

# Your Electricity, Gas and Water

How to save money, reduce waste and stay safe at home.

An energy efficiency guide for young people, created in collaboration with young people supported by Barnardo's.



## Infrastructure North

# About us

In your region, Northern Powergrid, Northern Gas Networks and either Yorkshire Water or Northumbrian Water are responsible for making sure you have a safe and reliable supply of electricity, gas and water to your home. Together, they work in partnership as 'Infrastructure North'.

There are lots of ways you can use your electricity, gas and water more efficiently to reduce your energy bills whilst helping the environment. This booklet will show you some top energy saving tips, as well as some potentially life-saving advice about staying safe in your home.

This document has been reviewed for Clear Print by RNIB.



# Emergency Contact Information

To report a power cut, call **105**.

**POWER CUT?  
CALL 105**



Report a gas emergency to the National Gas Emergency Service by calling **0800 111 999**.

To report a water leak to Yorkshire Water, call **0800 573 553** or visit [yorkshirewater.com/report](https://www.yorkshirewater.com/report).

To report a water leak to Northumbrian Water call **0345 717 1100** or visit [nwlcommunityportal.co.uk/Leaks](https://www.nwlcommunityportal.co.uk/Leaks).

In an emergency call Northumbrian Water's emergency leak line on **0800 393 084**.



# Priority Services



**We all need a little extra help from time to time - major life changes like a death in the family, losing a job, divorce or illness can all have a major effect on our ability to cope.**

If you have mobility issues, visual or hearing impairment or just don't feel you would be able to manage without help if there was an interruption to your water, gas or electricity supply, please let us know.

There is a range of free services and advice, giving you, or those you care for, extra support and peace of mind.



Northern Powergrid  
**Priority Services Membership**  
Register for additional help during a power cut.

[northernpowergrid.com/care](https://northernpowergrid.com/care)  
or call **0800 169 2996**



Northumbrian Water  
**Priority Services Register**  
Register for additional help in the event of interruption to water.

[nwl.co.uk/your-home/your-services.aspx](https://nwl.co.uk/your-home/your-services.aspx)  
or call **0345 717 1100**



Northern Gas Networks  
**Priority Services Register**  
Find out if you're entitled to a free gas connection and additional home energy support.

[northerngasnetworks.co.uk/priority-customers](https://northerngasnetworks.co.uk/priority-customers) or call  
**0800 040 7766** option 3



Yorkshire Water  
**Priority Services Register**  
Let us know about your accessibility needs and how we can help to ensure you have water during an emergency.

[yorkshirewater.com/priority-services](https://yorkshirewater.com/priority-services)  
or call **0800 138 7878**

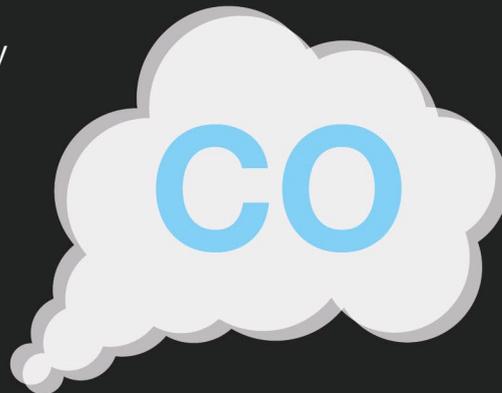
# Carbon Monoxide - The Silent Killer

Fit a Carbon Monoxide alarm around gas appliances or open fires and be sure to test regularly.



Every home should have an audio CO alarm. They're available from local DIY stores and supermarkets such as B&Q or Tesco, for around £15. Your energy supplier may also be able to provide you with one.

You can't see it, taste it, or smell it, but it can kill. Carbon Monoxide (CO) is a poisonous gas produced by the incomplete burning of gas, solid fuels and liquid petroleum gas (LPG). This can occur if an appliance (boiler, fire or cooker), has been incorrectly fitted, badly repaired or poorly maintained. It's important to get your gas appliances serviced every 12 months and if you rent a property, it is your landlord's responsibility to do this. They should provide tenants with a copy of the record of the annual safety check.



## Stay safe and healthy



### Spotting the signs

- If you have a gas cooker the flame should be crisp and blue. Lazy yellow or orange flames mean you need to get your cooker checked
- Dark staining around or on appliances
- Pilot lights that frequently blow out
- Increased condensation visible on windows



### Recognising the symptoms

CO poisoning is difficult to self diagnose as many of the symptoms are shared with common illnesses such as colds and flu or food poisoning.

