

THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

Energy Advice Guide



www.edinburgh.gov.uk/homeenergy

Second Edition

◆ EDINBURGH ◆
YOUR COUNCIL – YOUR ENVIRONMENT

About this guide

We're responsible for improving all council homes across the city.

We want to help our tenants keep their homes warm and comfortable. With rising energy prices this is becoming ever more difficult. We're working to improve the energy efficiency of our housing, but there are also things that you can do to keep warm whilst keeping your energy bills as low as possible. This guide has been written to help you to do this.

As a city we also have challenging targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and tackle climate change. Over a quarter of all our greenhouse gas emissions are generated in the home, so we all need to try to waste less energy. This guide has hints and tips to help you with this too.

If you have a question about keeping your home warm, getting the best deal from your energy provider or saving money on heating and power, this guide will help you to find the answer.

Please keep it somewhere handy.

sfc.energy@edinburgh.gov.uk

0131 529 7432

www.edinburgh.gov.uk/homeenergy

Thanks to Changeworks
for their help in producing
this guide.
www.changeworks.org.uk



Part of Sustainable
Edinburgh 2020

• EDINBURGH •
YOUR COUNCIL - YOUR ENVIRONMENT

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Introduction

This booklet explains buying and using energy in your home, and how to get the most out of your heating, appliances and lighting. It also includes information on reading your meters, understanding fuse boxes and consumer units.

Setting up gas and electricity accounts with a power company

The City of Edinburgh Council has a preferred supplier for gas and electricity to council housing. This means that in some council housing the gas and electricity supply will already be set up with the preferred supplier, to make it easier for you when you move in. However you can change suppliers after 28 days. If you want to change suppliers you have to do this yourself.

Responsibilities: Yours and ours

You are responsible for minor repairs like replacing fuses and light bulbs.

Gas and electricity fixtures in your home will have been checked before you moved in, and if you have gas heating this is serviced and checked by the Council every year.

Repairs

If you think there are repairs that need to be done by us you can contact

Repairs Direct

Phone 0131 200 2345 during normal working hours (8.00am – 8.00pm)

Email: repairsdirect@edinburgh.gov.uk

Emergency repairs:

Phone 0131 200 2000 (out of hours).

More information about repairs is included in our 'Repairs Policy' booklet.

Where to get help and advice

The contact details for your neighbourhood office are on the back page along with details of other council services. Free impartial energy advice is also available from **Home Energy Scotland**, by calling Freephone 0808 808 2282 (8.00am – 8.00pm Mon-Fri, 9.00am – 5.00pm Sat). From a mobile, call 0300 456 2655 (calls charged at a local network rate).

(All running costs referred to in this guide are approximate and based on December 2013 rates.)

Your meters

When you move in, take the **meter reading(s)** and make sure that you keep a note of these and the date they were taken. This will make sure that the bills you get are for the electricity/ gas you have used, and that you are not charged for any energy used by the previous tenant.

To read your meters...



Gas meters have a row of 5 or 6 numbers.

You need to read the first 4 numbers from left to right (the black numbers only) if you have 8 numbers only read the 5 black numbers.

Write your first gas meter reading in the boxes below. Then write the date that it was taken.

Meter Reading

Date of Reading



Electric meters usually have a row of 5 or 6 numbers.

You need to read the first 5 numbers from left to right (the black numbers only).

Write your first electricity meter reading in the boxes below. Then write the date that it was taken.

Meter Reading

Date of Reading



Electricity meters for electric heating

If you have electric storage heaters the meter will have more than one set of numbers. Some meters will have two sets. One set is used to record electricity used during the day and will be labelled 'normal' or 'day'. The other set of numbers or reading will be labelled 'low' or 'night'.

Write your first meter readings in the boxes below. Then write the date they were taken.

'Low' or 'night'

'Normal' or 'day'

Date of Reading

Digital electricity meters

Your meter might be a modern digital type. To take readings you will need to push the button on the meter to view the different screens. You will have up to 3 meter readings displayed – labelled rate 1 ('day'), rate 2 ('night') and rate 3 or rate B ('control').

Write your first meter readings in the boxes below. Remember to write down the date too!

RATE 1

RATE 2

RATE 3

Date of Reading

If you have a prepayment or 'key' meter (pictured) it will also have a digital display. Pressing the blue button will change the display so you can find out the readings for the different rates.



Important facts about prepayment meters

- Make sure that you order your own meter card or key from the electricity or gas supplier.
- Do not use the previous tenant's prepayment card or key since any money you pay will be credited to their account.
- Never let anyone else buy cards for you and always keep the receipts.
- Make sure you buy credit from a Post Office or an authorised Paypoint or PayZone and beware of prepayment meter scams.

You may want to consider having the meter removed by the supplier as prepayment meters are often a more expensive method of paying for fuel. You have to pay charges for having the meter, roughly £17.00 per year. Having a prepayment meter removed means you can look at cheaper ways of paying for your fuel – like direct debit. If you have a prepayment meter removed you may have to pay a security deposit.

Consumer units and fuse boxes



The Main Switch

There is a **RED** switch on your consumer unit. This is the **MAIN SWITCH**. If the switch is **UP**, the **MAINS** is **ON**.

Beside the red main switch, there are several smaller **GREY** switches, which are the **TRIP SWITCHES**. There is one trip switch for every circuit in your home. Underneath each grey switch there is a small label to tell you what it controls. When the trip switch is **UP** it is **ON** and the circuit is live. These switches protect your home in the event of a short circuit or fault, resulting in the switch being **DOWN**. If this happens the switch will turn itself **OFF**.

Test buttons

On top of each switch is a small button, normally marked 'T'. This is the test button. If pressed, the button will test the operation of the switch, turning it **OFF** (**DOWN**). After testing push the switch up to turn the power to the circuit **ON**.

What is a consumer unit?

Your consumer unit is the fuse box controlling electricity to different parts of your home. This is new technology that, in the event of a fault, will operate much faster than a fuse. It is also easier to reset the unit, compared to changing a fuse.

What to do if the electricity goes OFF

Sockets and appliances

Pull down the plastic cover on the consumer unit. Under it you should find one of the **TRIP SWITCHES** is in the **OFF** position, and is **DOWN**. Unplug all appliances (kettle, TV etc) on the circuit that is **OFF**. If the trip switch controls a fixed appliance (cooker, hot water, central heating or shower), switch it **OFF** at the **ISOLATOR SWITCH** on the wall. Then switch the **TRIP SWITCH** back **ON** at the consumer unit. Plug back in, and switch on all appliances one by one. If the power goes off as you switch the appliances back on the appliance that triggers the power cut is faulty. Leave it unplugged and turn the **TRIP SWITCH** to **ON** again.

