

Electricity

Billing & Disconnection



CODE OF PRACTICE

BGE/E/BCOP/0918

bordgaisenergy.ie

If you need any further help
or advice please contact us:

Residential electricity contact details

Tel: 01 611 01 01

Fax: 01 611 01 02

E-mail: elecinfo@bordgais.ie

Minicom: 1850 630 630

(for hearing impaired customers
with their own minicom equipment)

**Customer service
Residential electricity
Bord Gáis Energy
PO Box 10943, Dublin 2**

Business electricity contact details

Tel: 01 611 01 33

Fax: 01 611 01 02

E-mail: businessdirect@bordgais.ie

**Customer service
Business electricity
Bord Gáis Energy
PO Box 10943, Dublin 2**

Please note that to maintain the highest level of
service we may monitor and record calls.

Code of Practice

Electricity

Bill payment

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1 Introduction

As a customer of Bord Gáis Energy electricity, you can expect the highest standards of service from us. However, like any other business we rely on you to pay your bills on time so we can continue to provide an efficient and economical service.

You must pay for the energy you use. If for any reason, you cannot pay your bill by the due date please let us know as soon as possible. We are committed to helping you agree a payment plan or installing a Pay as You Go Meter (where suitable) in order to maintain your electricity supply. We will only de-energise your supply as a last resort.

This code of practice explains your bill, covers the various payment methods we offer and provides guidance on how we will work with customers who may be finding it difficult to pay a bill on time.

The code also explains the circumstances in which we will initiate a de-energisation of your supply.

2 Our promise

- We will promote this code of practice so you can easily get a copy.
- We will train our staff to deliver the services outlined in this code, and will keep our training up to date.
- We will issue clear and timely bills to all our customers.
- We will provide you with a choice of methods to pay your electricity bill.
- We will deal with all customer enquiries courteously and fairly while in accordance with stated policy.
- We will work with you in finding a suitable plan for settling your bills.
- We will monitor the service we give to make sure we are keeping our commitments.

3 Your Bord Gáis Energy bill

Bord Gáis Energy bills you for electricity at your relevant tariff rate.

Bills are calculated based on actual or estimated meter readings we receive from ESB Networks for your billing period.

The price of electricity

The charges on your electricity bill are based on your tariff category. For residential customers your tariff category depends on the network you are connected to (urban or rural) and whether or not you have a night saver meter.

These tariffs are identified by a number which is printed in the blue box in the top right hand corner of your bill:

- If your profile number is 1 you are on the residential urban tariff.
- If your profile number is 2 you are on the residential urban nightsaver tariff.
- If your profile number is 3 you are on the residential rural tariff.
- If your profile number is 4 you are on the residential rural nightsaver tariff.

We will notify household customers 30 days in advance of any tariff changes, except where the customer has entered into a flexible tariff arrangement which allows tariffs to change more frequently. To obtain a leaflet displaying the current tariff charges please call

01 611 01 01 or view them online by

visiting our website on **www.bordgaisenergy.ie**

Understanding your bill

The bill shows you the latest meter reading and the previous one. The difference between the two readings is the amount of electricity you are being charged for. A multiplier may be applied to the reading in order to calculate your usage. On the bill you will see the value charged for each unit of measurement, together with the unit rate as agreed with you and the standing charge for your tariff.

The bill will also show any unpaid balances from previous bills and, where applicable, any credits to which you may be entitled. In addition to charging for electricity, bills will also include charges for any other service offered by Bord Gáis Energy that you have agreed to pay through your electricity bill.

Quarter hourly metered customers' bills will only show volume used in the period.

A public service obligation levy is applied to customers. This levy is collected on behalf of the government by all electricity suppliers. This levy relates to security of supply and the use of electricity generated from peat, renewable, sustainable and alternative forms of energy.

3 Your Bord Gáis Energy bill (continued)

If you have any queries about the bill or you do not agree with it please get in touch with us straight away on **01 611 01 01** or **+353 1 233 5101** if you are calling from abroad.

Bill presentation

You may want to view your bill online and manage your electricity account online – to do this simply register with us on **www.bordgaisenergy.ie**

You can change back to paper/postal bills at any time simply and at no cost. If you have been receiving a discount for choosing an online “paperless” bill then you will lose it if you change back to paper / postal bills.

Special services

If you have difficulty reading your bill you can register with us on our special services. Register and we will have a member of staff phone you with details of your latest bill. This will give you the opportunity to ask any questions that you may have. We will still send you your bill in the normal way.

Alternatively, if you have a relative, carer or someone who would normally look after your bills, then you might want your bill to be sent directly to them. Please give us their name and address with your written consent to have your bill redirected.

If you would like to be included on our special services register to avail

of either of these services, please call us on **611 01 01** for further information and an application form.

