

## **Customer Code of Practice**

### **1. Introduction**

Squire Energy Metering Limited ("SEML") owns and operates electricity networks throughout the UK that distribute a supply of electricity to customers' homes and business premises.

Maintenance of our networks, to ensure a safe and reliable flow of electricity for consumers, is our top priority. This document outlines the services and arrangements we have in place to support this as well as details of how you can raise a complaint if we fail to meet standards.

**If you notice something potentially dangerous relating to your electricity connection or meter or any cables, lines or substations on a SEML network, call **0800 9961002** immediately. For advice on what to do in the event of a power cut see Section 4 of this document.**

### **2. Safety and Security of Supply Enquiry Service**

We operate an enquiry service that can be used by anyone to make reports, receive advice or offer information about any matter or incident that could:

- affect the security, availability or quality of our networks; or,
- in connection with the operation of our networks, cause danger or require urgent attention

To make use of this service, please use the following contact details:

- **Urgent Enquiries** to our emergency telephone: **0800 9961002**
- **Non-Urgent Enquiries** to our office telephone (Mon-Fri, 08.45am - 5.00pm): 01372 360607 or by post to: Squire Energy Metering Ltd., Sentinel House, 10-12 Massetts Road, Horley, Surrey, RH6 7DE

This service is staffed 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Reports made by post or in person should be restricted to events of a non-urgent nature. The service is free at the point of use.

#### **Customers who are deaf or have difficulty hearing**

If you are deaf or have difficulty hearing, you may write or email us using the contact details below.

Your correspondence will then be given a priority.

Post: Squire Energy Metering Ltd., Sentinel House, 10-12 Massetts Road, Horley, Surrey, RH6 7DE

email: [networks@stark.co.uk](mailto:networks@stark.co.uk)<sup>1</sup>

#### **Translation Advice**

If English is not your first language you may write or email SEML using the contact details outlined above and we will provide the necessary assistance or advice that you request to ensure your understanding of any SEML correspondence or statements. Your correspondence will then be given a priority.

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<sup>1</sup> This email address is monitored by SEML staff

## **Loss of Electricity Supply**

The service may also be used by any person to enquire about the likely extent or duration of supply emergencies. Every effort will be made to provide precise and up-to-date information.

## **Service**

All reports and enquires received in accordance with this statement, whether made by telephone, in writing, or in person, will be processed in a prompt and efficient manner and in accordance with any relevant guaranteed and overall standards of service set from time to time by the Authority.

## **Electricity Suppliers**

If any electricity supplier chooses to provide its customers with an address and telephone number which differ from those given in this document for the reporting of such matters, that supplier will be responsible for ensuring that full details of all reports are passed promptly to us. In all such cases, the standards of service provided would be measured from the time at which reports are received by SEML.

## **Enquiry Service Staff**

SEML enquiry staff are trained to provide non-technical advice for the avoidance of danger from the distribution system and from loss of supply. They have the necessary skills in communication and customer contact. If technical advice or assistance is required, the enquiry will be passed to an appropriate specialist.

## **Availability**

The service is also made available to other utilities, local authorities, and emergency services.

## **3. The SEML Priority Services Register**

We are aware that some of our customers have special requirements and need a priority service. If you are blind, partially sighted, deaf, have hearing difficulties, are of pensionable age, are disabled, chronically sick or depend on electricity for medical reasons you may register your details with us.

Some examples of what we mean by “medical reasons” are if you have a kidney dialysis machine, a ventilator, a stair-lift or a bath hoist.

We can keep your information on our Priority Services Register and this will help us to meet your needs. Examples of what our Priority Services Register provides are:

- advance notice of planned interruptions to your electricity supply
- a password facility to enable you to recognise our engineers should they have a need to visit your home (either at your request or in a case of an emergency). This is in addition to the photographic ID cards we already provide to our engineers
- providing advice on how to best prepare for an expected shutdown and manage in an unexpected shutdown.

To register with us please telephone 01372 360607 during the hours of 8.45am to 5pm or write to:

Post: Squire Energy Metering Ltd., Sentinel House, 10-12 Massetts Road, Horley, Surrey, RH6 7DE

or email: [networks@stark.co.uk](mailto:networks@stark.co.uk)

We need to know your name, address, telephone number and details of your special needs or special equipment and how regularly you use it.

Your details will be kept in strictest confidence and only passed on to other organisations for energy-related purposes e.g. a meter company who would need to know your special requirements should they require access to your home to read the meter. We will inform your Electricity Supplier, who can also register you under their own Priority Services Register.

Alternatively, if you register with your Electricity Supplier, they will pass on your details to us.

Please note that it is not possible to guarantee a constant supply of electricity and it is essential that you have alternative arrangements to fall back on. If a constant supply is essential for you, please ask us about other arrangements you may be able to use if your electricity supply goes off unexpectedly.