Lighting

When you pull down the plastic cover on the consumer unit you will find one of the **TRIP SWITCHES** is in the **OFF** position, **DOWN**. Switch off all the lights on the circuit that has gone **OFF**. Switch the **TRIP SWITCH** back **ON** at the consumer unit. Switch on each of the lights one by one. If as you switch on one light, the power goes **OFF** again the light is faulty. Start again but leave the faulty light off and contact Repairs Direct on 0131 200 2345.

If the **TRIP SWITCH** will not reset with the appliances or equipment switched **OFF** again contact Repairs Direct.

Thinking about changing your fuel supplier?

Switching supplier is a good idea:

- It could make your bills cheaper – most people can save 20% on their energy bills by changing supplier. This could be an extra £270 a year in your pocket
- You may want to buy electricity from a more environmentally-friendly company
- You may also want to change if you have had problems with your current supplier.

Buying gas and electricity (a dual fuel arrangement) from the same supplier may give you a further discount.

Be careful:

Suppliers may contact you directly and ask you to switch from your existing supplier, and to sign contracts with them. Be cautious of claims made by sales people about the savings you could make, especially those cold calling at your door. Do not rush into a new contract; you may get a better deal elsewhere.

If you are in a property under a Heat with Rent arrangement, check with your Housing Officer, since you may not be able to switch.

Do not change supplier if you do not want to.

How to choose:

- 1 Work out how much fuel you use:** To find cheaper gas and electricity, you need to know how much (how many kilowatts) gas and electricity you use. The cheapest supplier for you might not be the cheapest supplier for someone else – it depends on how much fuel you use. Use your old bills to add up how much electricity and gas you use in a year. If you don't have your old bills, phone your supplier and ask them how much you have used in the last year.

Write down how much gas and electricity you use in a year here:

Electricity used in a year kWh

Gas used in a year kWh

For more advice call Home Energy Scotland on freephone 0808 808 2282

- 2 Decide how you want to pay for your fuel,** as this will impact on how much the supplier will charge. You will usually be charged less if you pay by Direct Debit, or online. If you want to pay a quarterly bill as it arrives, by cash at a PayPoint, or by a prepayment meter, you will usually pay more.
- 3 Research your options.** There are websites and phone lines that can tell you about different suppliers and how much they charge.

www.which.co.uk/switch

www.energyhelpline.com or freephone 0800 074 0745

www.uswitch.com or freephone 0800 404 7961

www.adviceguide.co.uk/Scotland phone 0808 800 9060

www.moneysavingexpert.com

4

Check with the new supplier:

- How much do they charge per kilowatt based on how you prefer to pay for your fuel?
- Is there a Standing Charge (e.g. a daily charge)? Some companies do not have a daily charge, but the price you pay for fuel may be higher.
- Do these prices include VAT?
- How long are these prices guaranteed?
- How long is the contract for, and is there a charge to end it?
- Where can payments be made?

5

Compare the options to find out which supplier is the cheapest for you: Calculate the cost over a full year: multiply the kilowatt hours (kWh) you use in a year with the charge per kilowatt hour (kWh). Remember to include standing charges, or the higher rate for a proportion of the fuel, and VAT. It's a good idea to get several quotes so you can find the best deal.

You don't have to switch suppliers to save money. You could call your current supplier to find out about better deals as well as the Warm Home Discount (see pages 11 and 12 for more details).

Making the switch:

- Write down your supply number, or S-number (electricity) and meter point reference number (gas) from your bills. This is not the same as your account number or meter number, and is unique to your meter. This will ensure that your new supplier takes over the supply at the right address
- Take meter readings, and write them down
- Phone your chosen new supplier/s and give them your details. It can take up to 8 weeks for your supply to be switched
- You will be asked for meter readings: provide them with the date they were taken

Write your details here:**Electricity supply number** Meter reading when you first
phone the new supplier Meter reading: Date: Meter reading when the new
supplier takes over the supply Meter reading: Date: **Gas meter point reference no:** Meter reading when you first
phone the new supplier Meter reading: Date: Meter reading when the supplier
takes over the supply Meter reading: Date:

For more advice call Home Energy Scotland on freephone 0808 808 2282

Troubleshooting:

- If you live in a flat, the supplier may mistakenly take over someone else's supply in your building. To avoid any confusion, make sure your new supplier has your electricity supply number (S-number) and/or gas meter point reference number, and that your details are correct on letters you receive from your supplier
- You may not be able to change supplier until you have cleared your debt
- If you are being billed by two suppliers at once, call both of them and give them the meter readings and the date you changed from one to the other
- If you don't receive any bills from anyone, you need to find out why. Call National Grid UK for gas and MPAS for electricity to find out who supplies you (numbers below). Then call the company who supplies you to ask why you haven't received a bill
- If you have two electricity supply numbers you may not be able to change supplier. This may be the case if you have electric storage heaters

If you have a complaint, and the supplier is not being helpful, contact Citizens Advice Bureau on 0808 800 9060 for advice on how to take your complaint further.

**For more advice call the Home Energy Scotland on freephone
0808 808 2282**

Energy suppliers and their phone numbers:

Atlantic Electricity & Gas 0800 028 3028

Part of Scottish and Southern Energy

Ebico 0800 458 7689

UK's only not-for-profit energy supplier

Part of Scottish and Southern Energy

Ecotricity 0845 555 7100

EDF Energy 0800 096 9000

E.ON 0800 015 9855

Good Energy 0845 456 1640 Electricity only

Green Energy 0800 783 8551 Electricity only

npower 0845 071 4525

Scottish Gas (British Gas) 0800 048 0505

Scottish Hydro Electric (Scottish and Southern) 0800 980 2472

ScottishPower 0845 270 0700

Other useful numbers:

National Grid UK 0870 608 1524

MPAS 0845 270 9101

Citizens Advice Bureau 0808 800 9060

www.adviceguide.co.uk/scotland

Home Energy Scotland 0808 808 2282

Different ways to pay for fuel

There are five ways to pay for gas and electricity. Look below to find out which payment method is best for you.

