

# Help and standards

The help you can expect from  
British Gas and the standards you  
can expect from the energy industry



  
**British Gas**  
Looking after your world

**This booklet gives you important information about:**

- How we can help you with anything to do with your energy supply
- Other places that can give you help of support
- What to do if you want to make a complaint

It also provides you with our contact details if you need to get in touch.

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# Ways we can help you

## Our Priority Services Register

Our Priority Services Register is a free service that lets us know who needs extra help. If you're a British Gas customer of pensionable age, disabled, chronically sick, or on means tested benefits with children under 5, we want to make sure you're on our register. Call us on **0800 072 8625** to find out more or if you're a Pay As You Go Energy™ customer, call us on **0800 294 8604**. We can tell you if you're eligible for the register and let you know how to get on it.

## The benefits of being on the register include

### We may be able to carry out a free gas safety check

We'll look at your gas supply and appliances, and make sure they're safe to use. Remember you should still have your gas appliances serviced regularly to keep them safe.

You can receive a free gas safety check every year if you receive means tested benefits and you:

- Have a child under the age of 5 living in your home; or
- Everyone who lives in your home over the age of 18:
  - is of pensionable age;
  - is disabled; or
  - has a long term illness

If you live in rented accommodation, your landlord will need to arrange an annual gas safety check.

If you haven't had a free gas safety check in the last 12 months, call us on **0800 072 8625** or **0800 294 8604** if you're a Pay As You Go Energy™ customer to talk about it. If you have a textphone, call **18001 0800 072 8626**.

### If you have trouble reading your meter

If you have a condition that makes it difficult to get to your meter, we might be able to move it somewhere better. Or if no one in your home is able to read your meter, we can send someone to read it for you every three months.

### If you live alone

You might not feel comfortable answering the door to a stranger. Our password security system can help. All you have to do is choose a word you can easily remember, then let us know what it is by calling us on **0800 072 8625** (**0800 294 8604** if you're a Pay As You Go Energy™ customer). We'll then arrange for anyone visiting you to tell you this password when they arrive, and show you an identity card.

Remember that if someone turns up on your doorstep saying they're from British Gas, you can always call us to check that they are who they say they are.

### Sending your bills to someone else

If you're going to be away from home for a while, we can send your bills to a neighbour, friend or relative. They'll need to agree to look after them for you.

### If you need your bills in a different format

We can send them to you in large print, Braille or as an audio version. Or one of our team can phone you to give you the details – it's called our 'Talking Bill' service.

Other benefits of being on the register include priority notification if your supply is interrupted, specially designed appliance controls and adapters and priority attention for general enquiries.

## Here are some of the other ways we can help

### Energy Efficiency Advice

We can give you advice to help you make your home more energy efficient. We'll just need to ask you a few questions. Go to [britishgas.co.uk/ee](http://britishgas.co.uk/ee) to find out more, or call us free on **0800 072 8629**.

### If English isn't your first language

Tell us when you call and we can arrange for an interpreter.

### Are you getting all the benefits you deserve?

We can help you understand if you might qualify for benefits you don't get at the moment. If you're disabled, or care for someone who is, you can also call the Disability Living Allowance helpline on **0345 712 3456** (if you have a textphone, it's **0345 722 4433**).

### Investigating a troublesome meter

If you think your gas or electricity meter's not working properly, give us a call. We'll let you know what the problem is within five working days, either by phone or letter. And if we need to come out and have a look at your meter, we'll be there within seven working days.

### Our promise to you

We never knowingly disconnect any house where someone relies on electrical medical equipment like dialysis or a breathing support machine.

If we do need to stop your supply for any reason, we'll let you know in plenty of time. And if we need to temporarily stop your gas (for example to repair something), we will work with your network operator and sort out other arrangements for heating and cooking.

### Discount scheme to help with your energy bills

The Warm Home Discount Scheme helps low-income and vulnerable households with energy costs. It is a programme run by the Government and energy suppliers to give customers a one-off payment towards their electricity bill. Customers that may be eligible include the elderly, and those living with long term illnesses. To find out more call **0800 072 8625** or **0800 294 8604** if you're a Pay As You Go Energy™ customer. If you have a textphone, call **18001 0800 072 8626**.

### If you're having trouble paying your bills

Call our payment team on **0800 048 0404 (18001 0800 072 8626)** if you use a textphone.

We might be able to:

- Arrange for you to pay in instalments
  - Change your tariff or how you pay, like Direct Debit
  - Fit a pay as you go meter
  - Take payments straight from your benefits under the government's Fuel Direct scheme
  - Give you advice on how to use less energy
  - Let you know how the British Gas Energy Trust or other organisations can help.
- There's more information about these on page 5 of this booklet.

You might also want to get in touch with an independent agency like Citizens Advice at [adviceguide.org.uk](http://adviceguide.org.uk) or StepChange Debt Charity at [stepchange.org](http://stepchange.org) or by calling **0800 138 1111**.

### Dual fuel discount

If we supply both gas and electricity to your home, we'll give you a dual fuel discount that will be taken off your bill.

### How to get in touch with us

To talk to us about the ways we can help you, call **0800 048 0202**.

If you have a textphone, it's **18001 0800 072 8626**.

# Schemes and organisations that can help with your energy bills

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## The Warm Home Discount Scheme

This scheme will give you a one-off payment towards your electricity bill. It's run by the government and energy suppliers. Eligibility includes elderly customers, low income households and those with long term illnesses. To find out more visit [britishgas.co.uk/warmhomediscount](https://britishgas.co.uk/warmhomediscount), call **0800 072 8625** or **0800 294 8604** if you're a Pay As You Go Energy™ customer.

