



**COMMUNITY
POWER**

**Code of Practice on
Billing and Disconnection**

Billing and Disconnection

At *Community Power*, our main priority is you, our customer. We want to ensure that your experience with us is positive and transparent and that managing your energy is clear and simple. One of the ways we aim to achieve this is through ensuring your bill is detailed and easy to understand. For us to continue providing you with our service, we do rely on you paying your bills on time. This code of practice for domestic and non-domestic customers outlines our commitment to you in relation to our billing practice and explains your bill, how you can pay for your energy as well as what to do if you are finding it difficult to make payment on time. The code also explains when and how we will initiate disconnection of supply and how we collect debt should it apply.

Receiving your Bill

- * We will ensure you receive your bills promptly and regularly and as per the terms and conditions of our contract.
- * We will send you either a paper or electronic bill depending on whether you have agreed to online billing or not.
- * You can easily choose whether you wish to receive your bill via email or by post and the post option will have no extra cost. Your rate may however change depending on the billing method you choose.
- * Some of our tariffs may require you to avail of electronic billing but these terms will be explained to you during your sign-up process.
- * If you wish to change your billing method, please contact us and we can process the change and advise you if any change to rates may occur.
- * If you are a domestic customer, we will bill you and send you your bill every month.
- * If you are a large consumer with quarter hourly meter reads, we will bill you monthly.

Understanding Your Bill

Your bill will display:

- * The period you are being billed for, the date of issue and payment due date.
- * Your latest meter readings and your previous meter readings.
- * The reading type, either actual (a), customer read (c) or ESN estimate (e).
- * Your tariff and tariff rate.
- * All additional charges such as standing charges, PSO levy and VAT.
- * Any outstanding balances from previous bills.
- * Total cost due by you.
- * Other information that you may find useful when understanding your bill such as an explanation of the PSO levy, agencies you may wish to contact should you have issues paying your bill, energy advise agencies and our contact details if you need further information or need to raise concerns with us.

How is my bill calculated?

- * Your bill will be calculated using either:
 - **actual reads** provided by ESB Networks (reads shown as 'a')
 - **estimate reads** calculated and provided by ESB Networks or (reads shown as 'e')
 - **plausible reads** provided by you the customer (reads shown as 'c')
- * Actual reads allow for the most accurate billing of your consumption. As a residential customer, ESB Networks Ireland will attempt to take a meter reading four times a year. When your meter is not read, usage is estimated by ESN based on previous consumption. Any necessary adjustment is made when the next reading is obtained
- * Your previous and current meter reading are compared to illustrate how much energy you consumed (and are being charged for) between the reads.
- * The cost of the energy consumed is calculated by multiplying your units of consumption by the rate of your energy tariff.
- * All other costs identified above will be added to your energy consumption costs to provide a total bill amount.

Changes to my bill

If we change our tariff prices, we will let you know at least 30 days in advance.

Questions about your bill

If you have any questions about your bill, contact *Community Power* at:



info@communitypower.ie



+353 (0)67 56005



2nd Floor, Friars Court, Nenagh, Tipperary

Paying your bill

We ask that you pay your bill on time and engage with us should you experience any difficulty in paying your bill. If payment and engagement is not forthcoming you acknowledge that we will have to initiate our non-payment process which may lead to disconnection of supply.

