

**ofgem**

Making a positive difference  
for energy consumers



**Know your rights**  
power cuts

# Introduction

The energy industry in Great Britain is split into four parts: generation, transmission companies, distribution companies and the suppliers.

The electricity distribution companies own and operate the poles and cables that bring electricity from the national transmission network to towns and villages. They don't sell electricity to customers - this is done by the electricity suppliers.

# Ofgem's guaranteed standards

Great Britain has seen some severe weather patterns recently which have, at times, resulted in some homes and businesses being without electricity. This can have an impact on many daily activities that we take for granted - turning on the lights, charging mobile phones and refrigerating food.

Ofgem is committed to protecting customers' interests by ensuring that they are provided with a reliable electricity service, whatever the weather. That is why we have our Quality of Service Guaranteed Standards which are service levels that should be met by each distribution company. If they fail to meet the level of service required, then customers may be entitled to a payment.

The amount paid to customers depends on many factors including the cause of the interruption and the amount of time the supply was interrupted. Payments under the guaranteed standards recognise the inconvenience caused by loss of supply. They are not designed to compensate customers for subsequent financial loss.

# What are the guaranteed standards?

## Severe weather

Standard	Explanation	Payment for not meeting standard (by distribution companies to customers)
Regulation 7 – Supply restoration – category 1 severe weather conditions	Distribution companies have 24 hours to restore electricity supply if it fails due to a storm causing between eight and 12 times the daily average number of faults in a 24 hour period. They have 24 hours to restore supply if it fails when lightning causes more than eight times the daily average number of faults in a 24 hour period.	£70 for domestic and non-domestic customers. A further £70 will be paid for each additional period of 12 hours in which supply is not restored (up to a cap of £700 in total).
Regulation 7 – Supply restoration – category 2 severe weather conditions	Distribution companies have 48 hours to restore electricity supply if it fails due to a storm causing more than 12 times the daily average number of faults in a 24 hour period.	£70 for domestic and non-domestic customers. A further £70 will be paid for each additional period of 12 hours in which supply is not restored (up to a cap of £700 in total).
Regulation 7 – Supply restoration –category 3 severe weather conditions	The length of time without supply before a payment may be due depends on the scale of the impact of the weather (this is determined by the number of customers interrupted relative to pre-defined thresholds).	£70 domestic and non-domestic customers. A further £70 will be paid for each additional period of 12 hours in which supply is not restored (up to a cap of £700 in total).

Under categories 1 and 2, customers must be off supply for 24 or 48 hours continuously to qualify for payments. Where distribution companies are prevented by flooding from gaining access to their equipment or the customer's premises, the 24 or 48-hour period may not start running until it is reasonably practicable for the company to reconnect the customer.

## Normal weather

Standard	Explanation	Payment for not meeting standard (by distribution companies to customers)
Regulation 5 – Supply Restoration in normal weather conditions	Distribution companies have 12 hours to restore electricity supply if it fails during normal weather conditions.	<p>£75 for domestic customers and £150 for non-domestic customers.</p> <p>A further £35 will be paid for each additional period of 12 hours in which supply is not restored.</p>
Regulation 6 – Supply restoration in normal conditions affecting 5,000 or more premises	<p>Distribution companies have 24 hours to restore electricity supply if it fails during normal weather conditions.</p> <p><i>The standard only applies if supplies to 5,000 or more premises are interrupted by a single fault.</i></p>	<p>£75 for domestic customers and £150 for non-domestic customers.</p> <p>A further £35 will be paid for each additional period of 12 hours in which supply is not restored (up to a cap of £300 in total).</p>

## Restoring supply – other

Standard	Explanation	Payment for not meeting standard (by distribution companies to customers)
Regulation 8 – Supply restoration – rota disconnection	<p>Electricity supply shortages leading it to be interrupted deliberately on a rota basis in order for available supply to be shared fairly.</p> <p>Customers who are off for 24 hours or longer may be eligible.</p>	£75 for domestic customers and £150 for non-domestic customers.
Regulation 10* – Supply restoration – multiple interruptions	Electricity supply failing (due to the distribution system) for three hours or more, on at least four different occasions in a 12 month period (starting 1 April every year).	£75 for domestic and non-domestic customers.
Regulation 11 – Distributor's fuse	If a distribution company's fuse is stopping supply to the customer's property then an appropriate professional must attend the scene within three hours (working days) or four hours (other days).	£30 for domestic and non-domestic customers.

\*In identifying the four different occasions, an interruption to electricity supply covered by regulation 5, 6, 7, 8 or 11 is not included.

