

# Energy suppliers, contracts & bills

**We know energy bills, and worries about whether you're getting the best deal, are putting lots of extra pressure on businesses right now.**

This sheet will help you navigate the process of switching energy contracts; know what to do during energy sales calls; and look out for extra money you could be paying on your bill.



## Is it the right time to change your supplier?

Before trying to change your supplier, it's important to make sure you can end your current contract. Many business supply contracts are fixed term, and businesses should be confident that they are able to move to a new supplier before committing to a change.

Before you decide to change your supplier:

- Explore measures you could take to reduce your demand for energy supply.
- Make sure you understand your current contract rates and terms, as well as the implications of moving to a new supplier - and whether you can break any existing contract.
- You should also be aware of how to spot fraudulent or rogue utility companies and brokers.



## Energy sales calls and careful contracting

**If you get a cold call from an energy company:**

- Don't agree to anything you haven't got in writing or had time to think through.
- Don't say 'Yes' at any point - even that could be taken as an agreement to enter a contract, and could be upheld legally. Almost no suppliers provide for a cooling-off period in which a contract may be cancelled.
- Don't give your name, business name or address.
- Do hang up and research what they're selling yourself if you're interested. Read all information and contracts carefully and work out the benefits and any hidden risks.
- Do get advice from someone you trust if you're not sure.



Remember: someone who really wants to help you won't confuse you, get annoyed or put pressure on you. Be aware that fraudsters may impersonate OFGEM, or pretend to be supplying a government rebate/grant.

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- Read your current and new contracts carefully - and take note of the termination clauses. You may be required to give very long notice of a change (often ninety days). If you don't, you may be 'rolled over'.
- Energy companies are required to give you notice when a contract is due for renewal, but not all contracts make this clear. Be aware, be prepared and make a note of the renewal date in advance.
- Your bill will have a QR code on it. This code contains all the information you would need to compare and switch energy tariffs, including supplier name, tariff name and your annual usage, making it easier to find a better supplier.

**If you'd like help understanding bills or contracts, call Business Sheffield on 0114 224 5000 or email [businesssheffield@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:businesssheffield@sheffield.gov.uk)**



## Paying your bill

- It is not uncommon for energy suppliers to send additional bills to customers in an effort to get back money lost due to their own internal system errors. These mistakes go unnoticed as customers rarely read their electricity bills. If you do not understand your bill, ring Customer Service at your supplier.
- Check your own meter readings regularly, even if you have a Smart Meter (they can make mistakes).

Check you're being billed for the right meter

- Are all the meters in your premises your meters? You may be paying for somebody else's energy if you are in an older building!
- Check all your meters for their 'meter reference number' - then check your energy bills (or your annual statement) for the same 'meter reference numbers' and immediately tell your energy supplier if they don't match.

Make sure you cancel your energy supply if you move

- If you have moved premises, make sure you have contacted your energy suppliers, or you may still be paying for your previous address.

**If you're worried about paying your bill, contact your supplier before you miss a payment.**

Often, suppliers can help you manage the payment, for example by making a payment plan. This is much more likely to be possible if you haven't already missed a payment.

If you'd like help with anything to do with your business, our friendly and expert business support team is here to help. Call us on 0114 224 5000 or email [BusinessSheffield@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:BusinessSheffield@sheffield.gov.uk)

You can find information and support around the cost of living, including more resources to help you manage the impact on your business at [www.sheffield.gov.uk/costofliving](http://www.sheffield.gov.uk/costofliving)

