

Erroneous Transfers

On rare occasions, some customers have been accidentally switched to a new energy supplier without their consent. The industry calls this an erroneous transfer or 'ET'. It is usually the result of a genuine mistake and suppliers will always work to fix the problem with no discomfort to the customer.

The energy industry regrets any instances where customers are inconvenienced but erroneous transfers are rare. If customers have a problem they should contact their supplier which has a duty to sort it out. Customers are protected under the 'Erroneous Transfers Customer Charter' which says that if you are transferred to a new supplier by mistake the transaction is seamlessly reversed at no cost. The gradual switch over to Smart meters will significantly reduce the number of erroneous transfers as there will be one up to date data base for both gas and electricity services and no need to wait for meter readings.

There are currently two databases containing customer information – one for gas and one for electricity - and there can be a number of practical reasons why there can be errors. The simplest is that the system is not static. It is changing all the time and any system will run slightly behind the ongoing changes being made.

The Facts

- ▶ **Rare Occurrence:** Erroneous transfers are rare and regrettable. Only around 1% of switches are made in error.
- ▶ **Honest Mistake:** Erroneous transfers are usually the result of a mix up over addresses or simple human error.
- ▶ **Quick:** As soon as an erroneous transfer is detected, companies quickly work together to make sure the problem is fixed.
- ▶ **Communication:** Customers are notified by letter within five days when an erroneous transfer is detected, letting them know the issue is being addressed. A further letter is sent within twenty days to say confirm customer is being moved back to their original supplier.
- ▶ **No Change in Service:** The service a customer receives is completely unaffected by an erroneous transfer. There is no chance of being cut off and bills are not affected.