KEEP WARM THIS WINTER!

With the cold weather setting in we wanted to make sure you are informed about the help which is available to you should you need it.

THE WARM HOME DISCOUNT SCHEME

The Warm Home Discount Scheme (WHD) is paid for by energy suppliers to assist vulnerable energy customers during the winter months.

CORE GROUP CRITERIA

Winter 2021-2022, you could get £140 off your electricity bill through the Warm Home Discount Scheme. The money isn't paid to you – it's a one-off discount on your electricity bill between September and March. The discount won't affect your Cold Weather Payment or Winter Fuel Payment.

BROADER GROUP CRITERIA

Householders who feel they may qualify for the WHD under their supplier's Broader Group should apply directly to their energy supplier. It is important to bear in mind that there is a cap on the number of households in the Broader Group; therefore some households may not receive the discount even if they meet the supplier's criteria. Different suppliers will also have different qualifying criteria for the Broader Group rebate, therefore, it is possible customers may not qualify for the Broader Group discount if they have changed supplier, even if they have received the discount with a previous supplier.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT CUSTOMERS WILL HAVE TO APPLY EACH YEAR FOR THE BROADER GROUP ELEMENT, BUT SOME SUPPLIERS MAY SEND REMINDERS TO CUSTOMERS TO RE-APPLY.

For more information contact your energy supplier directly.

WINTER FUEL PAYMENT

The Winter Fuel Payment is between £100 and £300 tax-free to help pay heating bills for older UK citizens. Winter Fuel Payment is automatically paid if a person gets the State Pension or another social security benefit (not Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction, Child Benefit or Universal Credit).

A person qualifies for Winter Fuel Payment if:

- They were born on or before 26 September 1955 (this date changes every year)
- They were living in the UK during the qualifying week 20 to 26 September 2021

Most payments are made automatically in November or December. You should get your money by 14 January 2022.

If you qualify but do not get paid automatically you will need to submit a claim.

Winter Fuel Payment Centre:

Telephone: 0800 731 0160

Textphone: 0800 731 0176

Monday to Friday 9.30am –3.30pm.

For more information about the Winter Fuel Payment see:

https://www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment/overview

COLD WEATHER PAYMENT

The Cold Weather Payment is different to the Winter Fuel Payment. You may get a Cold Weather Payment if you're getting certain benefits including Pension Credit. You'll get a payment if the average temperature in your area is recorded as, or forecast to be, zero degrees Celsius or below for 7 consecutive days.

You can receive £25 for each 7 day period of very cold weather between 1st November and 31st March

The Cold Weather Payment due to start on 1 November.



You don't need to apply. If you are eligible, you will automatically be paid.

For more information about the Cold Weather Payment see:

https://www.gov.uk/cold-weather-payment/overview

THE PRIORITY SERVICE REGISTER

If you sign up to your energy supplier's Priority Services Register (PSR), you can get extra help and support with your energy supply.

You are eligible to sign up to the Priority Service Register if:

- You are of state pension age
- You are disabled
- You are suffering from a chronic illness
- You have a visual or hearing impairment

You could also qualify to join the PSR if your movement is restricted or you have difficulty walking or if you're in a wheelchair, if you have a long-term or serious illness, a heart condition, arthritic hands, breathing difficulties or speech problems.

If you sign up to the PSR you could get help with:

- Free advice on being more energy-efficient
- Protection from cold callers with a password protection scheme to keep you safe
- Your meter moved free of charge if it's hard for you to use or read the meter
- A free quarterly meter reading if you can't read your meter
- Have you bills sent to a relative, carer or friend to help you check them
- Receive your bills and meter readings in a braille, large print, audio tape, textphone or typetalk if you're visually impaired
- Receive advance notice if your supply is going to be interrupted
- Priority reconnection if your supply is interrupted
- Alternative facilities for cooking and heating if your supply is interrupted
- Extra help to use your meter or appliances
- Annual gas safety checks

To apply you need to contact your supplier to see if you're eligible to sign up to the PSR. If you have different suppliers for gas and electricity, you'll need to call them both.



FUEL SUPPLIERS TRUSTS AND HARDSHIP FUNDS

Most of the energy suppliers offer a range of grants and for the most vulnerable customers. At the time of writing this the following suppliers are offering help: British Gas (British Gas Energy Trust), EDF Energy (EDF Energy Trust), E.ON Energy Fund, npower Energy Fund, Scottish Power Hardship Fund and Charis Grants

Charis Grants are a charitable foundation who facilitate and design corporate support frameworks for vulnerable members of society. For further information see:

http://www.charisgrants.com/

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY WINTER CHECKLIST

- [ ] Food (3-6 day supply, requires little/no cooking, high energy)
- [ ] Torch (check batteries regularly)
- [ ] Portable radio (check batteries regularly)
- [ ] First aid kit
- [ ] Spare batteries
- [ ] Manual can opener
- [ ] Candles
- [ ] Waterproof matches
- [ ] Medications (3-6 day supply)
- [ ] Medications list
- [ ] Mobile phone and charger
- [ ] Cash



Travel Bag

- [ ] Personal hygiene items (toilet paper, sterile wipes, gel hand sanitizer)
- [ ] Backup prescription glasses
- [ ] Extra change of clothes/warm clothes
- [ ] Rain coat
- [ ] Walking shoes
- [ ] Blanket or sleeping bag
- [ ] Water bottles
- [ ] Breakfast food or energy bars
- [ ] Medications list

Other Preparations

- [ ] Petrol tank at least half full
- [ ] Spare hearing aid batteries
- [ ] Emergency supply of pet food