	Advantages	Disadvantages	Who would it suit?
<p>Direct Debit – an agreed set amount is taken directly from your bank account every month. The amount is based on what your fuel supplier estimates you use in a year, averaged out. The more often you supply meter readings the more accurate these payments will be.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payments the same all year round • Supplier should review and revise the amount you pay every 12 months • Usually the cheapest way to pay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you use more gas or electricity than you have paid for, your direct debit amount will be increased for next year • The money will come out of your bank account whether it is in credit or not 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Households with regular income and a bank account • Households that prefer monthly budgeting
<p>Periodic Billing – your supplier sends you a bill every 2 or 3 months for the amount of fuel you have used in that time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You pay for the amount of fuel you have used, after you have used it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to budget because of large difference in winter and summer bills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Households whose income can cope with higher winter bills.
<p>Payment Plans – you pay a set amount every week, fortnight, or month, based on what your fuel supplier estimates you use in a year averaged out.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small set payments on a regular basis making it easier to budget • Can be used to pay back fuel debt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you use more gas or electricity than you have paid for, your payment amount will be increased for the next year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Households without bank accounts • Households that want to pay weekly or fortnightly and people repaying debts • Households that find it convenient to pay at post offices or PayPoints
<p>Fuel Direct – the Benefits Agency and your fuel supplier organise payment of your fuel usage and debt to be deducted directly from your benefits. This payment is only available to people in debt and on Income Support, Income-Based Job Seeker's Allowance, Pension Credit or Income-based Employment and Support Allowance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fuel charges are taken out of your income-based benefit so you don't have to keep money aside • Fuel costs and debt repayments are evenly spread at a manageable level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you use more gas or electricity than you have paid for, your payment amount will be increased for the next year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People who are in debt and on income-based benefits, particularly people in ill health or with mobility problems, and who do not have a bank account to pay by direct debit
<p>Prepayment Meter – you pay for fuel as it is used using an electricity prepayment meter and/or gas 'Quantum' meters.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You can pay as you go, and can't use fuel you haven't paid for • The meter can be set to pay off debts gradually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usually the most expensive way to pay • You can cut yourself off if you don't have enough money to buy credit, or if you have difficulty getting to shops to buy credit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People in debt or who have difficulty budgeting

For more advice call Home Energy Scotland on freephone 0808 808 2282

The Warm Home Discount Scheme

The Warm Home Discount Scheme provides a £135 rebate (i.e. money back) on electricity bills in winter. Find out if you qualify, when you'll get your rebate, and how the scheme works.

Who can get the Warm Home Discount?

Pension Credit customers are automatically considered for the discount.

You may qualify for it if on the 'qualifying date' each year all of the following apply:

- you got only the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit (no Savings Credit)
- your name, or your partner's name was on your electricity bill
- your electricity account was with one of the energy suppliers participating in this scheme – see '[Energy suppliers participating in this scheme](#)' on page 12.

If you meet the conditions above you do not need to do anything now to get your discount.

If you do not qualify automatically because you get the Savings Credit element of Pension Credit, see '[Can other people get a Warm Home Discount?](#)' opposite.

Can other people get a Warm Home Discount?

Energy suppliers may also give a £135 discount to some other customers in vulnerable groups. Each supplier has different eligibility criteria they will use to decide who may get the discount. Contact your electricity supplier to find out if you are eligible.

What you need to do

If you were only on the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit on the 'qualifying date' each year, you don't need to take any action now. Otherwise contact your electricity supplier to find out if you are eligible and how to apply.

How much you can get

If you qualify you'll receive £135 towards your electricity bill in the winter months.

Energy suppliers participating in the scheme

The electricity suppliers involved in this scheme are:

- Atlantic
- British Gas
- EDF Energy
- E.ON
- Equipower
- Equigas
- First Utility
- Manweb
- M&S Energy
- npower
- Sainsbury's Energy
- Scottish Gas
- Scottish Hydro
- ScottishPower
- Southern Electric
- SSE
- Swalec
- Utility Warehouse

Cold Weather Payment and Winter Fuel Payment

Rebates paid under the Warm Home Discount Scheme will not affect any Cold Weather Payment or Winter Fuel Payment you may receive.

Cold Weather Payments help people, who get certain income-related benefits, with their increased heating costs caused by periods of very cold weather during winter. You don't need to apply - if you can get a Cold Weather Payment, you'll be paid it automatically

Winter Fuel Payments help older people keep warm in winter. If you haven't received it before, find out what you need to do.

Further help

For further information about the scheme call the **Warm Home Discount Scheme Helpline on 0845 603 9439**.
Lines are open from 8.00am - 6.00pm, Monday to Friday.

For other help with reducing your fuel costs call Home Energy Scotland FREE on 0808 808 2282

Problems paying for fuel

If you think your bills might be wrong, check:

- that it is your bill – check the name, address, and dates
- that the meter readings on your bill are correct – there may be errors or estimations: look for the letter ‘E’ against meter readings
- your bills are from the right fuel supplier.

Common ways to get into fuel debt:

There are lots of ways that people get into debt with their fuel supplier:

- estimated meter readings on your bill show less fuel used than the amount of fuel you are actually using in your home. Giving regular meter readings to your supplier can help avoid this
- weekly or monthly fuel payments are too low
- your home is expensive to heat because it is not energy efficient - call Home Energy Scotland on 0808 808 2282.

Repaying fuel debt:

If you are in debt to your fuel supplier, phone them to arrange how to repay the debt.

You won't have to pay it all at once.

Work out with your fuel supplier what you can afford to pay back each week or month, and remember you still have to pay for the fuel you are using now.

Ways to repay debt include:

- Paying extra on top of your weekly or monthly payments. You don't have to clear the debt off in one year if you can't afford to
- Using a prepayment card meter to clear the debt gradually and prevent the debt increasing. There is a weekly rental fee for a prepayment meter
- Paying for fuel use and debt out of your Income Support, Job Seekers Allowance, Employment Support Allowance, and Pension Credit. Each week a payment for fuel is taken off your Income Support, Job Seekers Allowance, Employment Support Allowance, and Pension Credit money. This is called Fuel Direct, or direct payment. Ask your supplier about this option.

**For more advice call Home Energy Scotland
on freephone 0808 808 2282**

How to prevent fuel debt

- If you can't pay your fuel bills, let your fuel supplier know as soon as possible – they might be able to help, by spreading the cost.
- Make sure estimated meter readings those with an 'E' against a meter reading on your bill or statement are corrected with real meter readings. If no one comes to read your meter then take meter readings yourself and tell your fuel supplier.
- If you move house, take final meter readings when you move out and readings from your new meter(s) when you move into your new home. Tell your fuel supplier.
- Ask your fuel supplier about different ways to pay for fuel. There may be an easier way to pay that allows you to budget, or one that saves you money.
- If you go away for a long time, make sure that your fuel supplier knows and arrange to have someone deal with any fuel bills or payments.
- Claim all the benefits you are entitled to – contact your local Advice Shop or Benefits Office for information, or call the Home Energy Scotland.
- Call Home Energy Scotland to see how you could save energy.

Who can give advice ...

Question:

Who can tell me who my electricity supplier is?

