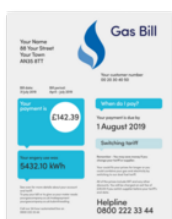


Ideas to save energy

Things to think about when you use your gas, electric and water



When you get a gas, electric or water bill, it will tell you how much gas, electric or water you have used.



If you use a lot of gas, electric and water, you will have to pay more than someone who does not use as much gas, electric and water.



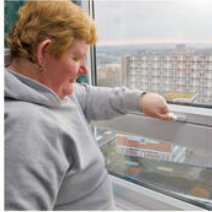
You might hear people talking about **fuel poverty**.



Fuel poverty is when you need to spend a lot of your money or benefits on keeping your home warm enough for you to be warm and healthy.



This page gives you some ideas about how you can try to use less gas, electric and water at home.



Check your doors and windows close fully. Use a **draught excluder** if you need to.



A **draught excluder** is a long piece of metal, wood or material which you put by the edge of a door or a window.



It stops the cold air coming in and the heat from your house going outside.



When it starts to get dark, close your curtains or blinds to help to keep the heat in the room.



Use the timer for your heating and hot water so that they are only on when you need them.



Use the thermostat to choose how warm the rooms are when your heating is on.



Only put as much water as you need in your kettle.



Check that your taps are turned off fully and are not dripping.



Defrost your freezer if it has a lot of ice around the shelves.



When you are cooking, use a saucepan which is the right size for what you are going to cook.



On the hob, use the right size ring for the saucepan.



Try to wait until you have enough clothes to fill your washing machine before you wash them.



It is quicker to wash clothes at 30 degrees than if you wash them at 40 degrees.



This means you will use less electricity.



Tumble dryers use a lot of electricity.



Can you dry your clothes outside on a washing line?



Can you dry your clothes on a clothes airer?



If you use a clothes airer indoors, you might want to open the window so the damp air can go outside.



Try to wait until the dishwasher is full before you put it on.



Some washing machines and dishwashers have a delay button.



A delay button means you can put your clothes or dishes in the machine and set the programme,



but the machine will not start until later.



If your electricity is cheaper at night, you might want to use the delay button so that your machine works when the electricity is cheaper.



If the machine will be working at night, think about whether it will wake anyone up.



A shower uses less water than a bath.



Try not to spend too much time in the shower.



Turn off the tap while you brush your teeth.



Only turn on lights when you need them.



Turn off the light if you are not using a room.



Turn off things like your tv. Do not leave them on standby.



Most laptops and phones only need an hour or two to charge.



If you charge them overnight, you will use more electricity than they need.



You might want to ask friends and family for their ideas about how you can try not to use too much gas, electric and water at home.

How to get help



You can get help and advice on our website at www.mencap.org.uk/COL



If you are worried about money, contact our Learning Disability Helpline:



Call us Monday to Friday on 0808 808 1111



Email us at helpline@mencap.org.uk



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Sources: Tips on how to save energy and money at home – Centre for Sustainable Energy. How to save money and use less energy – Ofgem