Energy supply emergencies

Your questions answered



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Network gas supply emergency
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Network gas supply emergency

What is a gas supply emergency?

A gas supply emergency is where there is an actual or potential loss of pressure in a part of the UK gas network, due to an incident involving a pipeline or lack of gas flow.

While the operation of the gas network in the UK is frequently checked, severe weather of a long duration, or an unexpected loss of gas pressure in the network can lead to a shortage of gas and instability in the global market. And while the probability of a gas supply emergency occurring is low, we still need to prepare to be ready to act as instructed by the UK Gas Transporters if asked to do so to preserve gas supplies.

Why might this happen?

If the demand for gas is greater than the availability of gas in the network, a state of supply emergency can be called. This will bring together the National Grid National Emergency Co-ordinator (NEC) and representatives from the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero's (DESNZ's) Emergency Response Team to execute the emergency procedures.

Unless some customers are restricted from taking gas, there may be a dangerous drop in pressure within the gas network.

It is important for us to stress that measures taken during a gas supply emergency are only implemented where and when it will be of a greater benefit to the security of supply. The NEC will avoid disrupting as many gas consumers as possible.

Will I have to switch off the gas to my business/site?

Large sites consuming an annual quantity (AQ) greater than 732,000 kWh may be asked to switch off their supply. There are exceptions for some organisations. For example, if a loss of gas may cause damage to plant and equipment, or if a site is a key public service such as a hospital. These consumers are classified as 'priority consumers'.

How do I know if I am a gas priority consumer?

As your gas supplier, we can check if you have been allocated priority consumer status, based on the current industry classification.

At present, there are four priority consumer categories:

- **Category A** – organisations with a rolling AQ greater than 732,000 kWh for whom disruption to gas supply could cause loss of life, for example hospitals and care homes
- **Category B** – organisations where the sudden loss of gas would cause or threaten to cause serious damage, for an unacceptably prolonged period, to human welfare, the environment or the security of the UK that cannot be reasonably mitigated
- **Category C** – organisations consuming more than 2 million therms per annum for which the sudden loss of gas would result in repair or replacement costs amounting to 10% or more of their site fixed tangible asset value
- **Category D** - relevant customers where a failure in supply would impact their ability to supply heat to domestic premises as part of a heat network (Community Heating)

How do I apply to be a priority consumer?

If you fall into one of the categories mentioned, get in touch with us and we will submit the application to the Transporter on you behalf.

Priority status for A, C, and D is subject to validation and acceptance by the Gas Transporter.

Priority status for B is subject to validation and acceptance by the government (DESNZ).

What does being a priority consumer mean?

When Gas Transporters (or shippers) make contact with large consumers for the purpose of load shedding (requests to stop using gas), they will not contact priority consumers in the first instance,

Network gas supply emergency
continued

who instead will be permitted to continue to take gas for essential purposes and disregard public appeals to stop using gas. Unless otherwise directed by the Gas Transporter.

If any Gas Transporter directs a priority consumer to stop using gas and issues a direction notice accordingly, then that priority consumer MUST stop using gas.

Please note that gas supplies to priority consumers will not be maintained if this would result in the loss of gas supplies to domestic consumers.

How will I be told?

Instruction to stop using gas will come from your Gas Transporter. Contact will be made by telephone to one of your nominated emergency contacts. Or contact your Account Manager or CRM executive, or email us on yourbusiness@npower.com

What do I have to do if I am contacted?

You must stop using gas as soon as possible (please note that this does not mean waiting until the end of a production run). You do not need to shut off your gas supply at the Emergency Control Valve (ECV) – but you must stop your usual consumption (use for pilot lights, maintaining machinery in standby etc. is permitted).

You will only be contacted if, by turning your gas off, it will:

a) Make a substantial difference to the national or regional situation, and/or

b) Mitigate any further action from being taken

For how long will I be interrupted?

You will be interrupted until the system is stabilised. Your nominated emergency contact will be contacted and informed when you can resume usual consumption.

What happens if I ignore the notice?

It is an obligation under law to cease consumption of gas if, in a gas supply emergency, you are requested to do so (Gas Safety (Management) Regulations 1996 – paragraphs 6.4 and 6.5).