The main symptoms to look out for are:

- Headaches
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Breathlessness
- Collapse
- Loss of consciousness

If you suspect CO poisoning or smell gas, call the National Gas Emergency Service on **0800 111 999**.



Please be aware of some of the Carbon Monoxide (CO) risks outside the home in particular leisure activities, such as:

- Caravanning
- Camping/Festivals - don't bring barbecues into tents to keep warm
- Boating
- Allotments



# Water for health

Water helps every cell in our bodies stay healthy and it is important to drink water to keep our minds and bodies active.

By drinking plenty of water you can help to prevent a range of problems from headaches to kidney problems.

Why not try a healthier option?  
Many artificial drinks are high in sugar, caffeine and artificial additives.

Next time you make yourself a drink, try these healthier options:

- ✓ Replace your usual cup of tea or coffee with a glass of water.
- ✓ Liven up a glass of water with a squirt of lemon or lime juice.
- ✓ Keep a jug of water in the fridge with a supply of lemon slices.
- ✓ If you're out and about during the day, carry a re-usable, non-plastic bottle of tap water so you can have a drink whenever you want.



Did you know water makes up over two-thirds of the healthy human body?\*

For more information about the benefits of staying hydrated, visit [nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/water-drinks-nutrition/](https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/water-drinks-nutrition/)

\* Statistic from the NHS

# Frozen pipes

A cold, frosty spell could cause pipes to freeze, and then burst. If there's a freeze, and then a thaw, burst pipes will waste water and could also result in damage to your home and belongings. A few simple precautions can help keep everything safe and dry.

## Spot the potential problem areas

Keep an eye out for any pipes, taps, cisterns, tanks and water meters in unheated areas that might be exposed to freezing temperatures. This includes lofts, garages and outhouses.

## Keep your central heating ticking over

Heating a home is expensive, but so is a burst pipe. If you can, try to leave your heating on constantly at a low temperature.



## Protect your pipes and taps

After identifying the pipes and taps most at risk, wrap them in lagging. You can also use a tap guard to protect exposed outdoor taps.

