



Our Code of Practice

on Services for Prepayment Meter Customers



Foreward

We would like to take this opportunity to present our Electricity Code of Practice on Services for Prepayment Meter Customers.

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.

This Code is compliant with the minimum standards as set out by the Utility Regulator.

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

February 2017

Let Pay As You Go give you flexibility and control over your electricity bill



Code of Practice on the Services for Prepayment Meter Customers

What is a Pay As You Go meter?

A Pay As You Go (PAYG) meter lets you pay for your electricity as and when you use it. When we install a PAYG meter we will provide you with details of our Electricity charges. Our website www.sseairtricity.com also shows full details of current charges. Customers will receive a statement at least annually.

Criteria to qualify for a PAYG meter:

- > Customers with no critical care/life support facility on the premise.

If you do not meet this criteria (for example, if you are a critical care customer), other options are available to you, such as payment plans/arrangement. For details of these options, contact our Customer Service team on 0345 601 9093. The account holder will be made aware of the Code of Practice on Provision of Services for persons who are of Pensionable Age or Disabled or Chronically Sick. PAYG meters are an easy way to pay for your electricity.

Advantages of a PAYG meter are;

- > The meter is pay-as-you-go, no direct debit or security deposit.
- > It allows you to pay for your energy supply before you use it.
- > It can help you to manage arrears.
- > There are no additional charges for PAYG customers.

The disadvantages of a PAYG meter

While there are advantages associated with having a PAYG meter you should consider the issues you may experience in the event that you choose to have one fitted:

- > The range of outlets to purchase top-ups or replacement cards may be limited depending on your location.
- > These meters may have limited suitability for customers with medical or other special needs e.g. sight problems, mobility difficulties, medical equipment installed at the home etc.
- > Some homes may not be suitably wired to allow the network operator to install a pay as you go meter.
- > You need to check your meter regularly to ensure you remain in credit.

Prepayment Arrangement for Debt

Before the installation of a prepayment meter in order to collect outstanding debt we will

- > Outline the terms and conditions of the repayment arrangement
- > Outline the actual amount of debt and the percent of each vend that goes towards debt repayment
- > Provide guidance on what to do if you have difficulty maintaining debt repayments

Topping up

When a PAYG meter is requested you will be issued with a pay-as-you-go card for topping up – please keep this safe. If you do not have a pay-as-you-go card please contact our Customer Service team at 0345 601 9093 and we will issue you with one free of charge.

The most convenient way to make a payment for your meter is online at our website www.sseairtricity.com. All you need is your Pay As You Go meter card and an email address. You can also make a payment instore at any Payzone outlet, PayPoint outlet and Post office. You can view the list of approved Payzone and Paypoint outlets and access information on vending facilities in your area, including the location and hours available at www.payzone.co.uk/outlets and www.paypoint.com/en-gb/consumers/store-locator. Please be aware that using an unauthorized vending facility may cause difficulties with your supply.

When you buy a top-up you will be given a power code (usually a 20 digit number). If you lose your power code before keying it into the meter, you can ring our Customer Service team on 0345 601 9093 and we will re-issue the power code to you, free of charge. Alternatively, if you topped up online you can retrieve your power code from your emails, or if you purchased instore you can return to your, Payzone, PayPoint or Post Office agent who will re-issue you with your last receipt free of charge.

For those customers who have no internet access, please contact our Customer Service team on 03456019093 and we will be happy to let you know of your nearest approved Payzone or Paypoint Outlet.

Full Instructions on operating your Pay As You Go Meter:

In order to pay for your electricity using a PAYG meter, please follow these steps.

- > Top up online or go to any Post Office, PayPoint Outlet or Payzone outlet in Northern Ireland
- > Choose your top up amount – this can be any amount between £5 and £175
- > Provide your keypad card details and receive your 20 – digit PowerCode
- > Go to your Keypad meter and press '*' button once on the keypad.
The message 'KeyCode' will be displayed
- > Key in all digits of your PowerCode. If you enter a wrong digit press the '*' button to go back

- > Once all 20-digits are entered press the '#' button, if entered correctly an 'Accepted' message will display
- > You will then receive energy to the value of the top up amount you have entered less any amount to arrears if you have these on your meter.

