

# ENERGY ADVICE FOR PEOPLE LIVING IN RURAL AREAS

*People living in rural areas can be hit with some of the highest energy costs. This is due to a combination of older, inefficient housing and being off the gas grid. Using oil or LPG heating systems means having to pay out huge amounts in one go to fill up oil and gas tanks.*

*The energy infrastructure can be more fragile. In the recent storms many people in rural areas went without power for days or even weeks.*



*“UK Power Networks” by Leonard Bentley is marked with CC BY-SA 2.0.*

## THE PRIORITY SERVICES REGISTER (PSR)

The PSR is a list of people that will be prioritised in the event of a power cut or water outage. You are eligible to be on the list if there's someone in the home with an illness or disability, if you are over pension age or if you have children under 5. You should also be on there if you need to alert your energy company of any particular issues around communication or mobility.

If there is a power cut then you will be contacted by UK Power Networks who will let you know how long the power cut will go on for. If it goes on for a while then they will look after you, sometimes putting people up in hotels or dropping dinner round when needed.

It's especially important to be on the PSR if you rely on electricity for medical equipment.

The water company also have a PSR. You can get automatically added to both by visiting:

[www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk/energisesussexcoast](http://www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk/energisesussexcoast)

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## EASY WINS

### Draught proofing

Draught proofing is low cost and will make a big difference. Take some time to walk round the house and feel where the draughts are coming in around the windows, doors, up through the floorboards and in through cupboards. You can buy draught proofing tape and door brushes or make draught excluders from old jumpers. Gaps in the floor boards can be filled using wood strips which are sanded down or by mixing saw dust and filler.

If you have single glazing or draughty windows then lining your curtains with blankets will help keep draughts out and keep heat from escaping. Ideally, curtains should be right down to the floor so there's no gap at the bottom for draughts to escape. You can also buy thermal liners which you can clip on the back. You will really notice the difference!

### Lagging hot water tanks and pipes

Adding a thick insulation jacket to your hot water tank and lagging any pipes will ensure that heat isn't lost into the room and will mean that your system isn't having to work as hard to keep the water hot.



*"Draught proofing in London" by 1010  
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*Insulation by Erik Mclean on Unsplash  
(<https://unsplash.com/photos/aCshJn3y93s>)*

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## INSULATION

Improvements to the fabric of the building so that it holds in any heat you put into it will make your house more cosy and less expensive to heat. Ensure that any damp issues are dealt with first before adding insulation as this can trap moisture and make existing problems worse.

**Loft insulation** – this is quick and easy to install. You can either buy the rolls yourself and lay them between the rafters or get a professional installer in. It will pay itself back in around 2 years so is well worth the investment. Don't forget to do the loft hatch!

**Under floor insulation** – if you have draughts coming up through the floorboards then installing some insulation underneath the floor will make a big difference and can be done yourself or with a professional installer.





*Air source heat pump*

*Photo David Dodge, Green Energy Futures*

[www.greenenergyfutures.ca](http://www.greenenergyfutures.ca)

## RENEWABLE HEATING

Many people want to move away from oil and fossil fuel powered systems which are expensive and polluting. Air and ground source heat pumps are the most cost effective electric systems to run. They work by using the heat from the air or the ground, compressing it and then using this heat in your home. They work with larger radiators or underfloor heating. Your home needs to be EPC D or above in order to have a heat pump installed.

The installation costs can be very high, however there are government vouchers towards the cost of £5,000 for an air source heat pump or £6,000 for a ground source heat pump. There may also be funding available for people on lower incomes to fund the new system. •

**Wall insulation** – there are 3 different types of insulation for walls and it will depend on your wall type as to which one is best for you. If you have a cavity wall (a layer of brick work, a gap and then another layer) then insulation beads are sprayed into the cavity. This can be done in less than a day and isn't disruptive as it's done from the outside.

**Internal wall insulation** is when you add another layer of insulation to the inside of your wall. If you're redecorating then it's a good time to think about whether this could be added to the room. You can use breathable materials such as woodchip for older properties. We recommend getting a professional installer to help with this as it needs to be installed in a way to ensure it is as air tight as possible.

**External wall insulation** is when your building is clad in insulation. The benefits are that you get a much higher level of insulation than with internal wall insulation. However, it isn't suitable for many older style properties and is very expensive.

There is funding available for all of the above measures for people who have a household income of under £30,000 per annum after tax and live in a property of EPC D or below. Please contact us for information.

For energy advice or advice on funding please contact

**01424 390062**

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