cold water to the bath before hot – this reduces condensation
- Use an extractor fan if you have one
- Do not leave wet towels hanging around

Take care if leaving ground floor windows, or front/ back doors open.

**DO NOT** wedge open communal doors - This is a fire hazard and reduces the security of your home.

## Discounts and other payments towards your energy supply

### Warm Home Discount

This is discount of £140 on electricity bills during winter.

You may qualify if you receive certain benefits **AND** have children / a medical condition. To find out if you qualify you will need to contact your energy provider or attend the Advice Hub.

Those who qualify include:

Pensioners in receipt of '**Guaranteed Pension Credit**'

Households with a **Low income households**

Households with **someone classed as vulnerable**

### Winter Fuel Payment

Available for those who are of pensionable age – the age changes each year.

£100 - £300 payable towards heating bills between November and December.

It is paid automatically if you receive certain benefits.

Others will need to apply - Call the Winter Fuel Payment Centre on 0800 731 0160

### Cold Weather Payment

Some households qualify for £25 per qualifying week, paid automatically to those on certain benefits when the average temperature in the area is recorded as, or forecasted to be, zero degrees Celsius or below for seven consecutive days between 1 November and 31<sup>st</sup> March.

## Discretionary Assistance Fund – DAF



If all other benefits discounts and grants have been explored we can consider DAF

- Emergency Assistance Payment (EAP) – Emergency Cash
  - Must be over 16 and resident in Wales
  - Average £40 for a Single Person & £60 for a Family
  - Does not need to be paid back
  - Awarded via PayPoint so please ensure correct mobile number is entered onto the application

**Contact:** Welfare Liaison Team      029 20234200  
Council Advice Lice              029 20871071

## Finding cheaper Gas and Electricity

If you have been with the same supplier for over a year, you are most likely overpaying gas and electricity.

OFGEM found in their last estimation in 2019 that average fuel costs in the UK are:

	<b>Gas</b>	<b>Electricity</b>	<b>Combined</b>
<b>Annual</b>	£672	£696	£1,368
<b>Monthly</b>	£56	£58	£114
<b>Weekly</b>	£12.92	£13.39	£26.31

Living in a one or two bed flat should mean lower bills. UK Power estimate:

	<b>Gas</b>	<b>Electricity</b>	<b>Combined</b>
<b>Annual</b>	£396	£408	£804
<b>Monthly</b>	£33	£34	£67
<b>Weekly</b>	£7.62	£7.84	£15.46

## Why should I swap?

You could save up to **£374** over the year!

You are likely using more gas and electricity as we are told to spend more time at home - if told to stay at home and self-isolate due to having Coronavirus symptoms. However, fuel prices are falling.

If you have been with the same supplier for more than 1 year, you are likely to be on a '**Standard Variable Tariff**'.

Research by Ofgem has found the difference between the average Standard Variable Tariff of the six large suppliers and the market cheapest tariff was **£374**.

This means you could potentially save up to £374 over the year if you swap supplier!

## Who do I change to?

Consider online price comparison sites to compare deals and swap within minutes

## Am I able to swap?

Providing you do not have debt with your supplier you should be able to swap.

Some suppliers do not accept pre-payment meters –comparison sites will tell you.

## How do I swap?

Checking is simple and takes hardly any time if you have access to the internet on a PC, laptop or smart phone.

**Step 1** - Take a meter reading on your gas and electricity meter.

**Step 2** – visit one or all of the OFGEM accredited sites:

Website	Phone	Website	Phone	Website	Phone
energyhelpline.com	0800 074 0745	simplyswitch.com	0800 011 1395	uswitch.com	0800 688 8557
energylinx.co.uk	0800 849 7077	switchgasandelectric.com	03333 700 600	runpathdigital.com	
moneysupermarket.com	0800 177 7087	theenergystore.com	01259 220 270	quotezone.co.uk	
myutilitygenius.co.uk	0203 468 0461	unravelit.com	0333 344 0031		

**Step 3** – type in your personal details and address

**Step 4** – tell the site how much you spend

**Step 5** – click on the sites compare option

**Step 6** – let the site tell you what you can save

**Step 7** – consider the options

**Step 8** – select ONE cheaper plan from your searches

**Step 9** – let the site contact the new supplier.

## What happens when I swap?

The new supplier will contact your existing supplier and do all the work for you.

The new supplier will offer a cooling off period, which is usually a minimum of 14 days.

You will likely be contacted by your new supplier to discuss:

Payment options

Billing options

Contact details

Meter readings

Always ask for evidence of identity and consider calling the company on a number you source independently.

**Do not give personal or financial details over the phone without being 100% confident you are dealing with your genuine supplier.**

## **Contacts:**

### **Independent advice on your energy**

Welfare Reform Team	029 20234200
Council Advice Lice	029 20871071
Citizen Advice	029 2087 1016

### **For Gas safety checks**

Connect 2 Cardiff	029 2087 2087
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### **For advice on energy saving tips, reading your meter, reading bills and keeping the home in good condition:**

- Visit [Nea.org.uk](http://Nea.org.uk)
- Visit [OFGEM.gov.uk](http://OFGEM.gov.uk)
- Visit [Moneyadvice.org.uk](http://Moneyadvice.org.uk)
- Visit your supplier web pages