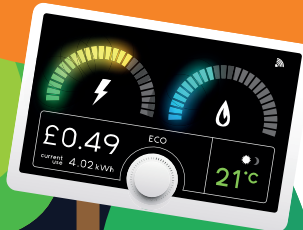
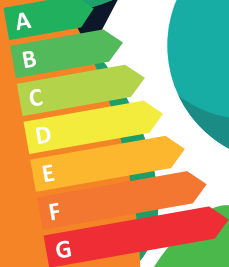


Home Energy Efficiency

gmhousing.co.uk



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Introduction

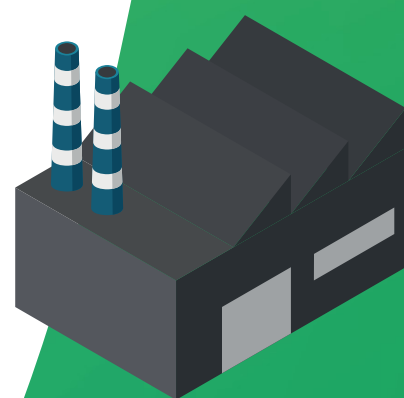
This booklet has been produced to support GMCA's 5 Year Environment Plan 2019-2024. The need to reduce CO2 emissions produced by the excessive use of energy in heating our homes is one of the key elements in the strategy and forms an integral part to the wider issue of tackling climate change.

***“We need to reduce CO2 emissions that are produced by the energy we use to power our transport and heat and power our buildings...
To do this, residents will need support to help make the right decisions, making sure everyone can benefit from these changes.”***

GMCA 5 Year Plan Executive Summary

Climate change is one of the most significant environmental issues of our times and reducing its impact is a sizeable challenge. While we are looking at different ways and technology to make our homes more energy efficient in the future, by making small changes to our daily habits, we can all play a part in helping to protect our environment for now and future generations.

This booklet shows how making simple adjustments around the home can reduce energy usage whilst helping to make Greater Manchester households warmer and healthier places to live. With handy hints & tips and advice around energy costs it will help to create savings as well as providing an opportunity for residents to make their own contributions to reducing CO2 levels in the GM region.



Top Ten Energy Saving Tips

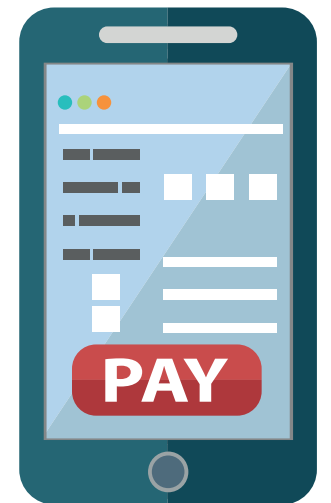
Everyday we use appliances, lighting and heating around our homes which uses electricity. Here are some simple ways to reduce the amount of electricity you use, which will also help to minimise your fuel bills.



- > Turn your thermostat down. Reducing your room temperature by 1°C could cut your heating bills by up to 10 percent. 18-21°C is a comfortable temperature for most people.
- > Always turn off the lights when you leave a room.
- > Washing your clothes at a lower temperature uses less electricity. Washing at 30°C rather than 40°C could save you a third of the cost. Fill up the washing machine, tumble dryer or dishwasher: one full load uses less energy than two half loads.
- > Spend less time in the shower - an electric shower is a high energy user as it heats the water instantaneously. Spending one minute less in the shower each day will save a typical household an estimated £45 per year, as well as saving on water costs.
- > Reduce the heat loss in your home. Keep internal doors closed, at night shut curtains or blinds and use draught excluders at the bottom of doors to prevent draughts.
- > Use energy saving lightbulbs. They last up to 10 times longer than ordinary bulbs, and using one can save you around £55 over the lifetime of the bulb.
- > Only boil as much water as you need. The more water in the kettle the more electricity used.
- > On a sunny day, opening your curtains will let warmth into your house, but when it's colder or the sun goes down don't forget to close them to keep that heat in.
- > Unplug electrical devices when not in use.
- > Understand how your heating and hot water system works. Your home may have a thermostat and programmer controls. Make sure you know how to use them to run the system in the most energy efficient way.