Customer Service

If you require information on the following please contact our Customer Service Team on 0345 601 9093.

- > How to operate your meter
- > If you are experiencing difficulty using your meter
- > If you believe there may be a fault with your meter.
- > For any complaints

Where requested, SSE Airtricity will provide the operating instructions in a language other than English or another format such as Braille at no additional cost.

Running out of credit?

When your credit reduces to £1 (£2 for Economy 7 meters) you will hear a low volume warning sound for two minutes. Press any button to turn it off. The warning sound will be repeated every 30 minutes (but not between 10pm and 11am) until a button is pressed

Friendly credit

Weekdays – if your credit runs out after 4pm, Monday to Thursday, the supply will stay on until 11am the following day. (depending on meter type friendly credit may end at 8am).

Weekends – if your credit runs out after 4pm on a Friday, the supply will stay on until *11am the following Monday.

Holiday - If you run into friendly credit on a bank holiday, the supply will stay on until *11am the following working day.

*Please add 1 hour during Summer Time

Remember the next time you buy energy, the amount of friendly credit used will be deducted from your balance.

Emergency credit

If you run out of credit outside of the hours listed in friendly credit you will start to use the emergency credit. Emergency credit is set at £1 (£2 for

Economy 7 customers) and gives you time to purchase credit from one of our authorized outlets. When the emergency credit has run out the supply to your premise will disconnect. Remember the next time you buy energy, the amount of emergency credit used will be deducted from your balance.

Important information on standing charges: Customers with an Economy 7 PAYG meter have a daily standing charge associated with their meter. Every day the amount of the standing charge is deducted from your credit. If you are away from your home for a period of time standing charges will continue to be charged on your meter.

You can check your applicable standing charges on www.sseairtricity.com. Please ensure you have enough credit on your meter at all times. Customers with other PAYG meter types do not have standing charges.

Standing charges are made up of costs associated with providing your energy supply such as operating costs, meter reading, maintenance and the cost of keeping you connected to the network.

Useful information

What happens when the energy price changes?

Power codes usually have 20-digits. However when you buy a top-up after a change in energy prices you will be given a special 40 or 60-digit power code. This will credit your meter with your top-up amount while updating it with the new price details.

What if I have previous arrears on my account?

If you have any arrears, a percentage of each top-up you buy goes towards reducing the arrears until they are cleared. You will also receive a statement at least annually, which will show the amount of energy you have used and the amount of credit you have bought. We will discuss repayment of outstanding arrears with you and will calibrate your PAYG meter to recover a maximum rate of 40% of your vend towards those arrears taking your ability to pay into account.

Removal/Resetting of meter

From time to time your meter may need to be removed or reset. These changes are carried out by NIE Networks. We will ensure any requirement to remove or reset your meter is forwarded to NIE Networks within 5 days of identification. NIE Networks will contact you directly to arrange access and to carry out the removal or resetting of the meter. Any credit on your meter at the time of removal or resetting will be transferred to your new meter.

Refunds

Please call us if you change address and require a refund of the credit. This will be issued in 10 working days from the date that the amount is requested.

Special Control Taps and Adaptors

We have special control taps and adaptors for customers who have problems using their electricity appliances. Simply let us know what difficulties you are having and we can advise you what special controls and adaptors are available. If the special control and adaptor that you are requesting is not available we can provide you details of where to purchase other items that assist with daily living and household tasks. If you need your meter to be repositioned, please contact us and we will provide assistance with this.

Further Useful Information

- > Debt will be recovered on a per vend basis at an agreed percent rate. Times of a lower usage may be a good opportunity to reduce the debt.
- > For each tariff change, domestic pre-payment customers are notified at least 21 days in advance of the tariff effective date.
- > If you choose to change supplier, your options for vending may change

Other formats of this guide

If you require Braille, large print or audio format, please contact us on 0345 601 9093.

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

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

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

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

Seatem House
28 - 32 Alfred St
Belfast
BT2 8EN

Telephone 0800 121 6022
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

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
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

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

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.

