



# Our Code of Practice

on the Efficient Use of Electricity



## Foreward

We would like to take this opportunity to present our Electricity Code of Practice on the Efficient Use of Electricity.

At SSE Airtricity we are committed to meeting the needs of our customers and our Codes of Practice informs our customers on the range of support services available.

We invite you to read on and find out more about the services we offer.

The Codes have been approved by the Utility Regulator in consultation with the Consumer Council for Northern Ireland.

These Codes of Practice are here to make sure our product and services meet the needs of our customers.

**We aim to offer you the best advice available to help you maximise energy efficiency in your home and to reduce your energy**

**Adopting some simple energy efficiency measures in your home could help you save on the cost of your energy bills**

**The controllability of electricity makes it easy to take energy efficiency measures**



## Code of Practice on the Efficient Use of Electricity

There are many ways to reduce electricity around your home. By taking simple steps you save money and help the environment if you use it efficiently. Enjoy the convenience of this clean and versatile fuel by following some simple advice.

### How to reduce the amount of electricity you use

Heat can escape from your home in many ways – through the roof, walls, windows and floors and by draughts. If you require assistance with any energy efficiency matter we can help you over the telephone. Please call 0345 601 9093 to speak to one of our trained staff

Alternatively, you can visit the Smart Energy section of our website [www.sseairtricity.com](http://www.sseairtricity.com)

You can make a significant difference to the amount of energy you use and save money if you follow these useful hints.

Useful hints

#### Check your room temperature

Don't open doors or windows to cool a room. Instead, control the temperature with low cost Thermostatic Radiator Valves (TRVs). You could save up to 10% off your heating bill if you reduce the temperature by 1oC. Try to reduce the temperature gradually until you find a comfortable level. It takes a few hours for your whole house to change to the new temperature.

#### Check your hot water temperature

Have a thermostat fitted to your hot water system. You can set this to make sure you don't heat water more than necessary. The normal maximum temperature for stored hot water is 60oC.

#### Avoid paying too much for hot water

Make sure your cylinder's insulating jacket is at least 75mm (three inches) thick and meets all relevant British Standards. If you have a thin jacket on your cylinder, add a second jacket over it. Taking a shower is normally cheaper than having a bath.

### Control your central heating

Use your central heating sensibly - only switch on your central heating when you need it. This saves money and avoids wasting energy.

As a guide use your timer to set your heating to go off 30 minutes before you go out for the day or go to bed.

Help to prevent burst pipes in winter. If you are away from home for a long time, program your heating to come on for a few short periods each day, and set the thermostat to low or install frost protection controls.

### Don't heat rooms you don't use

In unused rooms, make sure radiators are turned down low. Shut doors and windows. Air the room occasionally and check for condensation or mould.

Don't turn off the radiator next to a room thermostat. This gives a false idea of the temperature in the rest of the house.

If you use electric heaters or fires, save money by turning them off if you leave the room for any length of time. Electricity heats a room very quickly once the appliance is switched back on.

### Don't let heat escape

Don't open windows when your heating is on. If your house is too warm, turn the heating down.

If you need more air, open the door to that room.

Consider installing double-glazing and draught-proofing doors. This can save you money and makes your house more comfortable.

Heavy lined curtains are excellent at retaining heat. Make sure they don't cover your radiators. If possible, use curtains with heat-reflective, insulated lining.

### Don't waste energy on standby

Leaving appliances on standby wastes energy. Try to avoid leaving TVs and other electrical appliances on standby. Instead switch them off.

### Don't waste on laundry

Put a full load into your washing machine or tumble dryer whenever possible. Washing clothes at 30°C instead of a higher temperature can use around 40% less electricity. Washing powders and detergents work just as effectively at lower temperatures so unless you have very dirty washing, bear this in mind. Use economy programmes for small loads or washing which isn't very dirty. Front-loading washing machines are usually more efficient.

If the weather is fine, dry your washing outside.

If you use a tumble dryer, spin your clothes first. They'll dry more quickly. Make sure the filters in the tumble dryer are fluff free.

Don't turn up the tumble dryer too high or dry clothes for too long. It makes ironing easier.

Buying a new washing machine or dryer? Look for the energy efficiency rating. The more efficient (A or B), the cheaper to run.

### Top Tips!

Avoid drying clothes on radiators as this reduces the room temperature, making the boiler work harder.

Ensure all hot water pipes are adequately insulated.

Always use lids on saucepans and use the right size pan for the size of your cooking ring.

Only use as much water as you need in your kettle (making sure you cover the electric element).

Use a microwave instead of the oven as much as possible – not just for reheating and defrosting, but for fresh food too. They're quick, easy and economical to use.

Don't put your fridge or freezer next to a cooker or in the sun. Make sure air can circulate around the back. Load and unload the fridge as quickly as possible. Don't leave the door open for longer than you need to. Never put hot food in a fridge or freezer. Let it cool first. Defrost your fridge or freezer regularly.

## Energy Saving Light bulbs

Turn off lights when you are not using them. Use energy saving light bulbs. They last up to 10 times longer than ordinary bulbs, and using one can save you around £45 over the lifetime of the bulb. This saving could be around £70 over its lifetime if you're replacing a high wattage incandescent bulb, or one used for more than a few hours a day. Fit timers and automatic sensors to lights, especially outside lighting and avoid using spotlights.