Answer:

A company called Meter Point Administration Services (MPAS). Their enquiry helpline number is

0845 270 9101

Question:

Who can tell me who my gas supplier is?

Answer:

A company called National Grid Gas plc. Their national meter number helpline is

0870 608 1524

Question:

Who can advise me if I have difficulties with my fuel supplier?

Answer:

An organisation called Citizens Advice Bureau. Their enquiry helpline number is

0808 800 9060

Question:

Who can advise me on how to save energy and money?

Answer:

Home Energy Scotland. Their freephone number is

0808 808 2282

Gas heating in your home

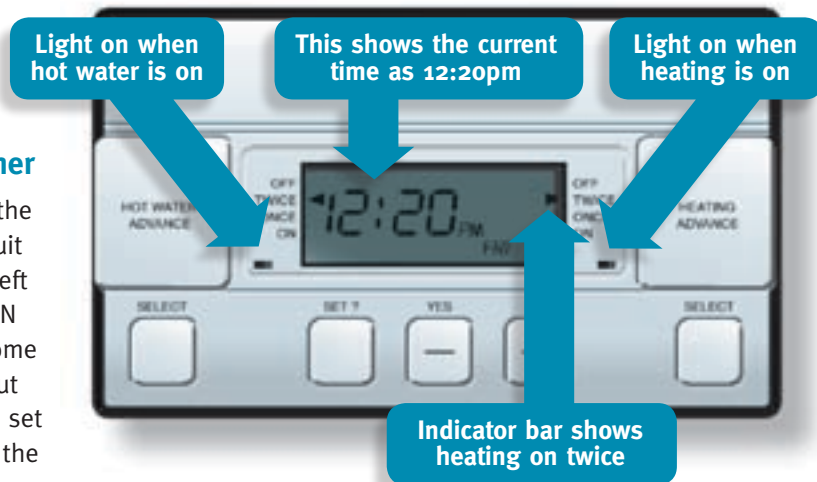


Your heating system includes a gas boiler and radiators

The boiler is a room-sealed boiler fitted to the wall. The boiler draws air from outside through a pipe (which is necessary for the boiler to work safely).

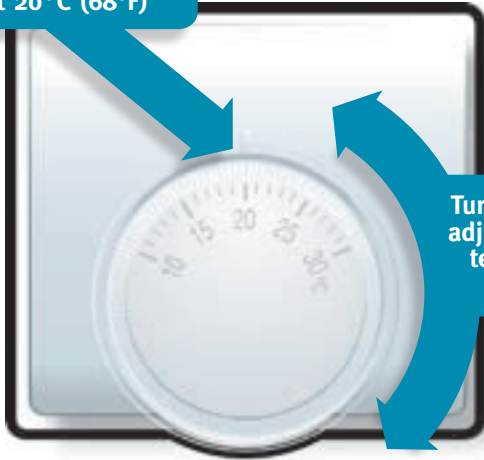
Your system is controlled by a programmer

This is a time-clock which you can set to switch the heating and hot water ON and OFF at times to suit you. Please refer to the leaflet which has been left in your home to find out about how to set the ON and OFF times. You should set the heating to come on about an hour before you get up and off about an hour before you go to bed. Most households set their programmer to come on for 1 to 3 hours in the morning and 4 to 6 hours at night. The programmer has an ADVANCE FUNCTION to allow you to switch on the hot water and heating on between the programmed times.



Remember to change the time on your programmer to reflect daylight saving, putting clocks forward by one hour in March and back by one hour in October. You'll also need to adjust it for colder and warmer times of year, and holidays.

This shows the dial is set at 20°C (68°F)



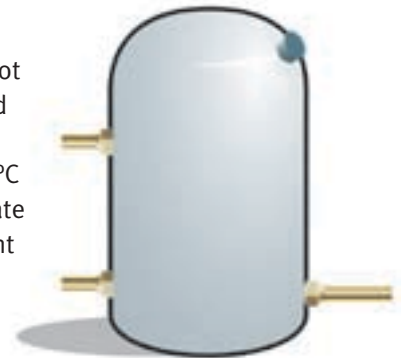
Turn the dial to adjust the room temperature setting

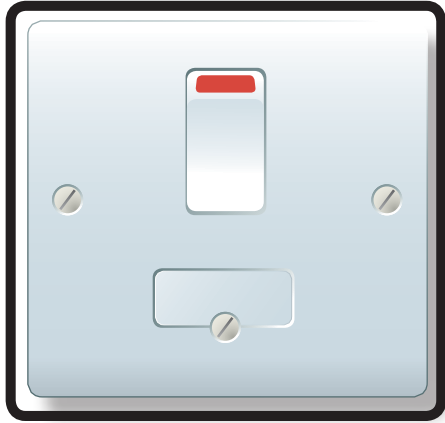


The room thermostat is normally fixed to the wall in the hall and controls the overall temperature in your home. When the air temperature reaches the temperature set on the thermostat the boiler pump will switch off automatically. The recommended temperature for halls, bathrooms and bedrooms is 18°C (64°F), and for living rooms and kitchens 21°C (70°C). If you are less active, disabled, elderly or have young children you may need to be a little warmer – about 22°C.

Thermostatic radiator valves are fitted to the radiators in your home, except the radiator in the hall which is controlled by the room thermostat. The radiator valves are designed to measure the air temperature in the room and to reduce the output of the radiators when the temperature in the room has reached the setting on the valve. This is particularly important in sunny rooms where they are warmed up by heat from daylight, or in rooms which are frequently used. Set the radiator valves high in main living rooms, with the valves in bedrooms and other less frequently used rooms set lower.

The cylinder thermostat controls the temperature of the water in the hot water tank. This temperature will have been set by the installer and should not need to be altered. However if your hot water is very hot and needs to be diluted with cold water then the thermostat needs to be adjusted to 60°C and no lower. If your heating is a combi system you will not have a separate hot water tank. Most hot water cylinders have an electric immersion element fitted as a back up. This should be switched off unless there is a problem with your gas supply as it can be expensive.





Your heating system is connected to the household electricity supply, and controlled through the Maintenance Control Switch. It is an isolation switch that is turned off for safety when servicing the central heating, but then turned back on after the servicing has been completed.

New installations: If the gas central heating in your home is new, the company putting in the heating provides a one year guarantee and is responsible for any breakdowns in the first year. Should a breakdown occur on the heating system during this first year telephone the council on 529 7079 during office hours. Breakdowns outwith office hours should be reported to the Central Emergency Service on 200 2000.

Other forms of gas heating

Individual gas fires are fitted to chimneys. These are far more efficient than flame-effect fires. Homes with central heating systems and a fire should only use the fire sparingly, as the central heating will be far more efficient than the fire.

