



Paying Your Electricity Bill



Customer Service
Code of Practice

This code of practice explains how to pay your electricity bill, what we will do to help if you have difficulty in paying and outlines your rights and responsibilities as a customer.

This code can be made available on request in large print and also on audio cassette.

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Making an enquiry

If you need any help understanding your bill or are unhappy with any aspect of our service, please tell us about it and give us the chance to put things right.

How to contact us:-

By telephone – 0845 555 7 200

Calling a member of our customer contact team with details of your enquiry is probably the quickest and most convenient way. We will take full details of your enquiry and will strive to solve it straight away. If this is not possible, we will let you know what action we need to take to fully resolve the concerns you raise and we will keep you informed of our progress.

Our working hours are: Monday - Friday: 08:30 – 17:30

In writing:-

If you prefer to write to us with details of your enquiry, please address all correspondence to:

The Customer Services Team, Ecotricity, Unicorn House, Russell Street, Stroud, Gloucestershire, GL5 3AX

By e-mail:

Our e-mail address for general enquiries is home@ecotricity.co.uk.

Our website:

Complete the form on our website:

<http://www.ecotricity.co.uk/customer-service/contact-us>

By Fax:

If you prefer to fax your letter to us, our fax number is 01453 756222, please address your letter to The Customer Services Team.

What you can expect from us

We promise that we will:-

- Ask the meter reader to obtain regular meter readings to help maintain the accuracy of our bills.
- Provide accurate and timely bills.
- Provide a prompt response to any enquiry you make.
- Provide regular assessments of payment plan accounts, adjusting payments where necessary and with the appropriate notification.
- Be sympathetic if you are finding it difficult to pay.
- Provide help and guidance to assist in preventing debt and disconnection if you ask us.
- Offer you a way to repay your debt in manageable installments through a payment plan, Fuel Direct or a pay as you go (Prepayment) meter.
- Install a pay as you go meter where it is safe & practical to do so.
- Promote the efficient use of energy & offer free, impartial advice to help you reduce your energy bills.
- Treat you with fairness and courtesy at all times.
- Treat all personal and financial details you provide in confidence.

What you can do to help us maintain your account accurately:-

- Allow our meter readers access to your home, when required.
- Provide your own meter readings if you miss the meter reader or receive an estimated bill. You can do this online at www.ecotricity.co.uk, by phone to 0845 555 7 400 or by post.
- Contact us immediately on 0845 555 7 200 if you do not agree with a bill.
- Let us know as soon as possible if you think your meter is faulty.
- Contact us immediately on 0845 555 7 300 if you are having difficulty paying your bill, so we can offer help and advice.
- If you are planning to move home call us on 0845 555 7 500.
- If you move into a new home where we are the supplier, please let us know as soon as possible so that we can set up an account for you 0845 555 7 100.
- Ensure we are advised of any change in your contact details.

How You Can Pay Your Bill:

Monthly Payments

Payments can be made by direct debit, standing order or cash/cheque each month so that you can spread your energy costs over the year, making it easier to budget. We look at your annual usage and calculate an appropriate monthly amount for you to pay. We will review your account at least every 12 months to help ensure that the amount you're paying closely matches your usage. At this stage we may need to change your monthly payment to reflect any difference in consumption. We will always notify you of any proposed change. You can help to ensure the amount you pay matches your usage by providing regular meter readings.

By Direct Debit following dispatch of the bill

You can pay by direct debit directly from your bank or building society account. We will send you your electricity bill and then wait at least 10 days before deducting the amount, to allow you time to query the bill should you wish to do so.

By Post

Following receipt of your electricity bill, you can send a cheque with the tear-off slip from your bill. Please write your account number on the reverse of the cheque and post to the address indicated on your bill.

At Any Bank

You can pay by cash or cheque at any bank, although there may be a charge if you use a bank other than your own.

Through Giro bank

If you have a Girobank account, you can fill in the Giro transfer form on the front of the bill and send it to Girobank in one of their prepaid envelopes or over the counter at a Post Office.

At Any Post Office

You can pay by cash or cheque at any local Post Office, but there will be a small charge for this.

Frequent Cash Payments

If you wish to pay by regular cash payments, we can provide a payment card which will allow you to pay in cash at any Post Offices. This service is free.

Fuel Direct

If you receive a state benefit like Income Support or Jobseekers' Allowance you can apply to join the fuel direct scheme. If the Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) accepts you on the scheme, they will deduct an agreed sum off your benefits to cover your energy costs and any balance that is outstanding on your account.