- * Your payment method is included in the terms of your selected tariff. In order to avail of the tariff, the payment method must be used.
- * If your bill is paid by direct debit, it will be paid from the bank account that you specified when you signed up with us.
- * Payment will be processed and taken from your account 14 days after your bill issue date.
- * If your account is in arrears and you pay by direct, payment will be taken from your account with immediate effect. You will receive a bill showing the arrears.
- * We understand that sometimes there are circumstances where you become aware that there won't be sufficient funds in your bank account to cover your direct debit. We encourage you to contact our Customer Service Team on 067 56005, at least five working days before your payment is due and we can arrange an alternative payment plan. Please note, if you notify us less than five working days before your payment is due, we won't be able to cancel your direct debit as it will already be initiated with your bank.
- * We are only able to discuss payment options with the authorised account holder or the nominated representative that we have on record.
- * Failed Direct Debit Payment Process:
 - In the event, your direct debit is returned unpaid, you will be charged a €6 fee by *Community Power*. Your bank may also charge you a separate fee for failed direct debit payment.
 - If your direct debit fails, you can pay us through phoning through to our call centre who can process a phone payment on a different card or pay online at www.communitypower.ie
 - Once we have received notification of unsuccessful direct debit payment, we will get in touch with you to inform you of the payment failure. We will also attempt to contact you by phone to recover the unpaid amount the following working day, before attempting to make representation to your bank for the unpaid direct debit(s).
 - In the case, your direct debit returns to us, we will be permitted to make representation to your bank for the amount of the unpaid direct debit(s) within seven days of the notification of return by your bank, if we have not already received payment for this amount at this time.
 - We will make up to three attempts to draw down the direct debit from your account. Please note, you will incur charges for each unsuccessful attempt.
- * *Community Power* reserve the right to charge interest on overdue invoices on a daily basis from the due date until the date of payment at a default rate that is 3% per annum above EURIBOR.

Closing your account and your final bill

Moving out

When you want to close your account or are moving to a new house, you need to take the following steps:

Step 1. You will need to give us notice by phone, email or post.

Step 2. The closure notice must include the following:

- Your name and MPRN number (see top of latest Bill)
- A closing meter reading
- Forwarding address so we can send you your final bill.

We will only accept a termination notice from the authorised account holder or the nominated representative that we have on record.

If you cannot provide a final reading your final bill will be based on an estimated reading provided to us, by ESB Networks Ireland.

In the unlikely event that you don't inform us that you are moving out you will be held responsible for any energy used up to the date the meter is disconnected for vacancy or a new customer moves into the premises. We will pursue unpaid debts using our debt collection procedures.

All unpaid debts will be subject to our normal debt collection procedures. We may withhold supplying energy or opening an account with us in your name until all outstanding debt is paid. You may not be able to open a new account in a new premise with us until all your outstanding debt is paid. Unpaid debts maybe transferred to a new account and this will depend on individual circumstances.

Step 3. Once we have a final reading and a forwarding address, we will issue you with your final bill no later than six weeks from the effective date of the change of supplier or account closure taking place.

Your final bill will include information about any credit due to you. We will refund any credit owing to you, either directly into your bank or if you require a cheque payment, please contact us on 067 56005. We will make any credit payment to you within 2 months of your final bill date.

Moving in

If you are moving into a property where *Community Power* is the registered supplier, you must notify us immediately as you will be liable for all energy consumed at the property. If we are not notified by you, you will be liable for consumption under the deemed contract legislation (Section 16 of the Energy Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1995) and via the deemed contract which we will send to you.

Payment difficulties

We understand that sometimes circumstances lead to genuine financial hardship where paying bills can be difficult. If you are having difficulty paying your electricity bill, please contact us as soon as you possibly can so that we can work with you to find a solution. When contacting *Community Power* with payment issues, we commit to:

- * Listen sympathetically to your case and ensure that it is heard and respected.
- * Facilitate you if you wish to nominate a third party to deal with the repayment plan and the management of your energy account.
- * Consider offers of repayment carefully and fairly.
- * Where possible, establish a workable repayment plan that considers your financial circumstances and capability to pay back the debt in realistic, feasible instalments.
- * Take all possible steps to avoid disconnection due to non-payment being carried out only as a last resort.
- * Communicate to you in writing no later than one week after the repayment plan has been agreed. The written notification will include details of the repayment plan and a clear explanation of the agreed terms of the repayment plan.

When do we disconnect?

Disconnection can occur for several reasons:

Customer requested Disconnection -

You can request a disconnection because you wish to undertake renovations, building work, demolition or you have chosen to for some other reason. To request a disconnection, please contact our customer care team on 067 56005.

Disconnection due to vacancy/no registered account holder –

Where a customer has moved out and no new customer has moved in, we will begin the process of disconnection due to vacancy. If we are not notified of a new occupant, we will write to the premises requesting the new occupant to contact us to avoid disconnection for vacancy. If no new occupant registers with us following our request to register, we will issue a disconnection notice. Disconnection will be formally requested 10 days following the disconnection notice.