## Communicating with customers

Standard	Explanation	Payment for not meeting standard (by distribution companies to customers)
Regulation 12 – Notice of planned interruption to supply	Distribution companies are required to give customers at least two days' notice for planned power cuts.	£30 for domestic customers and £60 for non-domestic customers if distribution company fails to give the required notice or interrupts energy supply on a different day.
Regulation 13 – Voltage complaints	<p>If a customer reports a problem with the voltage of the electricity coming into their property, the distribution company must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-send out a written letter explaining the issue within 5 working days</li> <li><i>or</i></li> <li>- offer to visit the customer's property within 7 working days</li> </ul>	£30 for domestic and non-domestic consumers if the company fails to keep or make an appointment or send an explanatory letter.

## Communicating with customers (continued)

Standard	Explanation	Payment for not meeting standard (by distribution companies to customers)
Regulation 17 – Making and keeping appointments	<p>This standard is applicable if the distribution company needs to visit the customer, or the customer requests for the company to visit.</p> <p>The distribution company must offer a timed appointment – AM (before 1pm) or PM (after 12PM) or a specific time two-hour time band.</p>	£30 for domestic and non-domestic customers if company fails to keep or make an appointment.
Regulation 19 – Notification and making of payments under the guaranteed standards	<p>Distribution companies have 10 working days to make a payment for failing to meet any of the guaranteed standards.</p> <p>For guaranteed standard 7, they must make payment as soon as reasonably practical.</p>	£30 for domestic and non-domestic customers

### Important note –

The table above provides a summary of Guaranteed Standards.

We strongly suggest that you read the complete document before making any claim

[http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/2131/pdfs/uksi\\_20102131\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/2131/pdfs/uksi_20102131_en.pdf)



## Who is my distribution company?

The GB electricity network is split into regions and each region has a local distribution company (referred to as Distribution Network Operators or DNOs in the industry). The name of your distribution company should be clear on the electricity bill you receive from your supplier. Occasionally, the details may be found on a customer's meter cabinet.

Alternatively, you can use the Electricity Distribution Map on the Energy Networks Association's website - [www.energynetworks.org/info/faqs/electricity-distribution-map.html](http://www.energynetworks.org/info/faqs/electricity-distribution-map.html)

## Making a claim

Customers must make a claim within three months of their electricity supply being restored.

Area	Distribution Network Operator	General Enquiries	Emergencies/ Power Cuts	Website
Scotland North	SSE Power Distribution	0800 048 3515	0800 300 999	<a href="http://www.ssepd.co.uk">www.ssepd.co.uk</a>
Scotland South	SP Energy Networks	0330 1010 444	0800 092 9290	<a href="http://www.spenergynetworks.co.uk">www.spenergynetworks.co.uk</a>
North East England	Northern Powergrid	0845 070 7172	0800 66 88 77	<a href="http://www.northernpowergrid.com">www.northernpowergrid.com</a>
Yorkshire	Northern Powergrid	0845 070 7172	0800 375 675	<a href="http://www.northernpowergrid.com">www.northernpowergrid.com</a>
North West England	Electricity North West	0800 195 4141	0800 195 4141	<a href="http://www.enwl.co.uk">www.enwl.co.uk</a>
Merseyside and North Wales	SP Energy Networks	0330 1010 444	0800 001 5400	<a href="http://www.spenergynetworks.co.uk">www.spenergynetworks.co.uk</a>
South Wales	Western Power Distribution	0845 601 3341	0800 052 0400	<a href="http://www.westernpower.co.uk">www.westernpower.co.uk</a>
West Midlands	Western Power Distribution	0845 724 0240	0800 328 1111	<a href="http://www.westernpower.co.uk">www.westernpower.co.uk</a>
East Midlands	Western Power Distribution	0845 724 0240	0800 056 8090	<a href="http://www.westernpower.co.uk">www.westernpower.co.uk</a>
South East England	UK Power Networks	0845 601 4516	0800 783 8866	<a href="http://www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk">www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk</a>
South West England	Western Power Distribution	0845 601 2989	0800 6783 105	<a href="http://www.westernpower.co.uk">www.westernpower.co.uk</a>

Area	Distribution Network Operator	General Enquiries	Emergencies/ Power Cuts	Website
London	UK Power Networks	0845 601 4516	0800 028 0247	<a href="http://www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk">www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk</a>
East Anglia	UK Power Networks	0845 601 4516	0800 783 8838	<a href="http://www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk">www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk</a>
Southern England	SSE Power Distribution	0800 048 3516	0800 072 7282	<a href="http://www.ssepd.co.uk">www.ssepd.co.uk</a>

The Distribution Network Operators also have a full list of who supplies electricity to every home in their area. If you have just moved into a property and need to find out who your supplier is then you can contact your local distribution company.

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## Complaints

If you are dissatisfied with your distribution company's decision following a claim, you will need to follow their complaints procedure. If you continue to be dissatisfied you can refer the case to the Energy Ombudsman - [www.ombudsman-services.org/energy.html](http://www.ombudsman-services.org/energy.html)

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[www.ofgem.gov.uk](http://www.ofgem.gov.uk)