



actonenergy
save money and the environment

Act on Energy is an independent organisation based in Warwickshire, dedicated to educating the public in the problems associated with climate change and other energy issues. We also provide householders and small businesses in the surrounding region with realistic solutions to reduce energy use.

free advice line

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get in touch!

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Act on Energy is a company limited by guarantee and registered in England and Wales number 3621022 and a registered charity number 1075679. Registered office 29 Wellesbourne House, Walton Road, Wellesbourne, Warwickshire CV35 9JB



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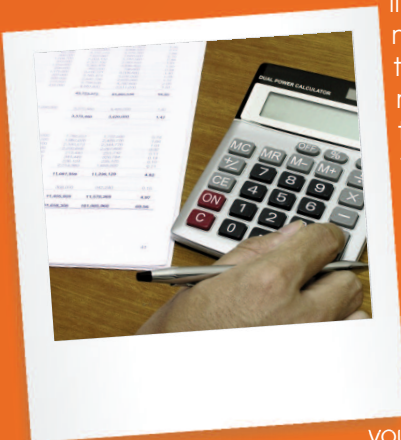
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How Do I Take Control of My Bills?

Do you check your meter reading when you get a bill? Most energy bills are based on estimated readings so if you do not check you may be paying more than you need. If your meter reading is less than the bill says, ring them and tell them. They will send you a replacement bill.

Get into the habit of taking regular meter readings. That way you will see if your energy use is unusual; you may have an electrical fault or a gas leak or have left something on.



How much do you pay?

Gas and electricity is charged by the kilowatt-hour (kWh) even though gas meters actually measure the gas in cubic metres. The number of kWh in a cubic metre of gas is shown on your bill because it varies.

The cheapest way to pay for gas and electricity is by monthly direct debit and you will get an extra discount if you buy both your gas and electricity from the same supplier. Usually the most expensive way is through a pre-payment card meter.

If you use a lot of electricity during the night, it may be cheaper to have an 'off-peak' tariff such as Economy 7. Remember that with an off-peak tariff, you pay more for your daytime electricity.



Switching Suppliers

You could save money by switching to a different energy supplier. You will also save money if you get both gas and electricity from the same supplier.

There are lots of different energy suppliers with lots of different tariffs and it can be quite difficult to know if you are getting the best deal. The easiest way is to use one of the Energywatch approved internet sites such as www.ukpower.com

- You will be asked how much energy (kWh or £) you have used in the last 12 months, who your current supplier is and how you pay. You will then see a list of all of your options.
- If you find you can save by switching to a different supplier, choose which one you want and switch online. However, the cheapest supplier one day may not be the next, but you can switch every 28 days if you want.
- To help the environment, you could switch to a 'Green' tariff. This means the supplier will buy the energy from a renewable source such as a wind farm or solar panels.
- Visit www.consumerfocus.org.uk or if you don't have a computer, ask a friend who does or get paper copies of the tariffs. Call **02077 997900**.
- Give the old supplier 28 days notice that you are changing.
- Pay any bills and read your meters on the day you switch. Send the reading to the new and old supplier. It may take 6 weeks to complete.



Smart Meters

The biggest problem with meters is that they just give a series of numbers that do not mean very much except to the energy supplier. You can get a battery powered device that tells you how much electricity you are using, how much it costs and sends this to a digital display screen.

For those who are concerned about Climate Change, it also tells you how much carbon dioxide is being produced at the power station to make the electricity you are using.



Switch it off

Now that you have got your energy as cheaply as you can, do not waste it.

Tip 1: Low energy lights only need a fifth of the energy of a filament bulb and should last several years. Over its life just one 20W low energy bulb can save over £100 in electricity. Many energy suppliers will give you some free, just ask them. Check out the special offers in the supermarkets and DIY stores.

Tip 2: When you buy a new appliance check the energy label to see how much it will cost to run. An 'A' rated fridge can save you about £40 a year compared to a 'G' rated one.

Tip 3: Finally, if you are not using something, switch it off at the wall or pull the plug out. Do not leave things on stand-by.

For more information on how to reduce your energy bills please call Act on Energy **FREE** on:

actonenergy 0800 988 2881