Bill frequency

- All residential customers are billed every two months
- Non residential customers with a quarter hourly metered supply are billed monthly
- Non residential customers with a non-quarter hourly metered supply are billed bi-monthly

Customers should not receive bills outside of the regular billing cycle unless there is a dispute and/or there has been a series of estimates and a corrected bill is requested.

Where we become aware of an unexpected delay in the issuance of a bill that will exceed one full billing cycle, we will, where reasonably practicable, make contact with you to explain the reasons for the delay and the actions being taken to remedy the situation.

Final bills will be issued on receipt of a final read when closing your account or moving premises.

Where a customer has switched supplier the final closing bill will be issued not later than six weeks from the effective date of the change of supplier. Where a replacement meter reading is issued after the final bill has been issued, this will be dealt with as an exception.

Dual Fuel Billing

If you have signed up to our Dual Fuel Contract, we will send you 2 separate bills for electricity and gas. Any payments made by you under your Dual Fuel Contract will be made against gas or electricity separately. Our Dual Fuel Contract usually requires paperless billing. You can change back to a paper bill at any time but will lose any discounts you receive for paying by this method.

Meter reading

ESB Networks provide the meter reading services for all customers regardless of their supplier. How often the meter is read by ESB Networks depends on individual circumstances.

If you are a residential or small to medium business customer, ESB Networks' meter readers call on you four times a year to ensure they record your electricity usage accurately. When your meter is not read, usage is estimated based on previous consumption. Any necessary adjustment is made when the next reading is obtained.

However, you can submit a meter reading online to ESB Networks if:

1. You have received an estimated bill that is significantly out of line with the actual reading.
2. Or if an ESB Networks' meter reader missed you today and left you a card. If you submit a

meter reading within 24 hours of receiving this card you can avoid getting an estimated bill.

We recommend that you check how much electricity you are using by reading your meters regularly and providing meter readings to ESB Networks online or call **1850 33 33 77**.

When entering meter readings on-line you must enter the readings and meter numbers for all the meters you have.

4 Bill payment

When you get your bill, it is for electricity you have already used or ESB Networks have estimated you have used and we therefore expect to be paid by the date specified on your bill.

The named account holder is responsible for paying the bill and we can only discuss account details with the person/s named as account holder/s, unless you have given us written consent to discuss your account with a third party.

Payment methods

We provide you with a variety of different payments methods for you to choose from. Direct Debit is our preferred method of receiving payment; it makes the payment process easier for you and for us.

The payment options open to you may depend on the tariff you are on. You can pay your electricity bill in a number of different ways._

Direct Debit

Our Direct Debit options are very convenient if you have a bank or building society account; you avoid the cost of cheques, postage stamps or the need to call to post offices, banks or other retail outlets.

We have a Level Pay option which allows you to make even monthly payments or we have a Bill Pay option which takes the bill amount owed by Direct Debit every 2 months.

Please have your bank account details to hand and call the number below.

Tel: 01 611 01 01

24 hour telephone payment service

You can pay with your Laser or credit card. You can also check your account balance, last payment amount and date and last bill date.

Tel: 01 611 01 01
English/Irish service

Tel: 01 611 01 04
Russian/Polish/Mandarin Chinese service

Cash

At any retail outlet where you see Payzone or PostPoint signs and at any Post Office. You can pay your bill in full or make a part payment to a

suggested minimum of €20. Please have your bill with you.



Cheque

Please make your cheque payable to Bord Gáis Energy. Send your cheque, together with your completed bank giro credit transfer slip attached to the bottom of this bill, to **Customer service, Residential electricity, Bord Gáis Energy, PO Box 10943, Dublin 2.** Please do not send cash in the post.

Please allow five working days for payments to appear on your account.

Security for payment

We may ask you to give us reasonable security against future energy bills. This security could mean that you pay us by Direct Debit and/or you lodge a cash deposit. There are a number of different security requirements which depend on your situation and your credit history. You may need to provide proof of ownership or your tenancy agreements when opening an account with us.

Where a security deposit has been requested this Security Deposit must be maintained for a period of 12 months. The security deposit will be credited to the next bill following satisfaction of credit terms for a period of 12 months continuously.

Where you have not fulfilled our credit terms, we will inform you of the steps needed to improve your credit worthiness, and state what you must do in order for security to no longer be required.

Bord Gáis Energy determines this deposit or guarantee. For more details on our Security Deposit rules, please see www.bordgaisenergy.ie/help-and-questions/

Final bills/moving home/ closing account

If you are moving house or closing an account with us, you will need to give us:

- A closing meter reading.
- Your Forwarding address to allow us to send you your final bill.
- If you cannot provide us with a closing meter reading, you will need to agree to an estimated reading with us, or,
- Provide access to ESB Networks to read and de-energise the meter at your premise.
- In the event that you cannot provide a meter reading, do not accept our meter reading or cannot provide ESB Networks access to the premises, you may be charged a special administration fee of €65 in order for us to try to obtain a final read.