Telephone or Internet Banking

If you wish to pay by this method our bank details are as follows:

Bank Account no: 10276769
Sort Code: 55-61-08
Account name: The Renewable Energy Co Ltd
Reference: Your customer account number

Pay as you go (Prepayment) Meters

We do not encourage the use of pay as you go meters as we believe the additional costs outweigh any benefits. However, we recognise that some customers may prefer to use pay as you go meters as a method of paying for their electricity and we will therefore allow them to do so. We may also install a pay as you go meter with your agreement as a method of reclaiming an outstanding debt. Pay as you go meters are operated using a personal key or Smartcard, which can be bought or re-charged at a range of outlets including food stores and garages. Please see our code of practice about pay as you go meters for further information.

Other ways of making regular monthly payments

Monthly payments can be made, by cash, cheque, standing order or a post office payment card. Contact us for further details.

Safety Net for Vulnerable Customers

If you can't pay your bill and you believe you are vulnerable, it is important that you contact us to let us know. We can then help you to manage both your debt and ongoing usage to protect you from disconnection.

To stop your supply from being disconnected it is important that you contact us:

- To agree a payment plan or join the fuel direct scheme if you are eligible

- If you are a tenant and your landlord should have paid the bill, but has not
- To tell us if you are going to be away from home for more than 1 month so that we can consider delaying your bill until your return
- To tell us that the account you've been asked to pay is in someone else's name

If we tell you that we plan to disconnect your energy supply you can contact Social Services, The Department of Work & Pensions or Consumer Focus for help.

Priority Services Register

We are committed to helping customers with special needs. We manage these support services with our Priority Services Register (PSR). Special needs customers (or someone acting on their behalf) can register with us, and let us know the customer details and special needs requirements. We also tell the local electricity distribution company that the customer has special needs. They need this information when doing meter readings and maintenance. For further information and an application form see our web page <http://www.ecotricity.co.uk/customer-service/priority-services> or call our customer services team on 0845 555 7200.

Disconnection

We will take all possible steps to avoid disconnecting your electricity supply if you are experiencing payment problems.

We issue a reminder for any outstanding debt 14 days after the date the bill was issued, a final reminder 7 days later and then a final notice 7 days after the final reminder, so please do take the opportunity to call us as soon as you are aware you have a debt you cannot pay in full. Our contact details are on page 3.

However, if you do not communicate or co-operate with us, we will enforce, by law, our right to be paid for the energy we have provided you with. We may

- Refer your account to a debt collection agency
- Take court action against you
- Enforce installation of a pay as you go meter
- Disconnect your supply

We will always tell you if we decide to take legal action against you, or if we are making arrangements to cut off your energy supply. We will also let you know when we plan to carry out the disconnection.

You may be held for any charges associated with following up your debt, and if you refuse us access to your home, we will return with a warrant of entry from the court.

Restoring a Disconnected Supply

We can arrange to restore your electricity supply by midnight on the next working day, if you:

- Pay the full amount you owe, including a fee for putting your supply back on, together with any security deposit that may be required
- Agree to a suitable payment plan, or
- Agree that we can fit a Pay as you go meter, if it is safe and practical for us to do so. We can set the meter to collect ongoing usage and any remaining debt

Please note that we have a statutory power to refuse to restore a supply where there has been criminal damage, such as meter interference

Standards of service

As part of our Supply License, we are legally obliged to meet guaranteed standards relating to billing, metering and customer enquiries.

All of our staff are carefully selected and given extensive training to help ensure that you receive the highest level of customer service. Our customer contact team are also rigorously monitored and retested on their competencies throughout each year, to enable us to deliver a consistent, high quality standard of service to our customers.

The industry's Guaranteed and Overall Standards of Service cover the activities of your local network operator. The network operating company owns the local distribution system, which we use to transport electricity from the National Grid to your home. Our industry regulator OFGEM (The

Office of Gas and Electricity Markets) ensures that the network operators comply with these standards. Details of the required standards are shown here on Ofgem's site [Table of Guaranteed Standards](#)

What To Do If We Get It Wrong

We aim to provide the highest level of service at all times, but inevitably mistakes do happen. If we have made a mistake, or you are unhappy with any aspect of our service, please tell us and we will strive to put things right immediately: our full contact details are on page 3.

Full details of our complaints process can be found via our website from the customer services page <https://www.ecotricity.co.uk/customer-service/when-something-goes-wrong>, including a downloadable version of our complaint handling code of practice. Alternatively you can obtain a copy by calling our customer service team on 0845 555 7200.