## Get to grips with your stop tap

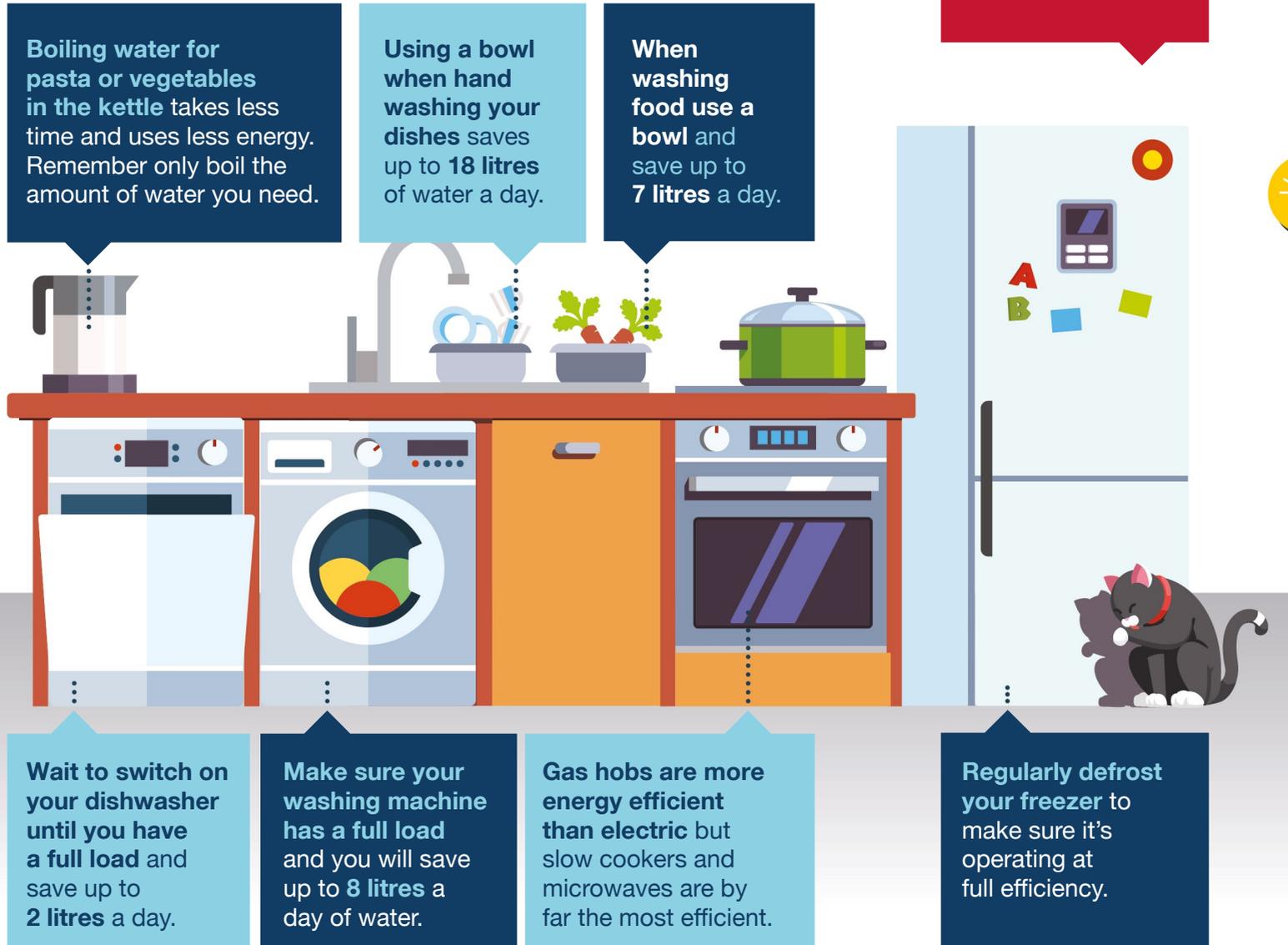
Shutting off the stop tap is the first thing you'll need to do if your pipes freeze and then burst. They are usually located under your kitchen sink.

To thaw frozen boiler pipes, hold a hot water bottle or heat wrap around the pipe. Alternatively, pour hot, NOT boiling, water over the frozen end of the pipe. If the boiler fires up, it's fixed. If it doesn't, pour hot water on the pipe again. If your pipes are still frozen, call your supplier.



# In your kitchen

We use lots of appliances in the kitchen so little changes can make a big difference to the amount of energy and water you use.



Potential savings in your kitchen:  
**£32.32\***  
per year.



## Top tip

Be energy savvy with your cooking.

Turn off the heat a couple of minutes before your food is cooked, especially if you have an electric cooker as they take a lot of time to cool down.



## Here's a bright idea...

Gas is one of the most cost effective ways to heat your home and water.

If your home isn't already connected to the mains gas network you may be able to get a free connection. To qualify you need to;

- live in an existing property,
- meet an assessment criteria of your household income and heating costs, or
- have someone living in your home who receives certain benefits

For more information and to check if you meet the requirements call Communitas Energy CIC on **0113 426 1616** or visit [ce-cic.org.uk](http://ce-cic.org.uk).

\* based on Northumbrian Water's water and sewerage charges, potential savings are estimated and subject to change.

# In your bathroom

Long soaks in the bath, electric toothbrushes and razors and any bathroom luxuries, can all affect energy efficiency.

Repair a dripping tap and save up to **9 litres** a day.

Fill a basin when washing your face or shaving rather than letting the tap run and save up to **12 litres** a day.

Potential savings in your bathroom:  
**£65.56\*** per year.



Take a shorter shower and save up to **18 litres** a day.

Turn off the tap when brushing your teeth and save up to **32 litres** a day.

Be conscious of when you're switching your immersion heater on and off. Make sure it is not on **24 hours** a day.

\* based on Northumbrian Water's water and sewerage charges, potential savings are estimated and subject to change.

A leaking toilet is one of the most common causes of unexpectedly high water use but they can be hard to see as the water often runs from the toilet cistern into the back of the pan.

The sound of a constant trickle is an obvious sign but some leaks are silent and easy to miss. A leaking toilet could be wasting an average of 215 litres of water a day. If you have a water meter and this is left undetected it could add an extra £200 on to your water bill.