We will then issue you with a final bill within 6 weeks. This bill will state your closing balance. If there is a credit due, this will be stated on the bill and that you must contact us to receive a refund. We will refund any credit within 2 months provided that you have contacted us to tell us how/where you wish the refund to be paid.

If the incoming customer registers an account with us before the meter is de-energised, we will cancel the de-energisation request with ESB Networks.

If you do not tell us you are moving or provide us/agree to a final read you will be held responsible for any electricity used up to the date the meter is de-energised or a new customer registers at that premises.

All unpaid bills will be subject to our normal debt collection procedures and/or legal proceedings. We may withhold supplying electricity or opening an account in your name until all your outstanding debt is paid. Unpaid debts will be transferred to your new account with us.

If you move into premises where the electricity supply is already connected, you must let us know straight away and must pay for the electricity you use.

If you do not inform us that you are

using electricity in a premises then we may charge you under a “Deemed Contract” under Section 16A of the Energy (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1995

5 Payment difficulties

Please tell us straight away if you have any difficulty in paying your bill. The sooner you do, the easier it will be for us to offer help and advice. We will be as flexible as possible in trying to agree a payment plan with you, but we must ultimately receive payment for the electricity that we supply. We may also offer you a Pay as You Go (PAYG) Meter as a way of re-paying your debt and keeping your supply on.

Customers with payment difficulties who contact us will be made to feel that their case is heard sympathetically; any offers of repayment will be carefully considered. We will assist customers in genuine financial difficulty in making a payment plan and we will take account of your ability to pay when agreeing any repayment arrangement.

When considering a payment plan with you, we will take into account the value of the debt and the period of time outstanding, your previous payment history, your ability to provide security for future bills and

any other material factors concerning individual customers. Where a security deposit has been requested this Security Deposit must be maintained for a period of 12 months. The security deposit will be credited to the next bill following satisfaction of credit terms for a period of 12 months continuously. You must then honour the payment plan if you want to retain your electricity supply.

If you have entered into a payment plan, we will send you details of the payment plan setting out a clear explanation in writing no later than one week after the payment plan has been agreed.

We will treat all information you give us in strictest confidence. There are a number of state agencies, state sponsored bodies and recognised charities that offer household budgeting advice including the Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS), An Post Household Budget Scheme and The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul (SVP).

If you are a residential customer, we will engage with the relevant state agencies or state sponsored bodies or recognised charities or other financial advisers to assist with your arrears if you give us permission.

Whatever the problem, we'll do our best to help. However, if you can afford to pay your bills, but choose not to, we must advise you that your supply may be withdrawn.

6 De-energisation procedures

We have clear internal procedures which ensure that de-energisation for arrears takes place only as a last resort. We have a clear escalation process to follow before de-energisation can take place. This process includes:

- a. contacting you at least 4 times to inform you that you are in arrears (in writing, by phone or by text or email)
- b. providing information on any options you have to make payment and providing contact details if you wish to enter into a payment plan
- c. offering installation of a Pay as You Go Meter for re-payment of debt (where suitable)

Before we initiate a request to ESB Networks to de-energise your supply we will:

- Give you ten working days notice in writing of our intention to request de-energisation.
- If you are a business or large electricity user and have gone into liquidation, receivership or examinership and where it is our opinion that there is a high risk of impending default, this notice period will be reduced to two working days or whatever has been agreed in your contract.
- The notice will specify the reason for de-energisation.
- The notice will detail the

costs that will apply for de-energisation and re-energisation.

- The notice will tell you that you cannot pay the arrears to the person carrying out the de-energisation.
- We will include our contact details so that you can discuss payment arrangements with us and avoid de-energisation.
- No disconnection calls will be made on a Friday, Saturday, Sunday, eve of a public holiday or a public holiday. However, disconnections for safety reasons can be made at any time.

We will de-energise your supply if:

- We do not receive a payment from you within the terms of your contract and arrears continue to accrue on your account.
- You do not respond to our notice for de-energisation.
- Where you do not agree to any payment plan or where that payment plan is broken.
- You request de-energisation.
- In the event of an emergency or where there is a safety issue ESB Networks may de-energise your premises without notification.

You will be charged for the costs associated with the method of de-energisation and re-energisation carried out by ESB Networks.