## Appliances which need to be powered all the time

Generally only the following appliances need to be powered all the time:

- > Home security systems and sensor lights
- > Gas and oil boilers and heating controls
- > Remote garage door openers
- > Standby reduction devices
- > Fridges & Freezers

Everything else like your TV can be switched off at the wall.

For more information or assistance on measures to improve the efficiency of your electricity usage please contact Bryson Energy (Energy Saving Trust Advice Centre) on 0800 1422 865 or visit the website at [www.energysavingtrust.org.uk](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk)

## Energy Efficiency Appliances

Some of the latest appliances are over 90% efficient. Ensure when making a purchase you choose higher rated appliances – A or B for electrically powered goods. The current lifespan of a boiler is around 12 years. Fitting an A-rated high efficiency condensing boiler with the correct heating and hot water controls can make a huge difference to your heating bills over time.

There may be grants and offers available to help you install an energy efficient heating system. To enquire about available grants please contact 0300 200 7874 for information on the governments Affordable Warmth scheme, alternatively please contact Bryson Energy (Energy Saving Trust Advice Centre) on 0800 1422 865.

## Business Energy Efficiency Advice

We offer energy advice to existing and potential business customers. Please contact us on 0345 601 9093 for further information about the efficient use of electricity for your business. Our staff will work with your energy and facilities teams, independent architects, suppliers and installers to assist you in identifying energy efficiency measures for your business.

## Our energy advice for business customers is free of charge.

Much of the advice outlined in Code of Practice on Efficient Use of Electricity is also applicable to commercial customers. We also offer specific advice and support to both new and existing customers. Our aim is to ensure that you minimise energy costs and become more energy efficient. A plant that was 'state of the art' twelve years ago may have been overtaken by the latest equipment and controls, which have the potential to reduce energy consumption, delivering economic and environmental savings.

Using our advice you can review existing equipment and control systems and help your business become more energy efficient.



Contact Details for Other Organisations

## **Age NI (formerly Age Concern & Help the Aged)**

3 Lower Crescent  
Belfast  
BT7 1NR

Advice Line 0808 808 7575  
[www.ageuk.org.uk/northern-ireland](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/northern-ireland)

Age NI is the charity combining Age Concern NI and Help the Aged in Northern Ireland. Age NI provides advice and advocacy and delivers care services with the aim of improving the quality of later life for everyone.

## **The Carbon Trust Loan Scheme**

Unit 3, The Innovation Centre  
Northern Ireland Science Park  
Queen's Road  
Belfast  
BT3 9DT  
Northern Ireland

Telephone 028 9073 4394  
[www.carbontrust.co.uk](http://www.carbontrust.co.uk)

Carbon Trust is a not-for-profit company providing specialist support to help business and the public sector boost business returns by cutting carbon emissions, saving energy and commercialising low carbon technologies.

## **Citizens Advice Bureau**

Citizens Advice Regional Office  
46 Donegall Pass  
Belfast  
BT7 1BS

Telephone 028 9023 1120  
[www.citizensadvice.co.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.co.uk)

Citizens Advice is the largest advice charity in Northern Ireland, working against poverty and provides a free of charge information and advice service to the general public.

## **Consumer Council for Northern Ireland**

Floor 3  
Seatem House  
28-32 Alfred Street  
Belfast, County Antrim  
BT2 8EN

Telephone 0800 121 6022  
[www.consumercouncil.org.uk](http://www.consumercouncil.org.uk)

The Consumer Council is an independent consumer organisation which represents transport, water and energy consumers. The Consumer Council's aim is to give consumers a voice by running information and education campaigns, undertaking research and producing publications.

## **Disability Action**

Portside Business Park  
189 Airport Road West  
Belfast  
BT3 9ED

Telephone 028 9029 7880  
Textphone 028 9029 7882  
[www.disabilityaction.org](http://www.disabilityaction.org)

Disability Action works to ensure that people with disabilities attain their full rights as citizens, by supporting inclusion, influencing Government policy and changing attitudes in partnership with disabled people.

## **Bryson Energy**

Freephone 0800 1422 865  
Email [advice@brysonenergy.org](mailto:advice@brysonenergy.org)  
[www.brysonenergy.org](http://www.brysonenergy.org)

Bryson Energy offers free comprehensive advice and support on how to save energy in the home.

## **Northern Ireland Housing Executive**

The Housing Centre  
2 Adelaide Street  
Belfast  
BT2 8PB

General Enquiries 0344 892 0900  
[www.nihe.gov.uk](http://www.nihe.gov.uk)

Northern Ireland Housing Executive is Northern Ireland's strategic housing authority, offering a range of services to people living in socially rented, privately rented and owner occupied accommodation.

## **Utility Regulator**

Queens House  
14 Queen Street  
Belfast  
BT1 6ED

Telephone 028 9031 1575  
[www.uregni.gov.uk](http://www.uregni.gov.uk)

The Utility Regulator is an independent non-ministerial government department set up to ensure the effective regulation of the electricity, gas and water and sewerage industries in Northern Ireland.

