

Delivering Fairness

Codes of Practice



Codes of Practice



SP Energy Networks is part of the Scottish Power Group of companies. We provide power on behalf of supply companies through a network of cables and power lines that we own and maintain. We do it responsibly. We do it with respect for people and for the environment. We do it looking at the long term, not just today. We do it innovatively.

Through our transmission and distribution network we provide power to;

- 1.5 million customers in Merseyside, Cheshire, North Wales and North Shropshire
- 2 million customers in Central and Southern Scotland.
(A small minority of properties in our area are connected to an independent network operator)

We operate primarily in a regulated environment, with targets set by the UK regulator, Ofgem.

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Like any business, our customers are important to us, all of our customers have one thing in common; their property depends on the safe and reliable delivery of electricity to their home through our network. We have produced these Codes of Practice to set out our customer service objectives and describe what we can do to help you.

If you would prefer to speak to someone please ring our enquiry number **0330 1010 444** where one of our team will be happy to help you.

Introduction



If there is a power interruption we are the people to contact to get the power back on.

We do not issue your electricity bill. If you have an enquiry about your bill or your electricity meter, you must contact your supplier. You will find the contact details on your latest electricity bill.

This booklet tells you about the services we provide.

- **Contacting Us**
- **Extra support during a power cut including registering for our Priority Services Register**
- **Interruptions to your power**
- **Helpful advice during a power cut**
- **Visiting your home**
- **Complaints and customer satisfaction**

Contacting us

If you wish to tell us that you have no power or to report a potentially dangerous situation involving our equipment, you can contact us on our **Faults and Emergency Freephone helpline 24hour/7days a week** on



0800 001 5400 for customers in Merseyside, North Wales, Cheshire and North Shropshire



0800 092 9290 for Central and Southern Scotland

If you would like to contact us regarding any of our other services, please telephone: **0330 1010 444**.

If you require any further information about a planned interruption to your electricity supply, please telephone the number on the notification letter we send to you.

Alternatively, if you would prefer to contact us in writing in relation to any matter, please write to the:



Customer Contact Team
SP Energy Networks
320 St Vincent St
Glasgow
G2 5AD

These codes of practice are available, on request, in alternative formats such as Braille and large print.

Ethnic Policy If your first language is not English, we may, on request, be able to offer a translation service.

Extra support during a power interruption

We keep a **Priority Services Register** so that we can contact our most vulnerable customers if they do experience a power interruption. You can be included in our register if you are:

- Blind or visually impaired
- Deaf or hard of hearing
- Of pensionable age
- Dependant on medical equipment
- Chronically sick
- Disabled
- Or have some other special needs you would like us to consider

It does not cost anything to join our Priority Services Register.

What we offer our priority services customers -

- We will let you know in advance of a planned interruption to your electricity supply
- We will keep in touch with regular updates during a power cut and if necessary, we can work with external agencies who may be able to assist.

You can also contact your electricity supplier who can register you for their other services under their Priority Services Register. The telephone number is on your latest bill.

If you are a domestic customer and feel that our Priority Services Register would be of benefit to you, or any member of your household, please call us on **0330 1010 444**. You can also ask someone else to do this on your behalf.

In the event of an emergency we may share your information with other responding agencies.

If you register directly with us we will, with your approval, inform your supplier and pass on your details. Your supplier will be able to register you on their Priority Services Register and offer additional services related to their business.

Alternatively, if you contact your supplier in the first instance, they will pass on your details to us.

Password Protection

You may choose a password, so that if we need to visit your home, you can be confident that the person entering your home is our employee or contractor acting on our behalf.

Additional Support Services

You can also give us the name of a friend or relative to act on your behalf, in the event of a supply interruption or pre-planned outage. We take great care to ensure that we have details of customers who rely on essential electrical equipment, such as home dialysis machines. We can record where your home is, so that we can do our best to provide you with any additional help that may be necessary during supply interruptions. We can't guarantee that supply interruptions will never happen, therefore we recommend that you make alternative arrangements, e.g. contact family, friends or local hospital.

Being on our register won't necessarily mean we can restore your power more quickly, however we will try to proactively contact you if we know of a problem in the area.

Interruptions to your power

Planned Interruptions

Sometimes we must interrupt your power to carry out essential maintenance and to enable us to work safely on our equipment, although we do try to keep your power on wherever possible.

If we do need to interrupt your power we aim to give you at least 5 day's notice to help you prepare for the interruption. We will write to you giving the date and times we expect to switch the power off and on.

If you depend on electricity for special medical equipment e.g. kidney dialysis unit, nebuliser, are visually impaired or, you would be at risk due to the loss of the electricity supply, please contact us on the number listed on the notification letter sent to you.

If you require any further information and advice about a specific planned interruption, again please contact us at the telephone number listed on the notification letter we send to you.

Unplanned Interruptions

If you unexpectedly lose your electricity supply, we will do everything possible to restore it quickly. If this can be done safely, it may be helpful to carry out the following prior to contacting us:

- Check to see if your neighbours have lost their supply.
If they have not, the problem could be with your own electrical installation.
- If you have a trip switch, check to see if it has operated.
If it has, switch off all your appliances and try to reset the trip. The supply may then come back on.

