

Reading your Meter

Providing regular meter readings helps to make sure customers are billed correctly by their energy company. Bills are based on how much gas or electricity you have used. However, when the company hasn't got a recent meter reading and doesn't know how much energy you have used, they have to send you an estimated bill based on a customer's past use.

If you have cut your consumption or used more energy than usual, an estimated bill may mean that you end up paying more or less than you need to.

The facts

- ▶ **Reading the meter:** It is recommended that you should submit a meter reading to your supplier every three to six months to make sure you are being billed correctly.
- ▶ **Estimate bills:** When there isn't an up to date meter reading, suppliers will estimate how much energy has been used based on your past consumption and then bill you for that amount.
- ▶ **Types of meter:** There are various types of meter including electronic meters, dial meters and digital meters. If you are unsure you should get in contact with your supplier or look on their website, most of them have detailed guides on how to read a meter.
- ▶ **Difficulty reading a meter:** If you are having trouble submitting a reading contact your supplier, they will be very happy to help you.
- ▶ **How to submit a reading:** It is very easy to let your supplier know your meter reading, you can submit it on the phone, online through your supplier's website or by post.
- ▶ **Smart meters:** Between 2015 and 2020 energy companies will be installing smart meters in everyone's homes meaning that companies have real-time information about how much energy is being used and removing the need for customers to submit readings.
- ▶ **Meter readers:** Suppliers are required to send a meter reader out to read your meter at least once every two years. You can also request for your supplier to send out a meter reader to read your meter for you. However, this can cost up to £90 to do so, so if you are able to read it yourself it can save you both time and money.
- ▶ **Free meter reads for vulnerable customers:** If you are of Pensionable Age, disabled or chronically sick and unable to read your meter, your supplier can arrange to have your meter read, free of charge, at least once a quarter.