

# Warmth Matters

Stay warm. Stay healthy. Save money.

April 2020



## In this COVID-19 special issue...

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## Government agrees measures with energy industry to support vulnerable people through COVID-19

These new measures include ensuring prepayment and pay-as-you go customers remain supplied with energy through these challenging times and support all customers in financial distress.

This could include:

- Nominating a third party for credit top ups
- Having a discretionary fund added to your credit
- Being sent a pre-loaded top up card so that your supply is not interrupted.

More broadly, any energy customer in financial distress will also be supported by their supplier, which could include:

- Debt repayments and bill payments being reassessed
- Reduced or paused where necessary
- Disconnection of credit meters may also be completely suspended.



**If you are worried about your energy supply during these challenging times please contact your energy supplier (see how overleaf).**

## Need to contact your energy supplier?

If you usually pick up the phone to speak with your energy company, it's worth noting that phoning is not always the easiest way to get in touch - and in these challenging times it might be even more difficult to get through as more people will be concerned about their energy supply.

For most people, using an app, live chat and email can be a quicker alternative than using the phone. Email is one of the easiest ways of contacting your energy supplier but you don't always get an immediate response.

Also think about using social media as many energy suppliers use Facebook and Twitter to take customer queries. Just remember not to reveal any personal details – your energy supplier will invite you to use direct messaging to share this information.

If you don't use the internet or social media, ask a family member or friend to help out,

Remember, contact details of your energy supplier can be found on a recent bill

## Warm and Safe Homes Advice Service

The WASH Advice Service is a free support service providing advice to householders in England and Wales on their energy bills and keeping warm and safe in their home.

**You can speak to an adviser directly by calling 0800 304 7159**

The service has its own dedicated Facebook page. If you chat to them, you'll be taken directly to one of their Project Development Co-ordinators who can give you tailored advice.

Agencies can refer or clients can self-refer by filling in the simple form.

**For more information please visit [www.nea.org.uk/advice](http://www.nea.org.uk/advice)**



## Have you registered for the Priority Service Register?

We all rely on electricity day to day for various things and for some, a power cut can be particularly distressing and difficult, especially in these uncertain times.

**That's why it's important to register for this free service if you can.**

**You may want to register if you:**

- Are deaf or hard of hearing
- Have a disability
- Live with children under 5 years old
- Are blind or partially sighted
- Have a chronic illness
- Use medical equipment/aids reliant on electricity
- Are over 60

### How to register

**Southern Scottish Electricity Networks (SSEN)**

**Call 0800 294 3259**

or visit [www.ssen.co.uk/PriorityServices](http://www.ssen.co.uk/PriorityServices)

**UK Power Networks**

**Call 0800 029 4285**

or visit [www.tiny.cc/priorityservice](http://www.tiny.cc/priorityservice)

**If you ask them, they will register you with your energy supplier as well**

# Warmth Matters - Service Update



COVID-19 gives us a serious challenge in terms of the way we work and how we can be most helpful to our customers.

So from April, we'll be providing an email and telephone service to continue to give information and guidance to our customers.

## Top Tips

### Worried about topping up your meter?

Customers that are unable to top up their pre-payment meter are advised to contact their energy supplier immediately to discuss how they can be kept on supply.

### Help with topping up your pre-payment meter

Ofgem recommends consumers leave the meter box unlocked if they need someone else to top up the meter.

### Smart meters

Smart meter customers should be able to top-up remotely, such as by phone, mobile application or online.

### Power Cut

Remember, if you get a power cut you can call **105** for help and advice

### Some of the things that we can help with include:

- Information on what to do if you are worried about your energy supply, especially if you are on a pre-pay meter.
- Energy efficiency advice to help you keep your bills down
- Switching energy supplier during the disruption caused by COVID-19.
- Warm Home Discount and Priority Service Register information
- Support with understanding your gas and electricity bills and letters
- Information on energy and water schemes and trusts
- Fuel debt signposting

### For more information:

Email: [davidcarter@surreyca.org.uk](mailto:davidcarter@surreyca.org.uk)

Telephone: **07521 503 696**

(on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays)

or visit: [www.warmthmatters.org.uk](http://www.warmthmatters.org.uk)



### Worried about claiming benefits?

#### Stay up to date

Advice about your energy supply and the coronavirus can be found here:

[www.ofgem.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-covid-19-and-your-energy-supply](http://www.ofgem.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-covid-19-and-your-energy-supply)

Advice about the coronavirus and claiming benefits can be found here:

[www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk/coronavirus)

## Useful contacts & information

### Surrey Community Action

We have a wealth of knowledge about a variety of organisations, groups and communities across Surrey. We provide advice and support to voluntary and community groups, parish councils and social enterprises and deliver projects to help the community.

[www.surreyca.org.uk](http://www.surreyca.org.uk)

Tel: 01483 566072

### The Energy Saving Advice Line

0300 123 1234

### The Energy Saving Trust

[www.energysavingtrust.org.uk](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk)

### The Warm and Safe Homes Advice Service

0800 304 7159 (see page 2)



Hi, my name is David Carter and I started working on the Warmth Matters Project in November 2018 as an Advice and Guidance Officer.

I work Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays helping to provide free and impartial information on a range of energy saving topics.

For more information please visit [www.warmthmatters.org.uk](http://www.warmthmatters.org.uk)

## Coronavirus and Claiming Benefits

### Has your income been affected by the coronavirus?

For information on the Coronavirus and claiming benefits you can visit

[www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk/coronavirus)

### These links might be useful too:

[www.turn2us.org.uk](http://www.turn2us.org.uk)

Turn2us are a national charity helping people when times get tough. They provide financial support to help people get back on track.

[www.entitledto.co.uk](http://www.entitledto.co.uk)

Entitled to are one of the leading providers of online benefit calculators in the UK. They help people determine what they can claim from national and local government via our self-serve calculators.

[www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)

Age UK's Benefits Calculator can help you find out what benefits you could be owed. It's free to use and the details you provide are kept anonymous.

### Surrey County Council Crisis Fund

This fund can provide support for immediate needs after a disaster or in an emergency, where no other options are available. It may be able to assist with:

- food
- certain utilities
- emergency travel costs

[www.surreycc.gov.uk/people-and-community/surrey-crisis-fund](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/people-and-community/surrey-crisis-fund)

Warmth Matters is a project aimed at sharing tips on energy efficiency and keeping warm as well as helping you save money on your energy bills.

We offer free and impartial advice to help you stay warm, stay healthy and save money.

The project is delivered by Surrey Community Action and funded by The Sobbell Foundation and The Henry Smith Charity