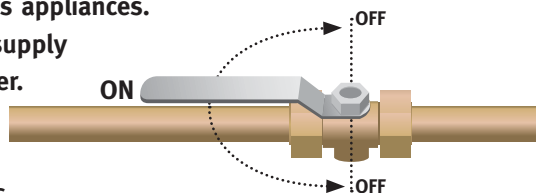
Wall-mounted gas heaters are installed in rooms where an open flame fire would not be allowed. They usually have thermostatic and timeclock controls.

Bottled gas heaters are free standing and refuelled with refillable cylinders. They are very expensive to use and are not allowed to be used in council homes.

Gas safety

If you smell gas

1. Turn off all gas appliances.
2. Turn the gas supply off at the meter.



Turn the lever handle on the gas supply pipe beside the meter by 90 degrees to shut off the gas supply.

3. Open windows.
4. Do not switch any lights on nor power switches off.
5. Call the National Grid Gas Emergency Service on 0800 111 999.

Annual maintenance inspection

To ensure that the gas appliances are safe, working efficiently and at lowest cost, they must be serviced and checked every year. We will write to you once a year and give a date for the service to take place. You must allow access for the contractor to carry out this essential maintenance and safety check. If you are not available on the date offered please contact one of our contractors on Freephone 0800 858666, as soon as possible to arrange a suitable date. Failure to allow access will result in us forcing entry to your property, cutting off your gas supply and leaving you without heating.

Ventilation

Do not block or cover any air vents in the room where your boiler is. This can stop the flow of fresh air and cause dangerous fumes to come into the room. This can be fatal.

Gas repairs

Any fault in your heating should be reported to Repairs Direct.

Gas meters

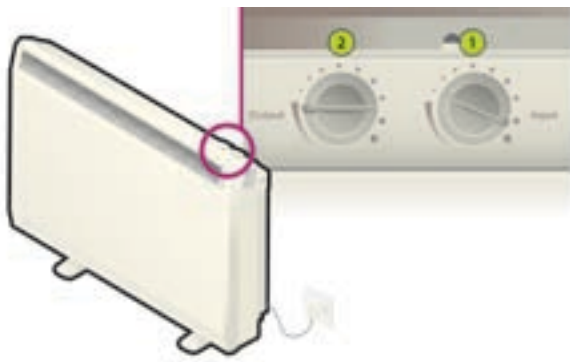
There are three main types which are described on pages 4 and 5.

How to find out who your gas supplier is

The name and phone number of your gas supplier will be on your last gas bill. If you do not have a bill and do not know which company supplies your home:

1. Find the red coloured meter serial number (the number ending in S) on your gas meter and take a note of this.
2. Phone Transco on 0870 608 1524, give your full address, postcode and the meter serial number.
3. Ask for the name of your supplier.

Electric heating



Storage heaters

Storage heaters run on Off Peak electricity, so are the cheapest form of electric heating if they are used correctly. They switch on at night and store up heat inside, so when you need heat the next day you can use the OUTPUT control to let the heat out.

How are they controlled?

There are two controls on most storage heaters, an **INPUT** control and an **OUTPUT** control. The INPUT control tells the heater

how much heat to store up, during the night. The OUTPUT control tells the heater how much heat to let out into the room, (often called BOOST or ROOM TEMPERATURE).



In the winter, you may need to set the INPUT control to its highest setting (usually 6 or 9). As the weather gets milder you may not need it as high. The higher the INPUT setting the more heat the heater will store, and the more electricity it will use.

If you have it set too high for the size of room it is heating, or for the time of year, you will be wasting money. When you don't need heat out of the storage heater (when the room is warm enough), and before you go to bed, make sure that the OUTPUT control is turned right down (usually anticlockwise, as far left as the control will turn). If you don't turn the OUTPUT control down at night the storage heater will use more electricity, heat a room that is empty and leave you with very little heat for the next day.

When the weather gets too warm to need any heat from your storage heaters, switch them off at the wall. Don't forget to turn them back on again in the autumn!

Points to note

Do not put ornaments or clothing on top of the heaters, as the outside can get very hot and you could risk a fire, or break the heater. Sometimes the thermostats inside the heaters can become faulty, so if your heaters start to get very hot or don't switch on at all, contact Repairs Direct.

If you have storage heaters, use them! Even though they look big and bulky, because they use cheaper electricity than bar fires or panel heaters they are much cheaper to use. A well controlled storage heater should give you 10 hours of useful heat a day or more.

If your room is cold by the evening, check that the OUTPUT is turned down overnight, and the INPUT is set high enough.

Hot water heating with off-peak electricity



If you have storage heaters you should also be able to make use of cheaper electricity to heat your hot water at night. You should have a hot water timer either in your kitchen or in the cupboard near the hot water tank. This will automatically switch your immersion on for about 5 hours at night, when cheap electricity is available and allow you to heat extra water during the day using the Boost Control.

It is much more expensive to heat water up during the daytime so check the timer is set up correctly.

Check the clock on the timer is set to the correct time.

Check the timer is set so the water is heated during the off peak period between midnight and 7.00am (for ScottishPower, other suppliers vary).

Other forms of electric heating

These are usually plugged into wall sockets, though some are wired directly to a switch. They usually operate on daytime 'peak tariffs', though households on Economy 7 tariffs can operate these on the cheaper tariff if used during the cheaper rate hours. This does not apply to some of the special tariffs for which the cheaper rate is available for storage heating and/or hot water.

Slimline wall mounted panel heaters including timers and thermostatic controls are often used in bedrooms where storage heaters are fitted elsewhere in the home. They usually have thermostatic and timer controls.

Electricity tariffs

Electricity Costs – Domestic or Standard Rate

Households with non-electric heating usually pay a domestic or standard rate for their electricity. If you have electric storage heating the rates are different and you should look at the section on your relevant tariff (contact your supplier if you are unsure) – ‘Domestic Economy/Economy 7/White Meter Rate No1’, or ‘ComfortPlus Control’, or ‘ComfortPlus White Meter’.

Domestic or Standard rates remain the same at all times of day and the average electricity cost is 15p (per kWh) based on prepayment prices. You may also have to pay an Average Standing Charge of 22p per day (£1.54 per week) based on prepayment prices. Fuel suppliers who do not have a Standing Charge generally charge more per kWh for the electricity you use.

You may save money by changing fuel supplier, saving over £200 a year!

For up-to-date prices from all the electricity suppliers contact the Citizens Advice Bureau on **0808 800 9060**, or go to www.adviceguide.co.uk/Scotland

How much?

You can work out how much it costs to run any appliance. Firstly, find the information plate on the appliance. This is a silver or white label that tells you the model number and power rating in watts (W) or kilowatts (kW).