If you are still off supply, and you can find no other reason for the supply interruption, then please contact us on our 24 hour Faults and Emergency Helpline;



0800 001 5400 for customers in Merseyside, North Wales, Cheshire and North Shropshire



0800 092 9290 for Central and Southern Scotland

- If you have a battery operated radio, listen to the local radio station. We will try to keep the radio stations informed of electricity supply problems in your area, especially during times of severe weather when we will also keep your supplier informed.
- Keep a torch handy.
- Keep fridge and freezer doors closed.
- Keep informed about your entitlements which are listed in our Standards of Service leaflet. Your supplier sends these leaflets to you every year.
- Many modern telephones, especially digital or cordless handsets won't work in a power cut. Keep an ordinary one to use.

Helpful advice during a power cut

- Protect sensitive electrical equipment such as computers, media players and tablets with a surge protector plug or an Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS).
- If you or a member of your family has a serious health problem please ensure that you have plans in place in the event of a long power cut. Make sure any medical equipment has a battery back-up.
- Turn off and unplug any electrical appliances that get hot, as you may forget they are switched on when the power returns.
- During cold weather dress warmly using several layers of clothing.
- If you have no gas for cooking, your neighbours may be able to help you with warm drinks and hot food.



Visiting your home

Normally, our staff or contractors working on our behalf, will visit your home by appointment. However, from time to time we may need to visit your home to inspect or maintain our equipment during emergency conditions.

We are particularly concerned about customers who may be vulnerable to bogus callers pretending to represent us.

If you have any doubts at all about whether a caller is genuine do not let them into your home.

All of our employees and contractors will carry an identity card showing the Company name, their own name and a photograph of the individual. They will always show you their identity card.

Where possible, all vehicles and clothing used for visits to customers premises will carry the SP Energy Networks or contractor's logo.

Will be able to inform you of our emergency telephone number upon request.

Will explain the reason and provide information on matters relating to the visit.

Will return their ID card when they leave the Company or the card expires.

Passwords

If you would like to feel more secure, we can agree a password with you when we make an appointment.

Keeping Appointments

If we agree an appointment with you, we will do our best to keep it, unless we agree an alternative date with you. If we do not keep the appointment we will make a fixed payment to you, in line with our Guaranteed Standards commitment.

Time Bands

When we agree an appointment with you, we will offer you an am or pm time-band to suit your own personal requirements.

Our time-bands are:

8am to 1pm or 12noon to 5pm, Monday to Friday.

If requested by you, we will agree to a more specific two hour time band.

Complaints and customer satisfaction

Our Commitment

We are committed to providing you with excellent customer service, first time every time. However, we understand that sometimes things do go wrong. We want to know when this happens, so that we can sort out any problems as quickly as possible.



Complaint Handling

If you have a complaint about any of our activities please let us know. Here is all the information you need to use our complaints procedure.



Telephone - please call us on **0330 1010 444**



Email - you can email us at customercare@spenergynetworks.com



In writing - you can write to us at:

For Central and Southern Scotland

Customer Contact Team
SP Energy Networks
320 St Vincent St
Glasgow
G2 5AD

For Merseyside, Cheshire, North Wales & North Shropshire

Customer Contact Team
SP Energy Networks
3 Prenton Way
Prenton
CH43 3ET

Please let us know your address including post code with a contact telephone number in your letter. We will acknowledge your letter or e-mail within one working day.

Step 1 Review by Customer Contact Team

However you contact us, we will aim to resolve your query within 10 working days.

Step 2 Review by your Local Manager

If you are not happy with the response to your initial query and contact us again, we will acknowledge receipt of your complaint and arrange for a manager responsible for the electricity network in your area to review your complaint. We will contact you within 10 working days, or sooner if possible, and will do our best to resolve the problem at that stage.

Step 3 Referral to a Senior Manager

If you are not happy with the way that the local manager has dealt with your complaint, you can ask for it to be reviewed by a senior manager responsible for your region. We will contact you within 5 working days, investigate your complaint and work with you to resolve the problem.

Step 4 Final Review by Director

If you are still not fully satisfied by the actions taken after discussing your complaint with the senior manager responsible for your region, you can ask for your complaint to be formally reviewed by our Customer Service Director.

We will then send you a letter setting out our final position within 10 working days.

Step 5 Energy Ombudsman

Rest assured that we will do all we can to solve your problem by working with you. Where appropriate, we will provide an apology and an explanation of what went wrong, as well as take remedial action where this is needed. Compensation could also be paid, if deemed necessary.

However if you are still unhappy with our actions and have already followed steps one through to four, or we have been unable to resolve your complaint within eight weeks, you have the right to contact the Energy Ombudsman. This is a free and independent dispute resolution service. The Ombudsman will ask you for a full account of your dealings with us and they will also contact us to gain a factual understanding of the case from our perspective.

The Ombudsman will make a final decision once they have obtained all of this information and inform you of the outcome. Contact details for the Energy Ombudsman are as follows:

Ombudsman Services: Energy
PO Box 966
Warrington
WA4 9DF

Telephone: 0330 440 1624

Fax: 0330 440 1625

Email: osenquiries@os-energy.org



**SP ENERGY
NETWORKS**