#### **4. Interruptions to Your Supply**

Sometimes we have to switch off the electricity supply to carry out essential planned maintenance of items on our electricity network or to connect new customers. We will either write to you or deliver a card showing the details of the times of interruption at least 2 days in advance.

Please note that where the interruption of supply is caused by an issue outside of SEML's control e.g. emergency street works that require a cessation of electricity or a fault on another organisation's network that is connected to ours, we will endeavour to inform you within 2 days of receiving the advance notification ourselves.

Our written notice delivered directly to your home will provide a telephone number to use if you wish to call us to obtain further details or to advise us of any other specific problems.

Please note that it is not possible to guarantee a constant supply of electricity and it is essential that you have alternative arrangements to fall back on.

Although we will notify you in advance of planned outages, we are not able to give notice of 'emergency outages' or 'dangerous situation outages'. Switching off the supply of your electricity during this type of emergency would be necessary should there be a danger to human life or to vital equipment.

If you have registered on our Priority Services Register we will endeavour to keep you informed of progress in restoring supply and will discuss any special requirements with you.

Please note, however, that we are not able to provide you with advance warnings for major emergencies or widespread fault situations. If you feel at risk, please contact your local hospital.

If your electricity supply is lost then we recommend you read the following advice:

- Check to see if your neighbours' have lost their supply. If they have not, the problem causing your loss of supply may be the result of one of your own fuses blowing.
- 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 the trip switch has not operated, and you can find no other reason, there may be a problem with the electricity supply. In which case, please call our emergency number listed above.
- If you have a battery operated radio, please listen to the local radio station as it may be possible to keep informed of the more widespread electricity supply problems particularly during times of severe weather.

## **5. Entering your home**

### **Respecting the privacy and security of your home**

Sometimes we may need to visit your home.

The visit will either be made by one of our staff or a contractor working for us. When this happens we want customers to be assured that the visitor is either a genuine member of staff or a genuine contractor working for us. To provide this reassurance:

- Wherever possible, all SEML employees and contractors will show an identity card showing their Company name, their own name, date of issue and a colour photograph of the individual. For customers who are blind or partially sighted, we can also arrange for a password (chosen by yourself) that can be tested on the engineer to ensure their authenticity. Please refer to our Priority Services Register service detailed in Section 3 of this document and our section on Passwords below.
  - All SEML employees and contractors will be able to inform you of SEML's emergency telephone number or general enquiry telephone number.
  - All SEML employees and contractors will be able to give you explanations and information on matters relevant to the purpose of their visit.
  - SEML will take all necessary steps to ensure that all ID cards are returned to the Company when an employee leaves or following the expiry of the card.

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

SEML will ensure that all employees and contractors are aware of the contents of this Code of Practice and will comply with it at all times. They will be suitable, appropriately qualified and fully trained for the purpose of their visit and will be calm and courteous at all times in their dealings with you. They will respect you and your home and give clear and accurate explanations of the work they are to carry out.

In arranging for a visit, you will be offered a morning or afternoon appointment. The morning times are from 8am to 12 noon and the afternoon times are from 12 noon to 4.30pm.

If we agree an appointment, we will do our very best to keep it – unless we agree an alternative date with you.

### **Passwords – Providing you with additional security**

If you are blind, have poor sight or would just like to feel more secure, we can agree a password with you that we will use, if we need to visit your home.

Any member of our staff or agent who has to visit your home will give this password to prove they are genuine.

To set up your personal password please telephone, 01372 360607 during the hours of 8.45am to 5pm or write to:

Post: Squire Energy Metering Ltd., Sentinel House, 10-12 Massetts Road, Horley, Surrey, RH6 7DE

or email: [networks@stark.co.uk](mailto:networks@stark.co.uk)

Alternatively, you may register a password with your Electricity Supplier and they will pass on that password for us to use.

If you have registered a password with us you should always ask for the password before you allow access. If you have any doubts about whether a caller is genuine, do not let them into your home.

As an organisation involved in the provision of electricity we do have Rights of Entry under the Rights of Entry (Gas and Electricity Boards) Act 1954. SEML or our agents will only exercise these rights in extreme situations e.g. should there be a requirement to inspect your meter following an interruption in supply or disconnect the supply in an emergency situation. Our entry will be in strict compliance with the terms of the Act.

## **6. Complaints and Customer Satisfaction**

Handling complaints from customers in a sensitive way that seeks to resolve matters at the earliest opportunity.

If you are dissatisfied with SEML for any reason, please feel free to contact us on 01372 360607 during the hours of 8.45am to 5pm or write to:

Post: Squire Energy Metering Ltd., Sentinel House, 10-12 Massetts Road, Horley, Surrey, RH6 7DE

or email: [networks@stark.co.uk](mailto:networks@stark.co.uk)

SEML will respond to all forms of contact within 10 working days. Should we fail to respond within this deadline, we will provide you with a compensation payment in accordance with Ofgem's Guaranteed Standards.

