

Are you missing out on free services and other benefits?

Are you a domestic consumer of gas and electricity and does one or more of the following apply to you?

- **Are you of pensionable age?**
- **Do you have a disability?**
- **Are you chronically sick?**
- **Do you have a hearing and/or visual impairment?**



If so you can choose from a selection of free services. The choice is yours. Every gas and electricity supplier provides a range of free services, so don't miss out on the ones that you are entitled to.

Please note that free services are available to all consumers of mains gas and electricity who can answer "yes" to any of the questions above. At the moment they are not available to households using Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG).

Every gas and electricity supplier has an obligation to provide certain free services, designed to make your life easier.

What are these free services?

Password protection scheme

For your own personal safety and to make sure you know a caller is genuine, you can agree a unique password with your gas and electricity supplier. Whenever their staff visit your home, they will give the password. This will protect you against bogus callers pretending to be from your gas or electricity supplier.

Accessing prepayment meters

If you cannot access your gas or electricity prepayment meter because you are frail or in poor health, your supplier will, without charge, move it to a more accessible location, providing that it is safe and practicable to do so.

Meter reading

Did you know that your gas and electricity suppliers are only required by law to read your meter once every two years? Without accurate readings, many people have found themselves faced with 'catch-up' bills running into thousands of pounds. So it is very important that your bills are based on the energy you are actually using.

If no one in your household is able to read your gas or electricity meter, your supplier will arrange to read your meter every quarter, and to send you bills based on these readings.

Bill nominee scheme

Would you like your bills or a copy of your bills to be sent to a friend, relative or carer, so they can help you read and check them? Your supplier will do this on request.

Advance notice if your electricity supply has to be interrupted

If you rely on electricity to power vital medical equipment in your home, your supplier will give you advance notice if your supply has to be interrupted for planned work. This should help you make any necessary arrangements.

Services for visually or hearing impaired consumers

Your supplier can provide information, including meter readings and bills, in a format suitable for you, whether it is Braille, large print, audio tape, or via textphone or Typetalk. They can also help you make a complaint or an enquiry.

How to register

To register for these free services, all you need to do is ask your gas or electricity supplier. You can find their telephone number on your latest bill. If you are unsure about doing this, you may wish to ask a friend to speak to the supplier on your behalf – either way your suppliers are obliged by law to help you.

Consumer Advice

For independent advice and information on energy matters, consumers can contact Consumer Direct on **08454 04 05 06** or via its website: www.consumerdirect.gov.uk