To find out how much it costs to run an appliance for one hour:

1. Find the power rating. If it is written in watts go to step 2. If it is written in kilowatts go straight to step 3.
2. Divide the number of watts by 1000 to convert the power rating to kilowatts.
3. Multiply the number of kilowatts by 0.15p. This will give you the cost to run the appliance for one hour in pence.

Remember

Similar appliances may use different amounts of electricity, depending on how efficient they are. Large appliances like washing machines, fridges and freezers are labelled (see picture). An ‘A++’ rated appliance is most efficient, and ‘G’ least efficient. Try to buy appliances as near to ‘A++’ as possible, you will save money in the long-run, even if they are more expensive to buy.

N.B. prices are inclusive of VAT

Domestic or Standard Rate charges

Here are some examples of how much it costs to run an appliance, based on an electricity cost of 15p per kWh.

The costs are approximate and may not exactly match the appliances you have. Prices in this guide include VAT and are based on average costs.

Handy Tip

Only use your water immersion heater when you need hot water. Leaving it on all the time wastes electricity and costs a lot of money.

Appliance

Cost per hour

Heating

Panel heater – 2kW 30p

3 bar fire – 3kW 45p

2 bar fire – 2kW 30p

1 bar fire – 1kW 15p

Oil filled radiator – 2kW 30p

Fan heater – 2.5kW 38p

Hot water

Immersion – 3kW 45p

Other

Washing machine – 3kW 15p per cycle

Tumble dryer – 2.5kW 60p per cycle

Jug kettle – 2.5kW 38p

TV/stereo – 100W 2p

Microwave – 800W 12p

Lightbulb – 100W 8p (5hrs)

Energy saving bulb – 20W 2p (5hrs)

Hoover – 1.2kW 18p

Computer – 30W 2p (5hrs)

Mobile phone charger – 5W 1p (10hrs)

An old fridge or fridge-freezer could cost you up to three times as much.

Refrigerator – A+ rated, small 44p per week

Fridge-freezer – A rated, half & half 82p per week

Other tariffs

Domestic Economy / Economy 7 / White Meter Rate No1

These electricity tariffs are for households with storage heating.

You may be on one of these tariffs if your heating system is more than about ten years old. Check with your fuel supplier. With these tariffs, your storage heaters use cheap-rate electricity to store heat up during the night. They then release the heat slowly throughout the next day. This makes storage heaters cheaper to use than plug in heaters or fires. All other electrical appliances in the house use cheap rate electricity at night and a more expensive rate during the day. Your fuel supplier chooses 8 1/2 hours between 10pm and 8.30am, and you get cheaper electricity during that time.

How much does it cost?

Supplier and Tariff	Standing Charge Per Day	Day Rate 1 Unit Cost	Night Rate Unit Cost
Scottish Hydro-Electric Economy 7: Standard	27.41p	16.41p	8.36p
Scottish Gas Economy 7: Credit	17p	19.43p	6.84p
Scottish Power White Meter Rate No.1	27.39p	17.29p	8.72p
E.ON Economy 7	27p	15.27p	7.56p

You may save over £200 a year by changing supplier!

For up-to-date prices from all the electricity suppliers contact:

Citizens Advice Bureau on 0808 800 9060, or go to www.adviceguide.co.uk/Scotland

Electricity Costs: ComfortPlus Control

ComfortPlus Control is a modern electricity tariff provided by ScottishPower for properties with electric storage heating.

Your storage heaters and other fixed heating appliances, including panel heaters and fan heaters, plus your hot water immersion, are all wired into a ‘controlled circuit’. They are run on electricity supplied at a cheaper rate of 8.6p per unit at all times of day. Electric bar fires and electric showers can also be wired into this controlled circuit, so they are much cheaper to run than if they were plugged into a socket as normal.

All other appliances and lights are wired up to the normal domestic circuit and use electricity charged at 14.4p per unit at all times. You also pay a daily service charge of 27.4p per day (£1.92 per week).

This tariff comes with ScottishPower’s WEATHERCALL® system. This means that ScottishPower controls the amount of charge that goes into your storage heaters depending on the weather (more when it’s cold and less when it’s warm). The amount of charge can vary between 0 and 14 hours. To take advantage of this system, you should leave the input dial on your storage heaters to maximum.

You cannot change supplier if you are on this tariff.

Electricity Costs: ComfortPlus White Meter

This is a ScottishPower electricity tariff for households with a storage heating system.

Your storage heaters are all wired into a ‘controlled circuit’, and run on electricity supplied at a cheaper rate of 7.7p per unit. This makes storage heaters cheaper than plug-in heaters or electric fires. The storage heaters charge up for 8 1/2 hours at off peak times. This is mostly during the night, but your storage heaters may get an extra charge in the afternoons. ScottishPower sets the times that your storage heaters charge up.

This tariff can come with ScottishPower’s WEATHERCALL® system. This means ScottishPower controls the amount of charge that goes into your storage heaters depending on the weather (more when it’s cold, and less when it’s warm). The amount of charge can vary between 0 and 14 hours. To take advantage of this system, if it is fitted, you should leave the input dial on your storage heaters to maximum.

All other electrical appliances use a cheaper rate at night (8.7p per unit) and a higher rate during the day (17.3p per unit). You also pay a service charge of 27.4p per day (£1.92 per week).

You cannot change supplier if you are on this tariff.

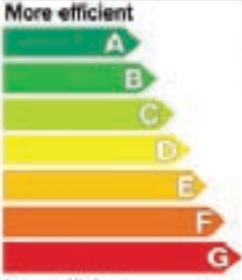


Top ten energy saving tips

Simply follow the energy saving tips to help reduce energy use in your home:

1. Switch off lights in empty rooms.
2. Close curtains at dusk.
3. Set thermostats correctly.
 - Hot water tank thermostat between 60-65°C
 - Room thermostats between 18-21°C
(or 21-23°C if there are older people, young children, or someone with health difficulties in the home).
4. Turn electrical appliances off at the plug rather than leaving them on 'standby'.
5. Only fill the kettle with as much water as you need each time you boil it.
6. Cook with lids on pans and match the cooking ring size to saucepan size.
7. Avoid placing furniture in front of a radiator.
8. Wait until you have a full load before using a washing machine, and use a lower temperature (30°C) wash cycle.
9. Use a shower instead of a bath if possible.
10. Tumble-dryers cost a lot to run – dry clothes outside, on a pulley or a clothes rail for free.

Also remember to let fresh air into the home when you are cooking, using hot water or drying clothes. Moisture generated by these activities can cause condensation on cold surfaces in the home. Air your rooms and use the trickle ventilators on double glazed windows.