Disconnection for safety reasons –

ESB Networks may be required to disconnect a premises for safety reasons.

Disconnection due to non-payment –

As per the section on payment difficulties, *Community Power* will only consider disconnection of supply due to non-payment as a last resort. We will only disconnect if debt continues to accrue, there is no engagement from you in response to our communication or if you refuse to enter into a payment agreement or break the payment agreement.

When do we not disconnect?

We will not disconnect you under the following circumstances:

- * Where you have entered into a payment plan and are honouring that arrangement.
- * Where you are pursuing a complaint using our complaint handling procedures (as detailed in our code of practice on complaints) and the complaint is related to the reason for disconnection. We will not initiate a disconnection in relation to the disputed amount until the complaint process has been completed. You may however be required to pay the undisputed element of the bill and any subsequent bills that follow during the complaints process.
- * The bill due is not for the supply of energy.
- * Failure to pay a bill based on a regular estimate unless it is fair and reasonable in the circumstances.
- * Where a customer relies on a recognised life support system and has already informed us.
- * During the Winter months which is from the 1st November to the 31st March where a person is registered on our special services register.
- * Where a customer is a member of any category of customer that the CRU may specify from time to time.

Disconnection procedure

We will exhaust all possible avenues prior to resorting to disconnection due to non-payment. If all avenues of communication and debt management have failed, we have no option but to enforce, by law, our right to be paid for energy we have provided you.

Before we disconnect you we will:

- * Contact you twice in writing advising you of your arrears and the need to engage with us to arrange a repayment plan.
- * Attempt to contact you twice more through either telephone, email or text message to advise you of your arrears.



- * Ensure that all above attempts to contact you are at least three working days apart.
- * Following no engagement from above attempts, we will write to you and give you ten working days' notice of our intention to request disconnection. We will not contact ESB Networks to request a disconnection of a domestic customer until after the 10-working day notice period has lapsed. The disconnection notice will contain the following information:
 - The reason for disconnection
 - List all costs that will apply for disconnection and reconnection
 - Contact details so that you can arrange payments with us and avoid disconnection
 - Disconnection site visits are not made on a Friday, Saturday, Sunday, or a public or bank holiday. However, disconnection for safety reasons can be made at any time
 - It must be noted that payment of arrears cannot be made to the persons carrying out the disconnection.

Reconnection

- * If disconnection due to non-payment occurs, we will work with you to find a solution to reconnect your supply. Before we can reconnect you, all arrears and costs associated with the disconnection and reconnection must be paid in full.
- * In certain circumstances we may enter a repayment plan and reconnect you. This is conditional on you not previously having broken a payment plan or repeatedly been disconnected or failed to make payment of bills at all.
- * Where a settlement has been reached with *Community Power*, you will be entitled to be reconnected under our standard terms and conditions.
- * *Community Power* may request additional security such as a security deposit/bond to undertake the reconnection and to ensure that disconnection for non-payment will not occur in the future. The reconnection SD must be maintained for a period of 12 months. The security deposit will be credited to the next bill following satisfaction of credit terms for a period of 12 months continuously. All conditions associated with the reconnection security deposit, including how it will be repaid will be provided to you in writing.

Our commitment

Our aim is always to provide the best possible service to you. If, however, we do not meet any of the above commitments within this code, you are entitled to apply for compensation under the terms of our customer charter, setting out why you believe we have not followed this code.

Where we agree that you are entitled to receive a Charter payment, the amount will be credited to your electricity account within one billing period.

If you are no longer an account holder with *Community Power*, we will arrange an alternative method of awarding your charter payment within 10 working days.

CRU sign-off

This Code has been approved by the Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU) on 25.11.2019.

Data protection

Community Power respects the rights of our customers under GDPR legislation. Please view our privacy policy on our website www.CommunityPower.ie. We will only ever use personal information for marketing purposes in accordance with this Code and in alignment with your marketing preferences.

Contact us

Please contact us at the below details if you have any query or concern in relation to our code of practice.



info@communitypower.ie



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