Energy Costs

With rising energy costs, it's never been more important to take simple steps to minimise your energy bills. As well as reducing the amount of energy you use, here are a few ways you can do this.



Managing Your Energy Costs

The wholesale prices of energy is constantly changing so it is becoming more and more important to be aware of how you are using energy in your household and what you are paying. Here are a few things that can be done to make it easier:



- 1 **Payment method** - are you on the best payment method for your budget? If you are on a pay as you go meter you can change to pay via bill or direct debit instead this can sometimes work out cheaper, contact your supplier to explore your payment options.
- 2 **Debt payments** - are you paying of debt on your meters or struggling to pay your energy bill? If you are struggling to pay, talk to your supplier they can support you in different ways such as amending your debt payments, payment breaks and referring you for hardship funds.
- 3 **Tariff check** - always make sure you are on the cheapest tariff with your supplier. As wholesale prices have risen switching supplier or tariffs to get a cheaper deal has become more difficult, but keep checking as wholesale prices constantly change.
- 4 **Smart Meters** - check with your supplier if they are offering smart meters. With a smart meter you will be able to track your day-to-day energy usage and find out where you can save energy and money.
- 5 **Talk to your landlord or local authority** - They will be able to let you know about any support available such as financial support from your local authority, additional benefits to help towards fuel costs, and government discount schemes to reduce your fuel bills.

Help available

Warm Home Discount

The Warm Home Discount is available from most large electric suppliers and runs annually. If you are eligible you could receive £140 towards your winter electric bill, applications are open for a limited period every year. Check with your energy supplier if they are part of the Warm Home Discount Scheme and when they open for applications.



Cold weather payments

If you receive certain benefits you will receive a payment if the average temperature in your area is recorded or forecast to be 0 degrees Celsius or below over 7 consecutive days. Check if you are eligible with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

Winter fuel payment

If you were born on or before 26th September 1955 you could get between £100 and £300 to help you pay your heating bills during the winter months. Payments should be made automatically between November and December each year. If you have not made your claim or have not received your payment, call the winter fuel payment Centre 0800 731 0160.

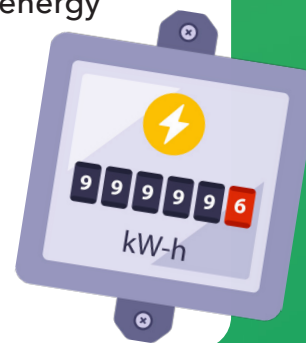
The Priorities Service register

The Priority Services Register (PSR) is a free and voluntary system that your energy supplier uses to ensure the correct support is given to its most vulnerable customers.

It is a system designed and overseen by Ofgem to better ensure that individuals with special requirements have access to additional support from their energy supplier as and when they require it.

This support varies by supplier and by an individual's circumstances, but can include:

- Large-format or Braille bills
- Advanced notice of service interruption
- Priority in a power cut
- Quarterly meter readings



Top up assistance on your Pay as You Go meter

Are you in emergency credit and cannot top up until you next get paid? Don't just sit in the dark, contact your energy supplier. Energy suppliers can offer discretionary credit to keep you on supply until you can next top up, this will be paid back at a weekly rate, but this support may help you through a difficult time and prevent you from dropping off supply.