Energy	
Manufacturer Model	
More efficient 	A
Energy consumption kWh/year <small>(Based on standard test results for 2012)</small>	325
<small>Actual consumption will depend on how the appliance is used and where it is located.</small> Fresh food volume l Frozen food volume l	190 126 
Noise <small>(dB(A) re 1 µW)</small> <small>Further information is contained in product brochures.</small>	
<small>Form EN 151 (Rev. 2005) EU Directive 2002/95/EC</small>	

Use your appliances and lights sensibly

If you use your appliances and lights sensibly, they will use less energy. If your appliances are old and in poor condition, it is worth buying new ones, which cost less to run and pay for themselves through lower fuel bills. New appliances have Energy Labels that help choose between one model and another. To get the most energy efficient appliance – and the cheapest to use – choose an ‘A’ rated. ‘G’ rated appliances are the least energy efficient and the most expensive to use.

A similar labelling system is the Energy Performance Certificate. You will have been shown the rating for your home when your local housing office set up your tenancy.

Disposing of your old appliances

When you want to get rid of an old appliance, arrange a special uplift from outside your home, or take it to a Council Community Recycling Centres (CRC) yourself. Appliances are recycled, degassed, crushed, and sorted. Hazardous materials are separated out and the remainder reused.

For a special uplift call 0131 529 3030

Cold appliances

These include fridges, fridge freezers and freezers which use energy to cool food. The cabinet and door stop heat getting in, and they lose heat through the cooling fins at the back.

Handy hints

1. Leave space for air to circulate at the back and top of the outside of your cold appliances.
2. Keep the fins at the back clean, by vacuuming or brushing.
3. Put your appliance in a cool place away from direct sun, heat from a cooker or boiler.
4. Check the inside temperature with a fridge thermometer. Fridges should be 0°C to 4°C, freezers -18°C (****) to -6°C (*).
5. Use the thermostat (the dial control inside the fridge or on the outside on freezers) to keep the right temperature.
6. Don't put warm or hot items inside the appliance.
7. Keep the door shut to stop cold air escaping and warm air getting in.
8. Defrost regularly – the more ice, the more electricity used.
 9. Replace damaged door seals, as they let heat in.
 10. Keep the appliance three quarters full. This is most efficient.
 11. Take food out of the freezer to defrost without using a microwave.

Repair or replace?

1. **Check the door seal.** Place a piece of paper between the cabinet and the door, and shut the door. Pull the paper. If there's no grip, the seal may need replacing.
2. **Is the door hanging properly?** If not, it may be letting warm air in.
3. **Are the compartment doors in place, particularly to the icebox?** If not, the appliance will be overcooling.
4. **Do the chill compartments ice-up and need frequent defrosting?** If so, your fridge is overworking.
5. **Is the thermostat control working?** Possibly not, if the appliance is either too cold or too warm.
6. **Is your appliance over five years old?** If you got it second hand it may be much older.

If your answer to three or more questions is YES, consider replacing the appliance. The energy savings could pay for the new model in five to seven years.

Choosing a new cold appliance

When buying a new cold appliance, think about:

- Where you want to put it
- Is it the right size for your needs? Aim to keep the appliance three quarters full, or it will waste energy.

Compare models by reading the Energy Label. For cold appliances, the most efficient are 'A++', followed by 'A+', then 'A', 'B', 'C' and so on. Compare appliances like-for-like, similar models by size and internal capacity (in litres).

Hot appliances

Most hot appliances are used to cook food. They use lots of energy as they operate at high temperatures. Other hot appliances in the home are hair dryers, irons and electric blankets.

Handy hints

1. Use a microwave. For most cooking, microwaves use a tenth of the fuel used by a traditional cooker.
2. Gas ovens cost 70 per cent less to run than electric ovens.
3. Match the ring size to the saucepan. Use a small ring or low flame for small pans. Keep lids on to hold the heat in.
4. Use a pressure cooker, steamer or slow cooker instead of an ordinary pan. They are more efficient and cost less to use.
5. Set the oven to the temperature you need and no higher.
6. Don't overfill pans or kettles – you waste energy heating extra water.
7. Boil water in a jug kettle, rather than in a pan or kettle on a hob.
8. Once a pan is boiling, turn down the heat to simmer.
9. For toast, use a toaster instead of the grill.
10. If you have a small top oven, use it for smaller items instead of the main oven.
11. Avoid opening the door of the oven when in use, and replace damaged door seals.
12. If you have an electric hob, make sure the bases of your pans are flat and in contact with the rings.
13. Turn off your oven before cooking is done to utilise the residual heat.

Repair or replace?

1. Check the door seals and if the doors are hanging properly. They may be letting heat out.
2. Is food cooking at the right temperature? Use an oven thermometer to check this. Many older cookers need to be set at higher temperatures, which wastes energy.
3. It is difficult and expensive to buy spare parts for older cookers.

Other hot appliances

Appliance	Typical wattage (W)	Cost per hour
Breadmaker	500	7.5p
Deep fat fryer	2,000	30p
Electric blanket (over)	150 - 350	2p - 5p
Electric blanket (under)	60 - 120	1p - 2p
Electric kettle	1,800 - 2,500	39p
Hair dryer	400 - 1,200	6p - 18p
Iron	1,200	18p
Microwave oven	800	12p
Toaster	1,050 - 1,350	15p - 20p

Choosing a new cooker

1. Choose the cooker that meets your needs, rather than buying a large one with functions that you will never or rarely use.
2. Avoid buying a cooker with a clock or timer unless you really need them.
3. Read the Energy Label and compare like-for-like. Energy Labels on cookers are rated from 'A' the most efficient to 'G' the least.



Wet appliances

The wet appliances in the home are washing machines, dishwashers and showers. Cut the costs of washing by choosing lower wash temperatures.

Handy hints

1. Wait until you have a full load for the dishwasher or washing machine, to make the most of the energy and water used. Dishwashers used this way use less hot water and energy than washing the same number of dishes by hand.
2. If you do a half load, use the 'Economy' or 'half load' button.
3. Use low temperature washes – most washing powders are designed to work best at 30 - 55°C.
4. Some dishwashers operate at lower temperatures (50 - 55°C).
5. Use short washing cycles for lightly soiled clothes.
6. If you don't heat your water with an on-peak electric immersion, use wash programmes with a hot fill.
7. Use the spin function or a separate spin dryer to dry washing. The higher the spin cycle, the drier the clothes.
8. Standard electric showers use a fifth of the water needed for a bath. However, power showers can use up to half the amount of water needed for a bath.