If you fail to act, your Gas Transporter will despatch engineers who have the legal right to physically terminate your gas supply. The engineers have right of access. If cessation of supply is not achieved, the engineers have the authority to terminate your gas supply outside of your property.

Will I be compensated?

Sites which experience a gas interruption are no longer automatically entitled to compensation. However, in some circumstances you may be able to make a claim.

Click here and refer to the 'Post emergency claims (PEC)' section for more information.

Will domestic customers be cut off?

Everything will be done to protect domestic customers from being cut off, so the likelihood is extremely remote. If domestic premises are cut off, they cannot resume gas consumption until all properties in the area are checked to ensure no air has entered the supply pipes and network.



Electricity security of supply event

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Electricity security of supply event

What is an electricity security of supply event?

The Independent System Operator and Planner (ISOP) is responsible for operating the flow of power to the UK's distribution networks. If there is insufficient power to maintain supplies, ISOP and the government (via DESNZ's Emergency Response Team) have temporary powers to control the sources and availability of energy.

Why might this happen?

The supply of gas still has an integral role in producing electricity for some forms of UK power generation. If gas supplies are limited or restricted, this could lead to a reduction of electricity being available through the networks.

How will I be told?

This depends on the plans agreed by ISOP, the government and the Distribution Network Operators (DNOs). However, it will likely be a combination of:

- **Industrial and commercial business restrictions** – either by a certain percentage or restricting use to certain days of the week
- **Public appeals** – issued via the media to ask domestic consumers and businesses to reduce consumption
- **A rota of disconnection** – intended to ensure supplies are equitably shared among all non-protected sites

How will I know when my electricity is going to be on or off?

If a rota of disconnections is implemented, each DNO will divide the power it has available in the local network by using a system of 'load blocks' to share out the power.

This system aims to make power available at specific times to all users in the most efficient way. Each block of power is assigned an alpha character/letter. You can find your block letter next to your supply number on your latest invoice (or visit powercut105.com).

This letter will correspond with the timetables issued by the Electricity Supply Emergency Code (see appendix 1 for an example of a Level 1 Disconnection Rota).

Unlike unplanned power cuts, rotas of disconnection are planned by the government, controlled by National Grid and are temporary power disconnections. Each period is unlikely to last more than three hours.

What if my rota letter is blank?

Your rota letter is assigned by your DNO. If you do not see a rota letter on your latest invoice, then your DNO has not given it to us. You can also find your electricity provider at powercut105.com, or call 105 for free.

Electricity security of supply event
continued

How much notice will I get that my electricity will be turned off?

As there has never been a real-life power disconnection scenario, it is hard to say. But according to the Electricity Supply Emergency Code, disconnections should be implemented within 48 hours of the government's decision to call an electricity supply emergency.

