



Natural gas

Billing & Disconnection

CODE OF PRACTICE

BGE/NG/BPCOP/0918

bordgaisenergy.ie

If you need any further help
or advice please contact us:

Residential gas contact details

Tel: 01 611 01 01

Fax: 01 611 01 02

Email: info@bordgais.ie

Minicom: 1850 630 630

(for hearing impaired customers
with their own minicom equipment)

Customer service

Residential natural gas

Bord Gáis Energy

PO Box 10943, Dublin 2

Business gas contact details

Tel: 1850 427 349

Fax: 1850 427 350

Email: businessdirect@bordgais.ie

Customer service

Business natural gas

Bord Gáis Energy

PO Box 10943, Dublin 2

Please note that to maintain the highest level of
service we may monitor and record calls.

Code of Practice

Natural gas Bill payment

1	Introduction	4
2	Our promise	4
3	Your Bord Gáis Energy bill	5
4	Bill payment	9
5	Disputed bills	12
6	Payment difficulties	12
7	Disconnection procedures	13
8	Reconnection	15
9	Complaints procedure	15
10	Contact details	16

1 Introduction

As a customer of Bord Gáis Energy, you can expect the highest standards of service from us. However, like any other business, we rely on you to pay your bills on time so we can continue to provide an efficient and economical service.

You must pay for the energy you use. If, for any reason, you cannot pay your bill by the due date please let us know as soon as possible. We are committed to helping you agree a payment plan or installing a Pay as You Go Meter (where suitable) in order to maintain your gas supply. We will only disconnect your supply if we have no other choice.

This code of practice explains your bill, covers the various payment methods we offer and provides guidance on how we will work with customers who may be finding it difficult to pay a bill on time. The code also explains the circumstances in which we will disconnect your supply of gas.

2 Our promise

- We will promote this code of practice so you can easily get a copy.
- We will train our staff to deliver the services outlined in this code and will keep our training up to date.
- We will issue clear and timely bills to all our customers.
- We will provide you with a choice of methods to pay your bill.
- We will deal with all customer enquiries courteously and fairly while in accordance with stated policy.
- We will keep all the information you give us in the strictest confidence.
- We will work with you in finding a suitable plan for settling your bills.
- We will monitor the service we give to make sure we are keeping our commitments.

3 Your Bord Gáis Energy bill

Bord Gáis Energy bills you for metered gas at your chosen tariff rate.

Bills are calculated based on actual or estimated meter readings received from Gas Networks Ireland for your billing period or from a meter reading you have submitted yourself.

The price of gas

The price for natural gas charged on your bill depends on the tariff you have chosen for your level of gas usage. We offer a range of tariffs which are set out in our tariff choices leaflets which are updated frequently.

We will notify household customers 30 days in advance of any tariff changes, except where the customer has entered into a flexible tariff arrangement which allows for tariffs to change more frequently.

To obtain a leaflet on our up-to-date choice of tariffs please call us on **01 611 01 01** or view it online by visiting our website at **www.bordgaisenergy.ie**

It is up to you, the customer, to choose what tariff is most appropriate for your use of natural gas. We provide information on tariffs and gas usage on our website or on request. If you believe you may be on the wrong tariff please contact us to arrange switching to a more appropriate one.

Understanding your bill

Your bill shows you the latest meter reading and the previous one. The difference between the two readings is the amount of gas you have been billed for in the billing period.

A conversion factor is applied to the amount of gas used to calculate the energy content of that usage.

On your bill, you will see the number of units used, the conversion factor applied and the energy content in kilowatt hours (kWhs) together with the unit rate. Depending on your chosen tariff a standing charge may also be applied.