Choosing a new wet appliance

Compare models by reading the Energy Label. Wet appliances use far less energy than cold appliances. It is worth noting the water usage. Energy efficient washing machines use a third less electricity than 10 year-old models. Energy efficient dishwashers use half of the electricity used by old models.

Energy Labels on wet appliances are rated from 'A', the most efficient, to 'G', the least. Compare appliances like-for-like, so look for similar models by size and internal capacity, spin cycle and special features.

Energy and money savings

Energy efficient appliances use less electricity. The Energy Label on new appliances includes information on water usage as well. Running your wet appliances on an off-peak tariff (Economy 7) is cheaper, although the amount of energy used will be the same.

Repair or replace?

The main repair problems relate to the motor or pump. If either is faulty, the repair costs may be as much as the cost of buying new.

Electric showers

Electric showers use cold water and heat it immediately. They are rated between 6 and 11 kilowatts. They are more expensive than showers fed from a central heating boiler. The main advantage of electric showers is that they are independent of the main hot water system in the home. They do however need enough cold water pressure to operate.



Dry appliances

Dry appliances include tumble dryers, spin dryers and integral dryers in washer dryers.

Handy hints

1. Use the spin function of a washing machine or a spin dryer to part dry washing before using a tumble dryer. The higher the spin cycle, the drier the clothes.
2. Tumble dryers are expensive to run, so dry washing outside when you can.
3. Use cycles that switch off the tumble dryer automatically when the load is dry, or set short drying times and reset as necessary.
4. A tumble dryer with a dryness sensor works best with same-fabric loads.
5. Remove fluff from your tumble dryer, especially from the condenser in a condensing dryer (one that does not need venting to the outside of the home).
6. For washing machines with low spin speed (around 800 revolutions per minute), a spin dryer will help to remove additional moisture and save on drying times.

Repair or replace?

1. Tumble dryers are most likely to break down because of problems with the motor or the heater. Repair costs may be as much as the cost of buying new.
2. Buy a tumble dryer with the best energy rating on the Energy Label and a sensor to optimise drying.

TVs, DVDs, VCRs, computers and game consoles



Older style analogue TVs are used with a 'set-top box', converting the signal to digital and giving access to a wider range of channels. The three types of television that are becoming popular are digital, high definition and plasma. Plasma screen TVs use most energy – up to 1,000 watts or 10 times that of a traditional TV.

Handy hints

1. VCRs, DVDs, Freeview digiboxes, computers and games consoles all have a standby function. Most appliances use more electricity on standby than when in use (8% of all electricity used in the home).
2. Older TVs left on standby use 85 per cent of their electricity on standby and only 15 per cent when in use. Annual standby costs vary from £5 for a TV or a hi-fi, to £14 for a digibox or a Freeview set-top box. Switch off appliances at the plug.
3. Get the greatest savings by replacing two or more appliances with one that incorporates all the functions. TVs with an integrated digital function have one power supply, whereas traditional televisions used with a separate digibox have two.
4. Digiboxes, satellite and cable TV receivers use the most electricity on standby – twice as much as a television!
5. Unplug chargers for your mobile phone once the charging is finished, otherwise these continue to use electricity.

Lighting

The energy efficiency of a lightbulb depends on how well it converts electricity to light. Most energy saving light bulbs are available as bayonet and screw fittings and in a variety of sizes.

Handy hints

1. Switch off lights when they are not needed.
2. Make use of daylight: keep windows clean and furniture away from windows.
3. Install energy saving bulbs in lights used for three or more hours a day.
4. Dimmable energy saving bulbs are now available. Ordinary light bulbs when dimmed save very little electricity (only two per cent).
5. Energy saving bulbs use a fifth of the electricity used by ordinary light bulbs. Replacing a 100W ordinary bulb with a 20W energy saving bulb will save over £100 over their lifetime.
6. Energy saving light bulbs last 10 - 15 times longer than ordinary light bulbs. Since they don't need to be replaced so often, they are ideal for difficult-to-reach light fittings that require a ladder or help from others to replace bulbs.
7. Energy saving light bulbs are heavier than ordinary light bulbs. If they are installed in fittings with more than one bulb, all bulbs will need to be replaced
8. When switched on, energy saving light bulbs do not get as hot as ordinary light bulbs, so they are ideal for upgrading the light in fittings that can only take a 60W ordinary light bulb.
9. The light from energy saving light bulbs is a slightly different colour compared to ordinary light bulbs. Energy saving bulbs work best when used with a lampshade, or where the light bulb comes in a decorative globe fitting.

There are four types of light fitting:

- **Pendant** (hanging ceiling fittings). These fittings usually have a lampshade and are ideal places to fit an energy saving light bulb
- **Recessed or feature ceiling light fittings** often with several decorative bulbs. These fittings usually have high voltage compact decorative lights which cannot take energy saving light bulbs
- **Table, standard and reading lamps.** These fittings can all take energy saving light bulbs, although the lampshade may need to be replaced to accommodate the larger fitting
- **Decorative lights.** Some types are available as energy saving light bulbs although some, including the light in a flame-effect fire, require the heat from a standard light bulb to operate.



HOW TO CONTACT US ...

NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICES

Central

1 Cockburn Street EH1 1BJ
0131 529 7061
Centralteam@edinburgh.gov.uk

East

86 Niddrie Mains Road EH16 4DT
0131 529 3111
eastteam@edinburgh.gov.uk

Leith

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0131 529 6171
leithandcitycentreateam@edinburgh.gov.uk

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South

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0131 529 5151
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South West

10 Westside Plaza EH14 2ET
0131 527 3800
southwestteam@edinburgh.gov.uk

West

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0131 529 7440
westteam@edinburgh.gov.uk

OTHER OFFICES

Kirkliston

19 Station Road EH29 9BD
0131 529 6920

South Queensferry

53 High Street EH30 9HN
0131 331 1590

REPAIRS DIRECT

Head Office

33 Murrayburn Road EH14 2TF
0131 200 2345
repairsdirect@edinburgh.gov.uk

There is also a special repairs freephone in the reception area of every local Neighbourhood Office

DAY/ NIGHT NOISE TEAM

24 hours / 7 days a week on **101** when the noise is happening.
For advice / information only:
Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm,
Friday 8.30am to 3.40pm
on **0131 529 3030**.

ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR HELPLINE

Office hours **0131 529 7050**
Outside office hours **0131 200 2000**

EMERGENCIES

Outside office hours **0131 200 2000**

Other Contacts

RENT PAYMENT

Freephone **0800 783 1719**

INCOME MAXIMISATION TEAM

0131 529 7304 or **0131 529 7463**

HOUSE SALES TEAM

0131 529 7635

ENERGY TEAM

0131 529 7432



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