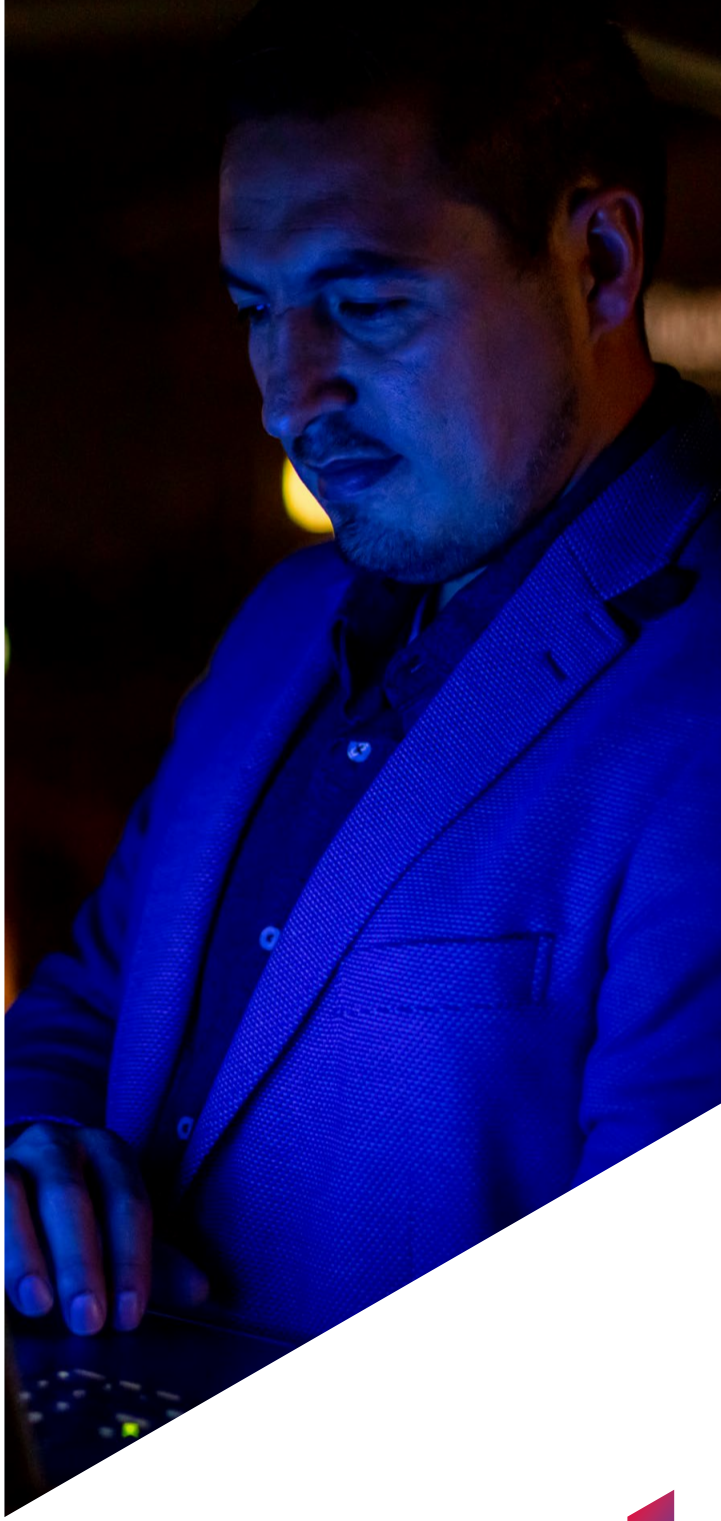
If I am a flexible customer, can I sell back the electricity I will not be using?

If there is sufficient notice that there will be an electricity supply emergency, then large customers on flexible contracts may be able to revise their positions, depending on their contractual arrangements.

Any industrial and commercial (I&C) customer with flexibility may also be able to support ISOP during times of system stress by participating in a variety of balancing services. We also offer a Market Access service for eligible customers, which gives consumers the ability to respond to price signals in the wholesale market. Speak to your Account Manager or Client Lead for more information.

How can I apply to be a protected site?

The list of approved designated services that are eligible to be on the priority consumer list is in the Appendix. If you feel your business operations are critical and therefore qualify to be classified as a protected site, you can contact your local DNO to apply. They can also confirm if you are already on this list.