The bill will also show any unpaid balances from previous bills and, where applicable, any allowances to which you may be entitled, such as the natural gas allowance administered by the Department of Social and Family Affairs. In addition to charging for gas consumption, bills will also include charges for any other service offered by Bord Gáis Energy that you have agreed to pay through your gas bill.

your natural gas bill



Bord Gáis Energy Limited
One Warrington Place
Dublin 2

1

Billing period 16 Jul 09
17 Sep 09

Date of issue 17 Sep 09

Account number 2 1234567890

METER NO.	METER READINGS			CONVERSION		GAS USED kWh	GPRN	AC BAND
	PRESENT	MINUS	PREVIOUS	UNITS	X CONV. FACTOR			
000001	16077		15777	300 m ³	11.1903	3357	0123456	B

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

A: Amended reading / C: Reading taken by customer / E: Estimated reading

	AMOUNT €
Previous Balance	71.75
09 Jun 09 Payment Received - Thank You	71.75CR
Total Payments	71.75CR
Domestic Standard Rate (17 Jul 09 to 17 Sep 09)	
Standing Charge 0.142 for 63 days	8.95
Unit Rate 0.04814 for 3,357 kWh	161.61
Total excluding V.A.T.	170.56
V.A.T. @ 13.5%	23.03
Total Including VAT	193.59

11

10

Emergency number
1850 20 50 50

Ervia
Registered office:
Gasworks Road, Cork
VAT Number: IE 9Y661020

CREDIT FINANCE INCLUDED	PLEASE PAY BY	TOTAL €
NONE	01 Oct 09	193.59

Page 1 of 1



12

CASHIERS
STAMP
& INITIALS

AIB Bank, 40/41 Westmoreland Street, Dublin 2
Account number: 13007016 Sort code: 93-33-84 BIC: AIBKIE2D
IBAN: IE95 AIBK 9333 8413 0070 16

BANK GIRO CREDIT TRANSFER

CASH COINS	€	
TOTAL CASH	€	
CHQS. ETC.	€	

Customer account no.

1234567890

Mr. Sam Sample

TOTAL € 193.59

PLEASE DO NOT MARK BELOW THIS LINE

01234 123456789012 0123456 931039

⑈999999⑈ 93⑈3384⑈ 13007016⑈ 89

Bill information

1 Bill address

The address the bill is sent to for payment.

2 Account number

Please quote this number when contacting our customer service department.

3 Meter number

The meter number is unique to the physical meter. If your meter is replaced the meter number will change.

4 Meter readings

Your present and previous meter readings are shown. A “C” denotes the reading has been taken by a customer. An “E” indicates an estimated reading (which will be corrected by the next actual read).

5 Units

This figure represents the number of units in cubic meters or cubic feet (M³ or ft³) which you are billed for.

6 Conversion factor

The conversion factor used to convert the gas from cubic meters or cubic feet to kWh.

7 kWh

The figure in kilowatt hours for which you are being billed.

8 GPRN

(Gas Point Registration Number)
This seven digit reference number used to identify a gas meter connection to the gas network.

9 AC Band

(Annual Consumption Band)
Your estimated annual usage of natural gas fits within the band range notified (there are 5 bands: A, B, C, Y and Z). Band descriptions are as follows:

A: Less than 6,000kWhs

B: 6,000 kWhs to 23,500 kWhs

C: 23,500 kWhs to 73,000 kWhs

Y: 73,000 kWhs to 750 MWhs

Z: 750 MWhs to 5,200 MWhs

10 Standing charge

The standing charge is included on every bill when you are on either the standard rate tariff or the reducing rate tariff.

11 Rate

The rate at which you are being billed e.g. standard rate etc.

12 Bank giro credit transfer

This is the bank giro that you can use to pay your bill.

For easy reference we have included some useful information on the back of the bill.

- Contact details
- 24 hour emergency number
- Payment methods
- Moving home
- Servicing and repairs
- Meter reading
- Complaints
- Overdue accounts and arrears
- Gas Networks Ireland contact details

3 Your Bord Gáis Energy bill

(continued)

Bill presentation

You may want to view and manage your electricity account online at **www.bordgaisenergy.ie** and click on 'Register Here'. You can change back to paper/ postal bills at any time simply and at no cost. If you have been receiving a discount for choosing an online "paperless" bill then you will lose it if you change back to paper / postal bills.

