

# Tenants Energy Guide



South Lanarkshire  
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# Tenants Energy Guide

## New Tenancy — new energy customer

When you are starting a new tenancy, one of the first things you must do is notify the energy supplier so that a new energy account is created.

The energy supplier will create a new account in your name starting from the date you became the tenants. This is so that you are not liable for a previous tenant's bills.

Ask your landlord or letting agent who is/are the energy supplier(s) for your address. You might just have a single supplier for both your electricity and gas or you can have two different suppliers – one for electricity and another for gas.

If the property only has an electricity supply then you will only have one supplier. If your home has standard bill paying meters you will have to provide meter readings at the start of your tenancy.

**Please note!** If your home has prepayment meters you still must notify the energy suppliers immediately! They will put the energy account into your name and to stop any debt accrued on a prepayment meter by a previous tenant being passed on to you.

## Energy costs and Meter Standing Charges

From the date you became the tenant, you are required to pay for energy. What you pay is for the cost of the energy you use and a 'meter standing charge'.

A meter standing charge is what you pay to be connected to a gas or electricity network. It is a fixed amount per day.

For example, a standing charge of 26 pence per day per meter amounts to £94.90 per year. If you have two meters with the same daily charge then the standing charge for the two meters would cost you £189.80 per year.

**Please note!** You must pay the 'meter standing charge' regardless of whether you use energy. For example, if you have gas supply which is only for your central heating, you still must pay a meter standing charge even if you are not using the central heating over the summer months.

If you do not budget and pay this fixed amount, you could end up with bill arrears even when you are not using the gas supply.

## Switching Energy Supplier

You do not have to stay with the existing energy supplier. You can switch energy supplier at any time.

You should shop around to find the best deal that suits your circumstances.



You can use energy comparison companies - remember to use at least two comparison companies as they often provide different deals or you can phone around the different energy suppliers.

Here are the details of some energy comparison companies:

<https://switch.which.co.uk/>

<https://energycompare.citizensadvice.org.uk/>

**Citrus Switch -  
Phone 07973 847 981**

## Energy Debt

You can contact the energy supplier directly to resolve the problem.

However, if you are having difficulty paying your energy bills then you can seek advice and assistance from the Council's Money Matters Advice Service or your local Citizens Advice Bureau where money advisors will act on your behalf in contacting the energy suppliers to resolve the problem.

Some of the energy companies have assistance schemes to help vulnerable customers on low incomes to reduce their bills.

## Tenants Rights

➔ Tenant to check for any clauses on energy suppliers in your tenancy agreement. There may be some circumstances when a letting agent or landlord has a preferred supplier.

- ➔ If you have a prepayment meter you should still be able to switch energy suppliers with a debt of up to £500 for gas and £500 for electricity. Prepayment tariffs are usually more expensive, so you may want to ask about the different options available to you, including if you can change to a standard meter. Most suppliers offer this for free, though some may charge. Your landlord can't stop you replacing a prepayment meter with a normal meter that lets you pay after using energy rather than in advance. You don't need your landlord's permission to do this.
- ➔ If your landlord pays your energy supplier you don't have a right to switch supplier, if your landlord pays the energy company directly and then charges you. If you want to change supplier you'll need to ask your landlord to do it – but they don't have to.
- ➔ Information tenants will require to switch supplier:
  - Your post code
  - The name of current supplier
  - The name of the energy offer you are currently on and how much you spend on gas and electricity. You can find this information on a recent bill
  - An up-to-date meter reading
  - Your bank details if you will be paying by direct debit
  - Your Meter Point Access Number (or MPAN) and Meter Point Reference Number or (MPRN). You can find these on a recent bill

## Tips for savings

Try to minimise your bills by reducing your energy usage – here are some tips:

- Avoid keeping appliances on standby mode as this uses up energy – where possible switch off your appliances when they are not in use;
- Take control of your heating by using the programmer and the thermostatic radiator valves:
  - set your heating and hot water to come on and off when you need them
  - heat only the areas of your home that need heating
  - set the temperature for each area of your home
- Paying by direct debit – which is often much cheaper
- A good way to budget is to pay an estimated charge based on an average monthly payment so that the payment stays the same all year gets into credit during the summer and utilises this credit during the winter.
- Prepayment meters can be more expensive (though not always). Removal of such meters can be requested. For more information please seek advice from your landlord, energy supplier or other relevant fuel advisory agent.

For further free advice contact **Home Energy Scotland** (which is funded by the Scottish Government) on **Freephone 0808 808 2282** where advisors are available to give advice over the phone Monday to Friday from 8am to 8pm, and on Saturday from 9am to 5pm.



For more information or additional copies of the leaflet please contact [communities@southlanarkshire.gov.uk](mailto:communities@southlanarkshire.gov.uk) or **0303 123 1017**. For more information regarding tenants' rights in general please contact [landlordregistrationteam@southlanarkshire.gov.uk](mailto:landlordregistrationteam@southlanarkshire.gov.uk)

If you need this information in another language or format, please contact us to discuss how we can best meet your needs.

**Phone:** 0303 123 1015

**Email:** [equalities@southlanarkshire.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@southlanarkshire.gov.uk)

**[www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk](http://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk)**