## **7. Ofgem's Guaranteed Standards**

Meeting the Guaranteed Standards of Service as agreed with Energywatch and Ofgem.

SEML aims to at least meet the Guaranteed Standards of Service that are required by Ofgem. If we do not meet a standard, we will, subject to certain exclusions, make a payment to you.

Regulation	Description	Prescribed period	Prescribed sum (domestic customer)	Prescribed sum (non-domestic customer)
5(2)(a)	Supply failure – normal conditions	12 hours	£75	£150
5(2)(b)	as above - each 12 hours thereafter		£35	£35
6(2)(a)	Supply failure – more than 5000 customers	24 hours	£75	£150
6(2)(b)	As above – each 12 hours thereafter		£35	£35
7(4)(a)	Supply failure – Cat 1 severe weather	24 hours	£70	£70
7(4)(b)	as above - each 12 hours thereafter		£70	£70
7(5)(a)	Supply failure – Cat 2 severe weather	48 hours	£70	£70
7(5)(b)	as above - each 12 hours thereafter		£70	£70
7(6)(a)	Supply failure – Cat 3 severe weather	(Calculated by formula for each distributor)	£70	£70
7(6)(b)	As above – each 12 hours thereafter		£70	£70
8(2)	Supply failure – rota disconnection	24 hours	£75	£150
11(4)	Multiple interruptions		£75	£75
12(3)	Distributors fuse failure	3 hours - working day	£30	£30
12(3)	Distributors fuse failure	4 hours - any other day	£30	£30
14(4)	Failure to notify shutdown to customer	2 days	£30	£60
14(5)	Failure to notify shutdown to other distributor	5 days	£30	£60
14(6)	Failure to notify customer of upstream shutdown	2 days	£30	£60
15(2)	Voltage outside limits	7 working days	£30	£30
15(4)(a)	As above, failure to visit		£30	£30
15(4)(b)	Voltage outside limits, failure to explain	5 working days	£30	£30
19(2)	Failure to offer an appointment		£30	£30
19(3)	Failure to keep an appointment		£30	£30
21(4)	Failure to make a customer payment or to other distributor for onward transmission to customer	10 working days	£30	£30
21(5)	Failure to make a customer payment or to or the electricity supplier for onward transmission to customer	10 working days	£30	£30

Payments, as detailed above, are governed by The Electricity (Standards of Performance) Regulations 2015 and we will be happy to provide you with a copy of the Statutory Instrument upon request.

If you are concerned about your meter, or your electricity bill please call your Electricity Supplier. Their telephone number is on their latest bill.

Our members of staff are trained to listen carefully to your complaint in a polite and understanding way. They will give their full name and telephone extension and may ask you further questions to assist them in fully understanding your complaint or query.

They will seek to resolve your problem themselves, but sometimes a visit by another member of staff will be the best way of resolving the difficulty. Where this is proposed, you will be given the visitor's name and designation and an appointment will be arranged as indicated above.

Where visits are made to assist in the resolution of your complaint, we will empower our member(s) of staff with the authority to make an 'on the spot' decision on the best course of action needed to resolve the issue to your complete satisfaction.

Many of our key electricity services are covered by guaranteed standards. Your complaint may be about one of these Standards. There is more information about this later in this document.

Where technical investigations are needed, for example if the voltage of the electricity supply to your premises is fluctuating outside the permitted limits, we aim to correct it within 6 months in line with Ofgem requirements. We may need to install recording or test equipment and these will be installed subject to the visits and appointment procedures outlined above.

Sometimes it is necessary to make significant alterations to our network and this work may take some time to arrange. However, we will keep you informed of progress at each stage of the process.

### **Escalating your complaint**

If you are not happy with your initial response or any decision made by SEML in resolving your complaint, you can, at any time, escalate the matter further by:

Firstly, contact SEML explaining why you remain dissatisfied. She/he will endeavour to resolve your complaint promptly. However, should she/he fail to do so, they will escalate the complaint directly to Director level. Our Directors monitor our complaint statistics to ensure we are meeting our own key performance indicators.

In the unlikely event that you are still not satisfied with SEML's response, you may then refer the matter to The Citizens Advice Consumer Service (CACS). They offer free, independent advice and will look at your complaint, but they do expect us to try to resolve it first.

To contact CACS:

- Call an adviser for help or advice: 0345 404 0506
- Typetalk is available by dialling 18001 followed by the full CACS number
- Visit their website at <http://www.adviceguide.org.uk>
- Write to them at:

Citizens Advice Consumer Service

Post Point 24 Town Hall

Walliscote Grove Road

Weston super Mare BS23 1UJ