Special services

If you have difficulty reading your bill you can register with us on our special services register and receive your bill in braille.

If you have hearing difficulties and you have minicom equipment you can get in touch with us on **1850 630 630**. We can also make life easier by having a member of staff phone you with details of your latest bill. This gives you the opportunity to ask any questions that you may have. We will still send you your bill in the normal way.

Alternatively, if you have a relative, carer or someone who would normally look after your bills, then you might want your bill to be sent to them. Please give us their name and address with your written consent to have your bill redirected.

If you would like to be included on our special services register to avail of either of these services,

please call us on 01 611 01 01 for further information and an application form.

Bill frequency

- Residential customers, with the exception of customers on the large residential user tariff, are billed every two months.
- Non residential customers on the standard industrial and commercial bi-monthly tariff are billed every two months.
- All other non residential customers are billed monthly.

Customers should not receive bills outside of the regular billing cycle unless there is a dispute and/or there has been a series of estimates and a corrected bill is required.

Where we become aware of an unexpected delay in the issuance of a bill that will exceed one full billing cycle, we will, where reasonably practicable, make contact with you to explain the reasons for the delay and the actions being taken to remedy the situation.

Final bills will be issued on receipt of a final read when closing your account or moving house.

Where a customer has switched supplier the final closing bill will be issued not later than six weeks from the effective date of the change of supplier. Where a replacement meter reading is issued after the final bill

has been issued, this will be dealt with as an exception.

Dual Fuel Billing

If you have signed up to our Dual Fuel Contract, we will send you 2 separate bills for electricity and gas. Any payments made by you under your Dual Fuel Contract will be made against gas or electricity separately. Our Dual Fuel Contract usually requires paperless billing. You can change back to a paper bill at any time but will lose any discounts you receive for paying by this method.

Meter reading

Gas Networks Ireland provide the meter reading service for all gas customers regardless of their supplier. They currently call to read the meter at your home four times a year. The other two times they estimate your consumption. In the event that they cannot gain access to read your meter, their reader will leave a meter reading card advising you to register a meter read using the 24 hour Dial-a-Read phone line **1850 427 732**. You can also enter your meter reading on our website at **www.bordgaisenergy.ie**

Estimated meter reading

You should compare any estimated meter reading on your bill with the reading on your meter. If you notice a big difference, please contact us with your updated meter reading and this will be reflected in your next bill. Otherwise

any discrepancies will be adjusted the next time your meter is read.

We recommend that you check how much gas you are using by reading your meters regularly and providing meter readings on the 24 hour Dial-a-Read phone line 1850 427 732.

4 Bill payment

When you receive your bill, it is for gas you have already used, or we estimate you have used and we therefore expect to be paid by the date specified on the bill.

The named account holder is responsible for paying the bill and we can only discuss account details with the person/s named as account holder, unless you give us written consent to discuss your account with a third party.

Payment methods

You can pay your gas bill in a number of different ways:

- **Direct Debit: Plan-Pay Direct Debit or Bill-Pay Direct Debit.** Our Direct Debit options are very convenient if you have a bank or building society account; you avoid the cost of cheques,

postage stamps or the need to call to post offices, banks or other retail outlets. We have a Level Pay option which allows you to make even monthly payments or we have a Bill Pay option which takes the bill amount owed by Direct Debit every 2 months.

To set up Direct Debit simply call **01 611 01 01** or sign up online at **www.bordgaisenergy.ie** and click on 'Register Here'.

- **Telephone:** By calling our automated phone-based bill enquiry service on **01 611 01 01**, you can pay your bill 24 hours a day, seven days a week. When you use this payment service you can pay your bill using your Laser or credit card and check your account balance and your latest transactions. It can also be used to verify payments received or to part pay an amount on a bill.
- **Cash:** At retail outlets displaying the signs PostPoint or Payzone.
- **Post:** Send your cheque, together with a completed bank giro credit transfer slip (attached to the bottom of your bill) to Bord Gáis Energy, PO Box 10943, Dublin 2. Please do not send cash in the post.
- **Post offices:** By cheque, cash or "Pay as you use" card. Minimum payment per transaction €20.
- **Banks and building societies:** You can pay at most of the main banks

by giro transfer slip attached to the bottom of your bill. Bank of Ireland customers may pay through any Pass Point ATM.