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## The British Gas Energy Trust

This is an independent charity that gives grants to help people pay their energy bills. The trust can also help with payments for things like appliances, boiler repairs or replacements, funeral expenses and other household debts. Go to [britishgasenergytrust.org.uk](https://britishgasenergytrust.org.uk) for more information, or call the trust directly on **01733 421060**.

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## Shelter – our partner charity

Shelter's a charity which helps people struggling with bad housing or homelessness. They can give you free, confidential advice at [shelter.org.uk/advice](https://shelter.org.uk/advice), or on **0808 800 4444**.

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## Home Heat Helpline

If you're worried about paying your heating bills, or need some advice on how to save energy, call the Home Heat Helpline on **0800 336 699** or visit [homeheathelpline.org.uk](https://homeheathelpline.org.uk). It's run by Energy UK and funded by British Gas and other energy suppliers.

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## Citizens Advice Bureau

You can get help or information about your energy supply from the Citizens Advice Bureau. From how to switch energy supplier, to advice on what to do if your power's just failed. Find them online at [citizensadvice.org.uk/energy](https://citizensadvice.org.uk/energy) or call them on **03454 040506**.

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## StepChange Debt Charity

If you're struggling to pay for your energy, don't face it alone. StepChange Debt Charity offers advice you can trust in the way that feels most comfortable to you. You can seek advice at [stepchange.org](https://stepchange.org), or if you prefer, call them on **0800 138 1111**.

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# Helping you stay safe

Sometimes old gas boilers, appliances and damaged pipes can cause gas or carbon monoxide leaks. Here's some useful information for keeping your gas supply safe.

## What is carbon monoxide?

It's a poisonous gas. When fuels like wood, oil or gas are burned without enough air around them, they make carbon monoxide. This could happen in a broken boiler or fireplace.

## How to spot carbon monoxide

As it's odourless, tasteless and invisible, it's difficult to detect.

Here are some things you should look out for:

- Stains, soot marks or discolouration, on or around your gas boiler
- A lot of condensation and seeing or smelling smoke in the room the appliance is installed
- A pilot light that goes out a lot. Also, pilot lights should burn blue – if it is yellow or orange, carbon monoxide may be present

Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning can be similar to flu and include headaches, dizziness, confusion and extreme tiredness, so if you or anyone in your home shows any symptoms, please see a doctor immediately.

## Carbon monoxide detectors

They're easy to get and they set off an alarm if they detect a dangerous amount of carbon monoxide.

Before you buy one, make sure it complies with "BS EN 50291: 2010" and carries a British Standard or approved mark, such as a Kitemark, like these:



To find out more call **0800 294 4430** or visit **[britishgas.co.uk/coalarm](http://britishgas.co.uk/coalarm)**

## Stay safe with your gas supply

Remember to keep vents in doors, walls and windows clear, and make sure your chimney isn't blocked by birds' nests or other debris.

We can arrange for one of our experts to come out and do a gas safety check for you each year. If we find anything that concerns us, our expert will explain the problem and tell you exactly what to do. If you want a quote for the repairs, we can do that too.

If you'd like someone else to carry out the repairs, it's important they're properly qualified. Always make sure you find an engineer who is a registered member of Gas Safe.

If you qualify for the Priority Service Register you may be entitled to a free gas safety check, you can find out more on page 3 of this booklet.

## If you're worried, call Gas Emergency Services

Their number's **0800 111 999** and they're open 24 hours a day. If you have a textphone, dial **18001 0800 371 787**.

# Need more information?

To talk to us about anything in this leaflet, call **0800 048 0202**. We're here from Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm. We're here on Saturday too, from 8am to 6pm.



If you have a textphone, it's **18001 0800 072 8626**. For any other questions, use one of the numbers below.

## Get the information you need, the way you need it



We can send you your letters and bills in large print, Braille or as an audio version. Or one of our team can call you to go through your latest bill with our "Talking Bill" service. Call us on **0800 072 8625 (0800 294 8604** if you're a Pay As You Go Energy™ customer) to find out more.

## If it's an emergency

- For gas leaks: **0800 111 999**  
(textphone: **18001 0800 371 787**)

# What to do if you're unhappy about something

When things go wrong we want to know about it. Let us know why you're unhappy and we'll get it fixed, you can also ask for a copy of our complaints handling procedure which we'll send you free of charge.

You can call us on **0800 048 0202**

You can go online, at **[britishgas.co.uk/energycomplaints](http://britishgas.co.uk/energycomplaints)**

Or you can write to us, at:  
**Complaints Management Team**  
**PO Box 226**  
**Rotherham**  
**S98 1PB**

- For power cuts: call your local electricity network operator. You'll find their number in the phone book or on your electricity bill.

## Useful leaflets

Some of our leaflets include:

- Lots of ways to pay
- Bright ideas – helping you save energy and money
- Pay As You Go Energy™ – all you need to know about our pay as you go meters
- High standards – what you can expect from our sales team
- We're listening – which explains how we handle complaints
- Codes of practice – the rules we follow to make sure we're being fair and responsible.

To get copies of any of these, give us a call on **0800 048 0202**, or visit **[britishgas.co.uk/info](http://britishgas.co.uk/info)**

## If you want to complain about your network operator

You can find their phone number at the top of your bill.

## If you want advice from someone independent

You can call the Citizens Advice consumer service. They'll give you free confidential, impartial advice.

Their number's **03454 040506**.

Or their website is **[citizensadvice.org.uk/energy](http://citizensadvice.org.uk/energy)**

Phone lines are open 8am-8pm Monday to Friday and 8am-6pm Saturdays. Closed bank holidays. Calls are free from a BT Calling Plan. Mobile and other providers' charges may vary. If you're hard of hearing or speech impaired and use a textphone, please call 18001 0800 072 8626. Your call may be recorded and/or monitored for quality assurance and compliance purposes.