
Keeping Warm This Winter

You may have noticed the beginnings of a few winter chills in the air and already started to turn the heating up at home.

It can be difficult to ensure that your house stays warm during the winter while also preventing heating bills from skyrocketing. In the UK, many carers struggle to pay energy bills as a result of costs incurred by their responsibilities.

With this in mind, it is useful to be aware of the financial support available to carers and how you can save money on heating bills.

Warm Homes Discount Scheme

You may be entitled to The Warm Home Discount Scheme which gives people a one-off discount of around £140 on their energy bills between October and March. There are a couple of ways you can qualify for the Warm Home Discount Scheme. Firstly, if you receive a pension and secondly if you're on a low income and meet your energy supplier's criteria.

Once you have applied for the Warm Home Discount Scheme and qualify for the discount, you must reapply every year in order to keep benefitting. It's also worth noting that you can still take advantage of this scheme even if you use a pre-pay or pay-as-you-go electricity meter.

For more information visit www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme (or contact your supplier)

Energy Company Obligation

The [Energy Companies Obligation \(ECO\)](#) is a government scheme which requires a few energy providers to give grants to households in order to install measures for them to boost their energy efficiency and lower their energy bills.

If you're a carer on certain benefits and own your home, you might be able to get financial help in making energy-saving improvements to your home. This may seem underwhelming but changes such as a new boiler or installing insulation can make a big difference in heating a property, and consequently to energy bills.

For more information on Energy Company Obligation contact your supplier.

Cold Weather Payment

You or the person you care for could qualify to get £25 a week between November and March, but only if the temperature in your area is particularly cold (below freezing for 7 consecutive days). Cold Weather Payments are made automatically to those on qualifying benefits.

For more information on Cold Weather payments go to <https://www.gov.uk/cold-weather-payment>

Winter Fuel Payment

The [Winter Fuel Payment](#) is a scheme specifically designed to support older people cover the costs of energy during the winter. This payment can be between £100 and £300, (dependent on your circumstances). If you're a carer looking after an elderly person, they are most likely to be eligible. It is worth noting that this payment is entirely tax free.

Contact the Winter Fuel Payment Centre on 0800 731 0160 or visit <https://www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment/how-to-claim>

It is important to not let the winter cold affect either your health or finances and these schemes are designed to help financially support you and your cared for through the winter months. So, no matter what the weather holds for us this year, you can keep your home nice and warm while saving money at the same time.