- **Telephone banking:** Ask your bank for details.
- **Internet:** Register with us on **www.bordgaisenergy.ie**

Please allow five working days for payments to appear on your account.

Payment schemes

Alternatively, you may apply for one of the following payment schemes:

- **Level-Pay Direct Debit:**
With our Level-Pay Direct Debit option you can spread your payment evenly over the year making it easier to budget your account. To set up a paperless Direct Debit, simply call us on **01 611 01 01** or register online at **www.bordgaisenergy.ie**
- **Pay As You Go Meters:**
These are only fitted where it is appropriate and practical to do so. This option is not currently available in certain areas. Please note there may be a charge for the installation of a Pay As You Go meter.

For further details on any of the payment schemes above, please call our customer service team on **01 611 01 01**.

- **Household budget scheme:**

Operated by the Department of Social & Family Affairs. This scheme generally has to be supplemented by additional customer payments to meet total bill costs.

- **Credit Union payment schemes:**
Ask your Credit Union for details.

Security for payment

We may ask you to give us reasonable security against future energy bills. This security could mean that you pay us by Direct Debit or you lodge a cash deposit. There are a number of different security requirements which depend on your situation and your credit history. You may need to provide proof of ownership or your tenancy agreement when opening an account with us.

Bord Gáis Energy determines this deposit or guarantee. Where a security deposit has been requested this Security Deposit must be maintained for a period of 12 months. The security deposit will be credited to the next bill following satisfaction of credit terms for a period of 12 months continuously. Where you have not fulfilled our credit terms, we will inform you of the steps needed to improve your credit worthiness, and state what you must do in order for security to no longer be required.

For more details on our Security Deposit rules, please see www.bordgaisenergy.ie/help-and-questions/

Final bills/moving home/ closing account

If you are moving house or closing your account with us, you will need to give us:

- A closing meter reading
- Your forwarding address to allow us to send you your final bill
- If you cannot provide us with a closing meter reading, you will need to agree to an estimated reading with us, or,
- Provide Access to Gas Networks Ireland to read and lock the meter at your premise
- In the event that you cannot provide a meter reading, do not accept our meter reading or cannot provide Gas Networks Ireland access to the premises, you may be charged a special administration fee of €65 in order for us to try to obtain a final read.

We will then issue you with a final bill within 6 weeks. This bill will state your closing balance. If there is a credit due, this will be stated on the bill and that you must contact us to receive a refund. We will refund any credit within 2 months provided that you have contacted us to tell us how/where you wish the refund to be paid.

If the incoming customer registers an account with us before the meter is locked, we will cancel the meter lock.

If you do not tell us you are moving or provide us/agree to a final read you will be held responsible for any gas usage up to the date the meter is locked or a new customer registers with us at that premises.

All unpaid bills will be subject to our normal debt collection procedures and/or legal proceedings. We may withhold supplying gas or opening an account in your name until all outstanding debt is paid. Unpaid debts will be transferred to your new account with us.

If you move into a premises where the supply is already connected, you must let us know straight away and must pay for the gas you use. If you do not inform us that you are using gas in a premises then we may charge you under a “Deemed Contract” under Section 16A of the Energy (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1995.

5 Disputed bills

If you have any queries about the bill or you do not agree with it, please get in touch with us straight away on 01 611 01 01.

6 Payment difficulties

Please tell us straight away if you have a difficulty in paying a gas bill. The sooner you do, the easier it will be for

us to offer help and advice. We will be as flexible as possible in trying to agree a payment plan with you, but we must ultimately receive payment for the gas that we supply. We may also offer you a Pay as You Go (PAYG) Meter as a way of re-paying your debt and keeping your supply on.

