

Citizens Advice information on vanishing energy suppliers

Many people have recently had the disconcerting experience of seeing their energy supplier break up and go out of business during the recent energy price fluctuations. It sounds pretty drastic, but the situation isn't as bad as it seems.

If you are one of those affected, remember these key facts: first of all, the gas or electricity supply itself won't be interrupted, so don't be concerned about that. Next, you should know that Ofgem, the industry regulator, will automatically move you to a new supplier. This usually takes a few weeks.

Wait for your new supplier to contact you. They will explain what will happen with your new account. But contact the new supplier yourself if you haven't heard from them within two weeks. You can check on www.citizensadvice.org.uk ("check who's taken over your energy supply") if you're not sure who your new supplier is.

While you're waiting to hear from the new supplier, it's a good idea to take meter readings (and a photo of the readings) as they might prove useful later. Make a note of your account balance too. Keep any old bills you have, as these can help prove your payment history, credit balance or debt.

If you aren't happy with your new supplier or tariff, you can switch suppliers. Look at "switch energy supplier" on our website or ring the Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline on 0808 223 1133.

Many people are seeing their energy bills increase significantly. If you are one of them, and worried about being able to meet these higher energy payments, please contact Citizens Advice on our Adviceline number 0808 278 7907.

Citizens Advice has slightly different advice for small businesses whose energy suppliers have gone out of business. Please visit the Citizens Advice website.