

Prepare for rising energy prices

The message isn't new, but it has more urgency. The Prime Minister met the Big Six energy suppliers and they agreed to write to 4 million households inviting them to *Check, Switch and Insulate to Save*.

The concern is over rising energy prices. According to the Financial Times, the average dual fuel customer now spends 6% of income on energy bills compared to 3% in 2004. If the trend persists the average household faces fuel poverty by 2015.

The trend is upwards, so how do we counter it? Here are some tips.

1) Insulate Your Home

Take the frost check. If the frost thaws faster on your roof than your neighbour's, heat is escaping. Top up your loft insulation to 270mm (10.5") to prevent this. Council grants reduce the cost and it could be free if you are aged 70 or over.

2) Go Solar

You can now get Feed in Tariff payments for having solar panels on your roof. These are index linked so they will rise with inflation over 25 years.

3) Switch Energy Supplier

With 400 tariffs available, a comparison site can help. If you prefer not to switch, review your payment method - direct debit is cheaper. Ofgem has said it will simplify standard tariffs so like-for-like comparison will get easier.

For more information, visit www.cocoonyourhome.co.uk or phone 0800 8048 777.

Cocoon Your Home compares prices for insulation, solar and energy. The service is impartial, independent and run by United Sustainable Energy Agency, a not-for-profit organisation.



Topping up your loft stops heat escaping

Photo courtesy of cocoonyourhome.co.uk

Notes for Editors

1. The government defines the fuel poor as households where 10% of income is spent paying energy bills. For more on the Prime Ministers meeting with Energy Suppliers see: <http://t.co/o2s3o4Rd>. For the Financial Times article warning that average household faces fuel poverty by 2015 see: <http://t.co/SWAJcZE0>
2. This article was produced by United Sustainable Energy Agency (USEA). Contact: Gordon Glass, Marketing Co-ordinator. To email USEA staff, please use the firstname.lastname@usea.org.uk format.
3. USEA (usea.org.uk) works in partnership with local authorities throughout Bucks, Berks, Beds, Herts, Oxon, Hants and the Isle of Wight. We operate an Energy Saving Trust advice centre for the South East and offer a comparison service - see Cocoon Your Home.
4. The information contained within this article is correct to the best of our knowledge, but is subject to change. USEA cannot in any way be held legally responsible for any advice given or any work carried out as a result of this information.