Customers with payment difficulties who contact us will be made to feel that their case is heard sympathetically; any offers of repayment will be carefully considered.

We will assist customers in genuine financial difficulty in making a payment plan and we will take account of your ability to pay when agreeing any repayment arrangement. When considering a payment plan with you, we will take into account the value of the debt and the period of time outstanding, your previous payment history, your ability to supply security for future bills and any other material factors concerning individual customers.

You must then honour the payment plan if you want to retain your gas supply. If you have entered into a payment plan, we will send you details of the payment plan setting out a clear explanation in writing no later than one week after the payment plan has been agreed.

We will treat all information you give us in the strictest confidence. There are a number of state agencies, state sponsored bodies and recognised

charities that offer household budgeting advice including the Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS), An Post Household Budget Scheme and The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul (SVP). If you are a residential customer, we will engage with the relevant state agencies or state sponsored bodies, recognised charities or other financial advisers' to assist with your arrears if you give us permission.

Whatever the problem, we will do our best to help. However, if you can afford to pay your bills, but choose not to, we must advise you that your supply may be withdrawn.

7 Disconnection procedures

We have clear internal procedures which ensure that disconnection of supply for arrears takes place only as a last resort.

We have a clear escalation process to follow before disconnection can take place. This process includes:

- a. contacting you at least 4 times to inform you that you are in arrears (in writing, by phone or by text or email)
- b. providing information on any options you have to make payment and providing contact details if you wish to enter into a payment plan
- c. offering installation of a Pay as You Go Meter for re-payment of debt (where suitable)

Before we initiate a request to Gas Networks Ireland to disconnect your supply we will:

- Give you a minimum of ten working days notice in writing of our intention to disconnect you.
- If you are a business or large gas user and have gone into liquidation, receivership or examinership and/or where it is our opinion that there is a high risk of impending default, the notice period will be reduced to two working days or whatever has been agreed in your contract.
- The notice will specify the reason for disconnection.
- The notice will detail the costs that will apply for disconnection and reconnection.
- The notice will tell you that you cannot pay the arrears to the person carrying out the disconnection.
- We will include our contact details so that you can discuss payment arrangements with us and avoid disconnection.
- No disconnection calls will be made on a Friday, Saturday, Sunday, eve of a public holiday or a public holiday. However, disconnections for safety reasons can be made at any time.

We will disconnect your gas supply if:

- We do not receive payment from you within the terms of your contract and arrears continue to accrue on your account.
- You do not respond to our notice for disconnection.
- You do not agree to have a Pay As You Go meter installed.
- Where you do not agree to any payment plan or where that payment plan is broken.
- You request disconnection.
- In the event of an emergency or where a safety issue arises, Gas Networks Ireland may disconnect your premises without notification.

You will be charged for the costs associated with the method of disconnection and reconnection of your supply. Disconnection of supply will be done by either:

- Placing a meter lock on your meter.
- Turning off the supply at the house entrance if we cannot gain access to the meter.
- Disconnecting and removing the meter.
- Disconnection externally at the footpath if access is refused.

We will not disconnect your supply if:

- You agree, and keep to a payment plan agreed with us.
- You agree to have a Pay As You Go meter installed.
- The bill due is not for the supply of gas.
- You have logged a complaint with us and the complaint is related to disputed bill charges. You will however, be required to pay the undisputed element of the charges billed and any subsequent bills that follow.
- During the winter months of November to March, if you are registered on our special services register
- For failure to pay a bill which is not related to the supply of gas;
- For failure to pay a bill based on a regular estimate unless it is fair and reasonable in the circumstances (to be decided by us);
- Where a customer is a member of any category of customer that the CRU may specify from time to time.

Disconnection of a premises with no registered account holder:

- If it is discovered that you or the previous occupant at your premise did not close their account correctly with us, we will issue a letter informing the new occupant that the premise will be locked due to no new account holder being registered.

