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waterpower

Code of Practice for

Vulnerable Customers

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At Waterpower we care about all of our customers but we are particularly concerned about our elderly customers and those with special requirements. This Code of Practice outlines our services for Vulnerable Customers and what you can expect from Waterpower.

Our Commitments

- We will ensure that the Electricity Supply Board Networks (ESBN) are notified immediately of customers registering as a priority support customer or special service customer.
- We will maintain a register of priority support and special service customers.
- We will communicate regularly with organisations representing customers with special needs to implement all appropriate services.
- We will ensure that all registered vulnerable customers will be placed on the most economic tariff available for their chosen payment method and billing format.
- We will ensure that customers on the Special Services Register will not be disconnected or de-energised during the winter months for reasons of non-payment.
- We will ensure that customers on the Priority Register will not be disconnected or de-energised for reasons of non-payment of bills.

Vulnerable Customers include

- i) Customers that are critically dependent on electrically powered equipment, which shall include but is not limited to life protecting devices, assistive technologies to support independent living and medical equipment.
- ii) Customers that are particularly vulnerable to disconnection during winter months (1st Nov to 31st March) for reasons of advanced age or physical, sensory, intellectual or mental health.

For the purpose of this code, a Vulnerable Customer is a customer who has self-registered on our register. 'Advanced age' is considered to mean a customer of 66 years of age or older. We may require a customer to demonstrate eligibility for inclusion on this register. This may include requesting a medical card.

General

- All customers are directed to our codes of practice at sign up (and annually thereafter) where particular reference to our this Code of Practice for Vulnerable Customer.
- If you have been identified as a Vulnerable Customer and have provided verbal notification of vulnerability but fail to complete or return completed and signed registration forms you will be provisionally added to the register and contacted twice by telephone and once in writing to return the form. If the form is not returned within two months and after all reasonable effort has been made to obtain the completed form you will be removed from the register.
- If you have a carer, relative or friend who helps look after your bills or would like to nominate a third party on your account, we just your need written consent sent to our main office on Strand Street, Kanturk, Co. Cork, and then we can send them your bills and any other communications.
- Vulnerable customers will be contacted from time to time to ensure our services meet their need and to determine if there have been changes in their status as a vulnerable customer.
- No Vulnerable Customer will be disconnected during the winter months. Please refer to our Domestic Code of Practice for Disconnections available from our website.
- The details of customers who register with us for priority service or special service needs will be passed to ESB Networks to allow them to provide you with additional services to suit your customer category, in accordance with the terms of the Data Protection Act (1988 and 2003).

Registration & Services

In order to register as a Vulnerable Customer all you have to do is fill out the appropriate form and return it to our customer care team located on Strand Street, Kanturk, Co. Cork.

- If you are critically dependent on electrically powered equipment or are particularly vulnerable to disconnection during the winter months you may register with our [Priority Support Register](#)
- If you are deaf or hard of hearing, blind or partially sighted or mobility impaired you may register with us to be placed on our [Special Services Register](#).

Services for Customers with Sight and Hearing Disabilities

Waterpower will provide the following communications in an appropriate format for customers with visual and hearing impairments. If you have any further requirements please contact us directly and we will try to help you to our best ability.

- Household Customer Terms & Conditions
- Customer Charter
- Customer Codes of Practice
- Household Tariff Information
- The energy bill and the energy statement
- Personalised Household Customer Communications (as approved by the Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU))
- Outage Notification
- Any letter to a customer informing them of a change in services or tariff
- Any insert to customers that has been required by the CRU

Talking Bill

If you are blind or visually impaired we can telephone you with your bill details. You can then ask any questions you may have. We will also send you a bill by post or email.

Print

Customers with sight difficulties can have their bills and other correspondence forwarded with larger print.

Email

Customers with sight difficulties can have their bills and other correspondence forwarded with larger print.

If you would like to avail of these services please complete the attached form and return to Waterpower

Payments

- We offer a variety of payment methods to our customers. Please contact our customer care team to determine the most suitable means of payment for your electricity supply. We do not incur any extra charges for billing for Vulnerable Users.
- Customers who are finding it hard to pay their energy bills should arrange to contact us immediately. We promise to deal with all customers in a sensitive and professional manner.
- Waterpower acknowledges that prepayment meters or budget controllers may not be appropriate in every case thus all due diligence will be employed at sign up to ensure the correct means of payment is selected in every case. Please note that PAYG options are not offered to customers on the Priority Services Register . Further details of our policies may be found in our Code of Practice on Pay As You Go/Budget Controllers and Sign Up.
- Please note that we will not levy penalty fees on PAYG customers who terminate a contract of supply where the PAYG meter is no longer suitable for use due to their vulnerability.
- Unless requested by the customer, we will not request disconnection where customers have registered as depending on emergency medical equipment. In addition, we will not request disconnection of registered elderly customers during the months of November to March inclusive, unless the customer requests us to do so. Further details of our policies may be found in our Code of Practice on Customer Billing.

If we fail to meet any of the commitments outlined in this Code, then customers will be entitled to compensation under the terms of our Customer Charter.

Copies of our Customer Charter and other Codes can be obtained via our website or by either of the following methods:

By phone: 087 1651165 (9am – 5pm Monday to Friday)

By email: customercare@waterpower.ie

By post:

Waterpower
Strand Street,
Kanturk,
Cork