Smart Meters



Smart meters are the new generation of gas and electricity meters, which will replace the traditional meters in our homes. Every home in England, Scotland and Wales will be offered a smart meter by their energy supplier, at no extra cost, between now and 2025

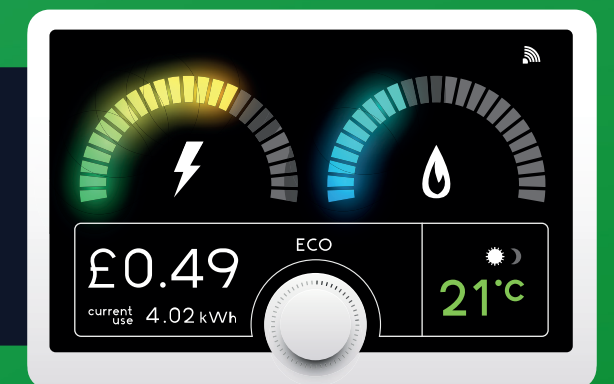
Smart meters let you to see exactly how much energy you're using, as you use it, and what it is costing in pounds and pence. This will help you to control your energy use.

Smart meters take regular readings and share these wirelessly, through a secure network, with your energy supplier. This means your bills will be accurate, not estimated, and you will no longer need to have manual meter readings.

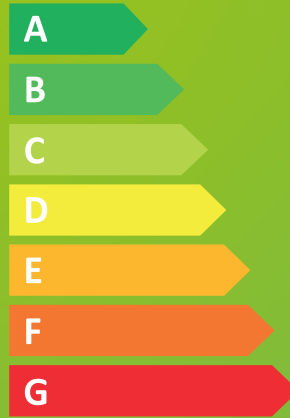
With a smart Pay as You Go meter, you will be able to top up in the comfort of your own home via telephone, website or app.

Along with your smart meter, you will receive an in-home display, a handheld digital device that shows exactly how much energy you're using and what it is costing in real time as well as the credit you have on the meters for PAYG customers.

Contact your energy supplier to request a smart meter.



**For more information visit:
www.smartenergygb.org**



Energy Ratings

Buying New Appliances

Technology is always finding new way to use energy more efficiently. So if you are replacing electrical appliances make energy efficiency a major consideration. By doing so, you could save energy and money every year for the life of the products.

Buy Energy Efficient Appliances

Update your appliances with new ones that carry the Energy Saving Trust or Energy Recommendation logos. A, A+ and A++ are the most energy efficient choices, whilst G rated are the most inefficient. When buying new appliances, think about the running costs as well as purchase price.

Tip - When buying new appliances, choosing energy efficient ones will save you money in the long run.



Recommended temperatures

Living Room

21°C



Bedroom & Bathroom

18°C



Hallway & Stairs

16°C



Managing Fuel Debt

What can you do if you are having problems paying your bills?



- 1 First of all, check that your energy bills are correct.** You should take regular meter readings to make sure you are being charged for the correct amount of units used. If an energy supplier does not receive a meter reading, they will estimate your usage, and this may well lead to a higher bill.
- 2 Inform your energy supplier straight away, if you cannot pay them or cannot keep up with payments.** There are rules your energy supplier must follow. If you do not inform your supplier and you miss a payment, they may add late payments fees to your bill. Contact them as soon as possible to avoid extra fees.

Your energy supplier must:

- Give you information about how to avoid getting into debt
- Give you advice on how to pay back money that you owe
- Offer a payment plan that takes into consideration how much you can afford
- Only offer a prepayment meter as a last resort to disconnecting you

If you require support to help you deal with your energy costs please see organisations below:

Charis Grants

01733 421 021 | www.charisgrants.com/individuals

The Energyworks Team

0800 090 3638 | www.groundwork.org.uk/greendoctor/our-partners/energyworks-green-doctors-in-greater-manchester/

National Energy Action - Warm and Safe Homes Advice

0800 304 7159 | www.nea.org.uk/wash-advice/

Citizens Advice Consumer Service

0808 223 1133 | www.citizensadvice.org.uk/energy

If you want some free, independent and confidential advice around helping you manage your finances, you can contact any of the following:

StepChange Debt Charity

free phone 0800 138 1111 or visit www.stepchange.org

National Debtline

free phone 0808 808 4000 or visit www.nationaldebtline.org