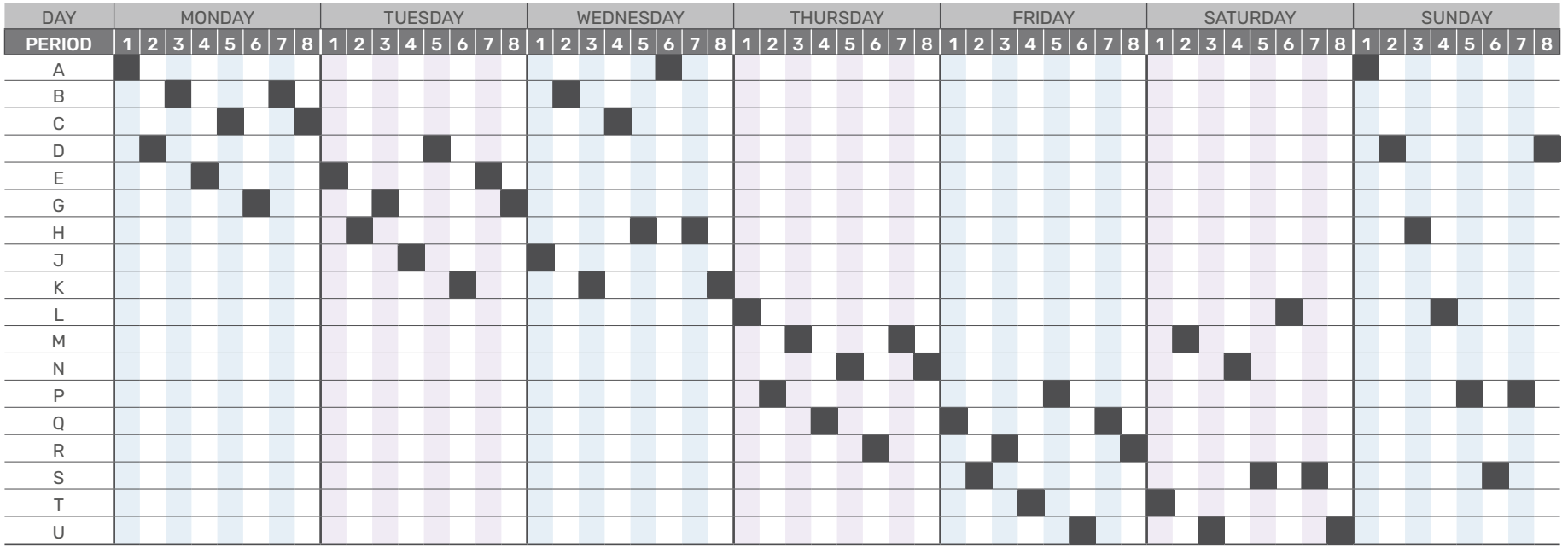
Appendix



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Example of a Level 1 Disconnection Rota for electricity supplies

Each period is of nominal three hours duration. Detailed timings of disconnections and reconnections will be confirmed by an Activiation Schedule issued by NGESO, otherwise this is the default rota disconnection plan.



Before a rota of disconnection is implemented, a government announcement would be issued to ensure people are aware.

Businesses and households can visit powercut105.com or call 105 to find out who their DNO is, and if/when their area will be disconnected by entering their postcode.

In preparation, you would be advised to:

- Check you have a battery-powered torch that works
- Charge phones and laptops in advance (where possible)
- Have a landline telephone that does not require electricity to operate (in case local phone masts are not operating)
- If safe, check on vulnerable colleagues, neighbours, family, and friends
- Keep fridges and freezers closed for the duration of the disconnection (which will preserve the food inside for around 24 hours)
- Turn a light on so you know when power has been restored

As the disconnections will be rotated around the country, areas are less likely to experience continuous daily outages and each outage is expected to last no more than three hours. Outages will also be spread around the country, so that you may only experience supply interruptions for one day a week.

You will also only be charged for the amount of electricity you use.

List of approved designated service that qualify for protected site status in electricity supply emergencies

Designated service	Lead government department/devolved administration
Gas reception terminals, storage installations including boosting and compression equipment, gas compressor stations and principal development and control sites for the control of gas supply systems and emergency procedures	DESNZ
Licensed electricity generators, and licensed network operators	DESNZ
Oil refineries and vital oil pumping stations	DESNZ
Sites with a continuous manufacturing process, not sustainable through standby generation, where regular shutdown for three-hour periods is not possible and would cause significant financial damage	DESNZ
Major airports and associated control facilities	Department for Transport
Significant railway operations	Department for Transport
Ports and docks which have a national infrastructure significance	Department for Transport
Essential water and sewerage installations	Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs, Scottish Government or Welsh Government
A major location for essential food manufacturing, processing or storing	Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs, Scottish Government or Welsh Government
Hospitals as agreed with NHS Foundation Trusts, Primary Care Trusts, Acute Trusts, Local Health Boards (in Wales), Welsh NHS Trusts and NHS Health Scotland	Department of Health, Scottish Government or Welsh Government
Digital and telecommunication services where there is a national need for continued operation	Department for Digital Culture Media and Sport
Emergency services of regional significance	Home Office, Department of Health, Scottish Government or Welsh Government
Armed forces sites that provide civil protection support	Ministry of Defence
Financial services where there is a national need for continued operation	HM Treasury

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Phone calls: We may monitor and/or record calls for security, quality or training purposes. Call charges to numbers beginning with 0800 should be free if you are calling from a business mobile or landline but this will depend on your contract. Please check with your operator for exact charges.

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npm15808/MM23827/10.26

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