**Northumbrian Water will repair your leaking toilet for free.\***

\*In some circumstances it may not be possible to repair the toilet. When this occurs the technician will provide you with advice on what needs to be done. This service is free for Northumbrian Water customers.

## Here's a bright idea...



Did you know that you can order a free water saving kit from your water supplier?

Contact Northumbrian Water or Yorkshire Water depending on where you live to be sent a pack that includes:

- a shower timer
- tap aerator kit
- a shower saver and
- a 'save-a-flush'

to help reduce your water use and bills.

**NORTHUMBRIAN WATER** *living water*

[nwl.co.uk/your-home/using-water-wisely.aspx](http://nwl.co.uk/your-home/using-water-wisely.aspx) or call **0345 266 0585**



YorkshireWater

[yorkshirewater.com/savewater](http://yorkshirewater.com/savewater) or call **0345 124 2424**

# In your living room

There are so many electronic devices that we can use smartly and efficiently to help save electricity and money.

Turning off electrical appliances like a TV, phone and chargers at the wall will save you money.

Use energy efficient light bulbs to save money.

Fit foils behind radiators on external walls to direct heat into the room and move furniture away from radiators and heaters.

Keeping your home warm is important for your health. To avoid potential health problems, keep the room you spend most time in between 18°C and 21°C (64°F and 70°F). The best temperature for other rooms is 18°C (64°F).



If you have an open fireplace that's out of use, try a chimney balloon to prevent loss of warm air. You can purchase these from your local builders merchants.

Draw your curtains at dusk to stop draughts and heat loss.

Look at turning the brightness down on your TV - the brighter the setting the more energy is being used.

**If there's a power cut**  
call 105 or visit [northernpowergrid.com](http://northernpowergrid.com) to stay updated.

# Outside your home

Installing double glazed windows, if not already fitted, could save from **£50 to £130 per year\***.

Most heat is lost through walls - installing cavity wall insulation could save you up to **£245 per year\***.

Loft insulation can save you up to **£250 per year\***.

Stop draughts by using sealants, brushes and rubber strips around doors and windows. This could save around **£20 per year\***.

Dry clothes outside when you can.



Approximately 90,000 litres of water falls onto a typical roof in any one year, that's enough to fill 473 water butts.

Capture some of this water by placing a water butt by sheds, greenhouses, and conservatories.

Not only will this provide you with a source of water without having to tap into your home's supply, rainwater is better for your plants.

Water Butts are available from both Northumbrian Water and Yorkshire Water's websites.

**NORTHUMBRIAN WATER** *living water*

[nwl.co.uk/your-home/using-water-wisely.aspx](http://nwl.co.uk/your-home/using-water-wisely.aspx)



YorkshireWater

[yorkshirewater.com/savewater](http://yorkshirewater.com/savewater)

\* Potential savings are estimated and subject to change.

# Do you need any extra help?

If you're finding it difficult to pay your bills, contact your supplier as soon as possible to see how they can help. Check your water supplier's social tariff for support with your bills.

## Yorkshire Water

Visit [yorkshirewater.com/priority-services](http://yorkshirewater.com/priority-services)  
or call 0800 1 38 78 78

## Northumbrian Water

Visit [nwl.co.uk/your-home/your-services.aspx](http://nwl.co.uk/your-home/your-services.aspx)  
or call 0345 717 1100

For further advice and support you can contact the following organisations for help:

**Citizens Advice** are there for independent advice on debt and energy issues.

Visit [citizensadvice.org.uk](http://citizensadvice.org.uk) or find your local branch in the phone book.

## Christians Against Poverty

offer debt counselling and help. Visit [capuk.org](http://capuk.org) or call 01274 760 720.

**Simple Energy Advice** can give you impartial advice on bills and energy issues.

Visit [simpleenergyadvice.org.uk](http://simpleenergyadvice.org.uk) or call 0800 444 202.

**Mind**, the mental health charity information and support for people living with a mental health condition.

Visit [mind.org.uk](http://mind.org.uk) or call 0300 123 3393  
[info@mind.org.uk](mailto:info@mind.org.uk)

**Samaritans**, providing emotional support to anyone in emotional distress or struggling to cope.

Visit [samaritans.org](http://samaritans.org) or call 116 123

This document has been reviewed for Clear Print by RNIB.

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Created in collaboration with young people

**Believe in children**



**Barnardo's**