Understanding your energy bills

Understanding your energy bills can be tricky. This video shows you how to read your bill – so you don’t pay too much or too little.

First off – always check that the bill is addressed to you, not ‘The Occupier’. If it’s an online bill, make sure you’re logged into your account with your energy supplier. See that the billing period matches the dates that you’ve lived in the property, and make sure that the meter serial number matches the one on your meter. If any of these details are wrong, get in touch with your supplier.

Next, have a look at the breakdown of your recent payments. At the bottom of the breakdown, there is usually an ‘Account balance’ – this is how much money you owe your supplier. Sometimes you might be in credit. If you stay in credit all year round, you may have been paying too much.

If your bill is estimated, you might have been paying too much or too little. To avoid this, take meter readings and provide these to your energy supplier so they can send you an accurate bill. Smart meters automatically send readings to your supplier, so if you have a smart meter, your bills shouldn’t be estimated.

All bills are based on a tariff. This is the amount you pay per kilowatt hour, or kWh. The details of your tariff are usually on the reverse of your bill, or available through your online account. Your bill also shows your annual usage in kilowatt hours, as well as a tariff comparison rate, so you can make a quick comparison with other tariffs based on average gas and electricity prices. You can do this using a tariff comparison website.

Mistakes are more likely to happen when you move house. Before you move out, take final meter readings and contact your supplier to close your account. And when you move to your new place, always take meter readings to pass to the current supplier of the property so they can set up a new account in your name.

For more information on saving money on your gas and electricity bills, contact Home Energy Scotland on 0808 808 2282 or visit homeenergyscotland.org