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Contracts, Pricing and Billing

If you're looking for a new deal on your household or small business electricity or natural gas account, it's important to know about contracts, pricing and billing.

Contracts

Your electricity or natural gas contract outlines all the terms and conditions of your relationship with your energy retailer. This includes things like price, service standards, fees and charges, billing and payment arrangements and penalties for early termination.

Customers who do not enter a negotiated contract with a retailer will automatically be placed on a **standard retail contract**. If you are on a standard retail contract for your electricity, you will pay the Government-set price.

Customers who choose to negotiate a new agreement with their energy retailer, will go on to a **market contract**. Minimum terms and conditions apply to all electricity and natural gas contracts. Your retailer must give you a Customer Charter that clearly outlines these minimum terms and conditions, which include things like billing, connections and disconnections.

At the end of your market contract, you have the option either to stay with your current retailer on a standard retail contract, negotiate another deal with your current retailer, or shop around for a deal with another company.

Pricing

What you pay for your electricity or gas depends on the price you agree with your retailer and the amount of electricity or gas you use. You should compare prices and offers to make sure you get the best deal for your needs.

Remember that no pricing structure is static. Market prices are likely to fluctuate and your market contract may take this into account, or your retailer may fix your electricity or gas price for the duration of the contract.

As a householder or small business operator, you can stay on the Government-set electricity price – or return to it at a later date – if you wish. This means, even if you try a market contract, you can choose to go back to the regulated price at the end of your contract.

Billing

Your current entitlement to any concessions, such as pensioner rebates, will also continue no matter which retailer you are with. Ask your retailer how to apply for these concessions.

You will continue to pay your Community Ambulance Cover Levy through your electricity bill. This is collected by your retailer on behalf of the Government.

If you have both electricity and natural gas, you should ask retailers whether there are any discounts or other offers available as a 'dual fuel' package, and compare offers. If you have any billing questions, contact your retailer.