We will not de-energise your supply if:

- You agree, and keep to a payment plan agreed with us.
- You have agreed to the installation of a Pay as You Go Meter (PAYG) and you will repay your debt via the PAYG Meter.
- You have logged a complaint with us and the complaint is related to disputed bill charges. You may, however, be required to pay the undisputed element of the charges billed and any subsequent bills that follow.
- The bill due is not for the supply of electricity.
- You have made us aware that you rely on a recognised life support system powered by electricity.
- During the winter months of November to March, if you are registered on our special services register.
- For failure to pay a bill which is not related to the supply of electricity/gas;
- For failure to pay a bill based on a regular estimate unless it is fair and reasonable in the circumstances (to be decided by us);
- Where a customer is a member of any category of customer that the CRU may specify from time to time.

De-energisation of a premises with no registered account holder:

- If it is discovered that you or

the previous occupant at your premise did not close their account correctly with us, we will issue a letter informing the new occupant that the premise will be de-energised due to no new account holder being registered.

7 Re-energisation

Where de-energisation has taken place, we will make every effort to come to an agreement with you so that the supply can be restored at the earliest opportunity.

Before we re-energise your supply all arrears and the costs associated with the de-energisation and re-energisation must be paid in full.

However, we will enter into payment plans and reconnect you, if you have not previously broken a payment plan or repeatedly been disconnected or failed to make payment of bills at all.

In certain circumstances, we may ask you to agree to the installation of a Pay As You Go meter at your premises before we reconnect you to prevent any further debt being owed.

Where a disconnected customer has reached an agreed settlement with us, you are entitled to be reconnected under our Standard Terms and Conditions of Supply.

We may also, under our standard terms and conditions, require that you provide a security bond and/or commit to paying future bills by Direct Debit. This will guard against

the inconvenience and cost of possible de-energisation in the future. We will notify you in writing of any conditions associated with a security bond/deposit required upon re-energisation (including the circumstances in which we will re-pay this).

8 Complaints procedure

We aim to give you the best possible service. If, however, you are unhappy with the service we have given you, please call us on **01 611 01 01** if you are a residential customer or **01 611 01 33** if you are a business customer and we will try and resolve it over the telephone.

Alternatively you can write to:

Customer service
Residential electricity
Bord Gáis Energy
PO Box 10943, Dublin 2
or by email to elecinfo@bordgais.ie

Customer service
Business electricity
Bord Gáis Energy
PO Box 10943, Dublin 2
or by email to bgenergy@bordgais.ie

It is our aim to settle any concerns as quickly and as fairly as possible. If you write to us with a complaint, we will respond to you within ten working days. If you are unhappy with the response you receive from the first point of contact, you may have your complaint reviewed at a higher level.

Our commitment is that all complaints will be either resolved within eight weeks or an action plan will have been agreed with you. In all cases, we will keep you informed about the progress in resolving the matter.

We have a code of practice on handling customers' complaints.

To receive a copy please call us on **01 611 01 01** for residential electricity or **01 611 01 33** for business electricity or you may view it online at www.bordgaisenergy.ie

If following a review and written response from one of our customer care managers you are still not satisfied, and have received written notification of the closure of the complaint from Bord Gáis Energy, you may contact the customer care team at the Commission for Regulation of Utilities.

The complaint should only be passed to the Commission after it has gone through the Bord Gáis Energy electricity internal escalation process. The office of the Commission for Regulation of Utilities can be contacted by the following means:

Address:

Customer Care Team
Commission for Regulation of Utilities
PO Box 11934
Dublin 24

Tel: 1890 404 404

Fax: 01 4000 850

Email: customer-care@crui.ie

Web: www.crui.ie/customer-care

Please note that Bord Gáis Energy is not in a position to resolve queries or issues relating to ESB Networks.

9 Contact details

We'd prefer you to phone rather than write because it is quicker, more direct and easier for us to answer your questions straight away. But if you want to write, our address is:

Customer service

Residential electricity

Bord Gáis Energy
PO Box 10943, Dublin 2

Customer service: 01 611 01 01

Customer service fax: 01 611 01 02

Customer service email:
elecinfo@bordgais.ie

Minicom: 1850 630 630
(for hearing impaired customers with their own minicom equipment)

Customer service

Business electricity

Bord Gáis Energy
PO Box 10943, Dublin 2

Customer service: 01 611 01 33

Customer service fax: 01 602 1201

Customer service email:
bgenergy@bordgais.ie

Please ensure that you have your account number ready when you call us, as we can only discuss account information with the account holder.

Our website

Visit our website at www.bordgaisenergy.ie to see more useful information on our services.

For electricity supply failure and emergencies call ESB Networks 24 hour service on 1850 372 999.

Other useful contacts

Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS)

MABS is a free, confidential and independent service for people in debt or in danger of getting into debt.

Tel: 076 107 2000

Monday to Friday 9.00am to 8.00pm

Email: helpline@mabs.ie

Web: www.mabs.ie

The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul (SVP)

SVP House
91/92 Sean Mac Dermott Street
Dublin 1

Tel: 01 838 6990

Email: info@svp.ie

Web: www.svp.ie

