



SSE Airtricity Gas Supply (NI) Limited
Code of Practice
on Efficient Use of Gas

Smell Gas? Call **0800 002 001**

This Code of Practice outlines the services, advice and assistance we may be able to offer you to help use your energy more efficiently.

October 2020





We aim to offer you the best advice available to help maximise energy efficiency in your home. Adopting some simple energy efficiency measures in your home could help you save on the cost of your energy bills and help the environment.

Using gas efficiently

Natural gas is the most environmentally friendly fossil fuel. Switching from oil to natural gas reduces the levels of sulphur, particulates and carbon dioxide in the air. In comparison with other fossil fuels, natural gas burns with minimum waste and emissions.

You can make a significant difference to the amount of natural gas you use and save money if you follow these useful hints:

Check your room temperature

A room thermostat, programmer, smart heating control and or thermostatic radiator valves (TRVs) could help you save on your energy bill.

If you already have a full set of controls, turning down your room thermostat by just one degree can save you up to 10% off your heating bill. Between 18°C and 21°C is ideal for health and wellbeing, as well as cost. It takes a few hours for your whole house to change to the new temperature. Reduce the temperature gradually until you find a comfortable level.

Whatever the age of your boiler, the right controls will allow you to:

- Set your heating and hot water to come on and off when you need them.
- Heat only the areas of your home that need heating.
- Set the temperature for each area of your home.

Smart heating controls, including smart thermostats and smart TRVs, are the latest innovation to help you control your heating and understand your energy use. They allow you to control your heating remotely via a mobile app, meaning that you can manage the temperature of your home from wherever you are, at any time of day.

To control an individual room, keep windows and doors closed and control the temperature with low cost TRVs.

Check your hot water temperature

If you have a thermostat fitted to your hot water system you can set this to ensure you're not overheating your water. You could reduce energy usage by setting the thermostat to 60°C, the recommended temperature for hot water.

Avoid paying too much for hot water

Make sure your cylinder's insulating jacket is at least 75mm (three inches) thick and meets all relevant British Standards. If you have a thin jacket on your cylinder, add a second jacket over it. Taking a shower is normally cheaper than having a bath.

Control your central heating

Use your central heating sensibly, only switch on your central heating when you need it. Reducing your usage saves you money and avoids energy being wasted. Simple tips include using your timer to set your heating to go off 30 minutes before you go out for the day or go to bed.

To help to prevent burst pipes in winter or, if you are away from home for a long time, program your heating to come on for a few short periods each day and set the thermostat to low or install frost protection controls.

Don't heat rooms you don't use

In unused rooms, make sure radiators are turned down low. Shut doors and windows. Air the room occasionally and check for condensation or mould. Don't turn off the radiator next to a room thermostat. This gives a false idea of the temperature in the rest of the house.

If you use natural gas heaters or fires, save money by turning them off if you leave the room for any length of time. Natural gas heats a room very quickly once the appliance is switched back on.

Don't let heat escape

Don't open windows when your heating is on. If your house is too warm, turn the heating down. If you need more air, open the door to that room. Consider installing double-glazing, cavity wall insulation, draught-proofing doors or insulating your loft from 100mm to 270mm. This can save you money and makes your house more comfortable.

Heavy lined curtains are excellent at retaining heat. Make sure they don't cover your radiators. If possible, use curtains with heat-reflective, insulated lining. Be careful not to block air vents in your rooms where fossil fuels are being used.

Don't block heat sources

On chilly days, when the radiators or heaters are on in your home or workplace, make sure they aren't blocked by clothes, towels, curtains or any desks or equipment. This is important, because it helps make sure that heat can effectively circulate and heat the room more efficiently.

Boiler servicing

An inefficient boiler will waste energy. An annual boiler service will help to ensure it operates both safely and at optimum efficiency. A boiler service should always be carried out by a Gas Safe Registered engineer.

Energy efficiency natural gas appliances

Some of the latest natural gas appliances are over 90% efficient. The current lifespan of a boiler is around 12 years. Fitting an A or AA rated high efficiency condensing boiler with the correct heating and hot water controls can make a huge difference to your heating bills over time.

There may be grants and offers available to help you install an energy efficient heating system. To enquire about available grants please contact NI Energy Advice on 0800 111 4455 or visit their website nihe.gov.uk/Community/NI-Energy-Advice

You must use a Gas Safe Registered Installer for all natural gas installations and servicing at your home. For a list of Gas Safe Registered Installers you can contact 0800 408 5500 or online at www.gassaferegister.co.uk

If these appliances are not installed, maintained, and used properly, carbon monoxide (CO) can build up to dangerous and even deadly levels, particularly in poorly ventilated areas. The best way to protect against carbon monoxide is to make sure all gas burning appliances are installed by Gas Safe Registered installers and serviced by competent companies or individuals - at least once a year. You should also install an audible carbon monoxide alarm – these are widely available to buy from supermarkets, DIY stores or online retailers.

Energy Performance Certificates

An Energy Performance Certificate, or EPC, shows how energy efficient a property is, as well as how energy efficient it could be. The certificate contains details on energy performance of the property and what you can do to improve it. To obtain an EPC if you do not already have one, a qualified assessor will need to visit your home. More details can be found at the following website: www.epcregister.com

Using gas efficiently in your business

Much of the advice outlined in the Code of Practice on Efficient Use of Gas is also applicable to commercial customers.

Conduct an energy audit

Take regular meter readings around your premises to keep track of your energy consumption, that way you will know what processes use the most energy and will be able to identify areas where savings could be made and help you budget more accurately for your business energy cost.

Get staff involved in your energy saving efforts

It's a great idea to get your team involved. Making staff aware of the business's efforts to save energy is a great starting point. Helping to make staff more aware of the energy they use can be a great help in your efficiency efforts. Work with your team to educate them about the small ways they can help to cut down on the energy they use during the day. You'll be surprised at how much of a difference these small changes can make to your energy costs.

Get in touch

If you require assistance with any energy efficiency matter or for more tips and advice, please contact us by:



Phone: **0345 900 5253**

Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 7pm and Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm
(calls charged at local rate)



Email: **info@airtricitygasni.com**



Website: **airtricitygasni.com/at-home/energy-efficiency**



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Alternative formats

A copy of this Code of Practice is available on our website at airtricitygasni.com or can be provided free of charge upon request. This Code of Practice is also available in alternative formats including Braille, Large Print or Audio Format.

Useful information sources

For more information or assistance on measures to improve your energy efficiency or to enquire about grants available for energy efficient heating systems in Northern Ireland, please find below the contact details of a number of organisations:

For home customers



Call NI Energy Advice on: **0800 111 4455**



Email: NIenergyadvice@nihe.gov.uk



Website: **<https://www.nihe.gov.uk/Community/NI-Energy-Advice>**

For business customers



Call Carbon Trust on **0207 170 7000**



www.carbontrust.com