8 Reconnection

Where disconnection has taken place, we will make every effort to come to an agreement with you so that the supply can be restored at the earliest opportunity.

Before we reconnect your supply all arrears and the costs associated with the disconnection and reconnection must be paid in full.

However, we will enter into payment plans and reconnect you, if you have not previously broken a payment plan or repeatedly been disconnected or failed to make payment of bills at all. You may need to supply a declaration of conformance from a Registered Gas Installer if the meter has been removed or if any work has been done to the gas installation.

We may also, under our terms and conditions of gas supply, require that you provide a security bond and/or commit to paying future bills by Direct Debit. This will guard against the inconvenience and cost of possible disconnection in the future. We will notify you in writing of any conditions associated with a security bond/deposit required upon re-energisation (including the circumstances in which we will re-pay this).

In certain circumstances, we may ask you to agree to the installation of a Pay As You Go meter at your premises before we reconnect you to prevent any further debt being owed.

Where a disconnected customer has reached an agreed settlement with us, you are entitled to be

reconnected under our Standard Terms and Conditions of Supply.

9 Complaints procedure

We aim to give you the best possible service. If however, you are unhappy with the service we have given you, please call us on **01 611 01 01** and we will try and resolve it over the telephone. Alternatively, you can write to:

Customer service
Bord Gáis Energy
PO Box 10943, Dublin 2

Email: info@bordgais.ie

It is our aim to settle any concerns as quickly and as fairly as possible.

If you write to us with a complaint, we will respond to you within ten working days.

If you are unhappy with the response you receive from the first point of contact, you may have your complaint reviewed at a higher level.

Our commitment is that all complaints will be either resolved within eight weeks or an action plan will have been agreed with you. In all cases, we will keep you informed about the progress in resolving the matter.

We have a code of practice on handling customers' complaints. To receive a copy please call us on **01 611 01 01** or you may view it online at **www.bordgaisenergy.ie**

If following a review and written

response from one of our customer service managers you are still not satisfied, and have received written notification of the closure of the complaint from Bord Gáis Energy, you may contact the Commission for Regulation of Utilities.

The complaint should only be passed to the Commission after it has gone through the Bord Gáis Energy internal complaints escalation process.

The office of the Commission for Regulation of Utilities can be contacted by the following means:

Address:

**Customer Care Team
Commission for Regulation of
Utilities PO Box 11934
Dublin 24**

Tel: 1890 404 404

Fax: 01 4000 850

Email: customer-care@cru.ie

Web: www.cru.ie/customer-care

10 Contact details

We would prefer you to phone rather than write because it is quicker, more direct and easier to answer your questions straight away. However, if you wish to write, our address is:

**Customer service
Bord Gáis Energy
PO Box 10943, Dublin 2**

In order to maintain the highest level of service we may record and monitor telephone calls.

Please ensure that you have your account number ready when you contact us as we can only discuss gas account information with the gas account holder.

Tel: 01 611 01 01

Fax: 01 611 01 02

Web: www.bordgaisenergy.ie

Email: info@bordgais.ie

24 hour Dial-a-Read: 1850 427 732

Call this number to register your meter reading - have your GPRN number (top right hand side of your bill) and meter reading to hand. Gas Networks Ireland will ensure your reading is recorded for your next bill.

Gas Networks Ireland 24 hour gas emergency line: 1850 20 50 50

Gas Networks Ireland provide the emergency response service for all gas users. In the interest of public safety, all emergency messages are recorded.

Other useful contacts

Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS). MABS is a free, confidential and independent service for people in debt or in danger of getting into debt.

MABS Helpline: 076 107 2000

Monday to Friday 9.00am to 8.00pm

Email: helpline@mabs.ie

Web: www.mabs.ie

**The Society of St. Vincent de Paul
National Head Office
91-92 Sean Mac Dermott Street
Dublin 1**

Tel: 01 855 0022

Email: info@svp.ie

Web: www.svp.ie
