

Codes of Practice

Western Power Distribution (WPD) looks after the safe delivery of electricity through the electricity network in the Midlands, South Wales and the South West to your home. Your supplier bills you for your electricity, is responsible for your meter and also operates a range of services through its Priority Services Register. If you have an enquiry about your bill, your meter or the supplier's Priority Services, please contact your supplier. Contact details can be found on your latest electricity bill.

This leaflet tells you about the following services: -

1. **How to contact Western Power Distribution**
2. **How to register for priority services**
3. **Power cuts – helpful advice**
4. **Planned interruptions to your electricity supply**
5. **When we visit your home**
6. **Complaints – how to contact us**

Please ask us if you would like a copy of this leaflet in large print, braille, on audio tape, in Welsh or another language. You can also download a copy from our website www.westernpower.co.uk

To contact us in Welsh: We have Welsh speakers at our South Wales Call Centre. If you write to us in Welsh, we will respond in Welsh.

1. **How to contact Western Power Distribution**

Emergencies: To tell us that you have no power or to report a potentially dangerous situation involving our equipment, please call our 24 hour/7 days week freephone emergency service:

East Midlands	:	0800 056 8090
West Midlands	:	0800 328 1111
South Wales	:	0800 052 0400
South West	:	0800 365 900

When you call we will play you a message if we are already aware of problems in your area. We use these messages to keep customers up-to-date with when we expect the electricity will be back on. Don't assume that we know you have no power. Please ring us as soon as possible. If you have information that we are not aware of please wait to speak to an operator.

Enquiries: To ask about a service that WPD provides (during office hours 8am - 6pm weekdays) please telephone us on:

Midlands	:	0845 724 0240
South Wales	:	0845 601 3341
South West	:	0845 601 2989

If your first language is not English and you experience difficulty when you contact us on the numbers above, we will be happy to provide a translation service to enable you to talk to us.

Deaf/hard of hearing customers: if you are deaf or hard of hearing you can call any of the above numbers via your Textphone, using Text Relay. Please just dial 18001 before you dial the WPD number. The 18001 informs the telephone network that a call is being made from a textphone and the Text Relay Operator will then join the line.

Minicom: Customers in South Wales and the South West can use our Minicom - 0845 6012318.

To write to us:

If you live in South Wales or the South West please write to:

Western Power Distribution
Records Team
Lostwithiel Road, Bodmin
Cornwall PL31 1DE

Fax: 01209 616811

Email info@westernpower.co.uk (general enquiries)

If you live in the Midlands please write to:

Western Power Distribution
Customer Operations Team
Herald Way
Pegasus Business Park
Castle Donington
Derbyshire DE74 2TU

Email: wpdcontactcentremid@westernpower.co.uk (general enquiries)

2. How to register for priority services

If you are blind, partially sighted or depend on electrical equipment for medical reasons, you can register your details with us. You can ask someone else to do this on your behalf.

If you live in South Wales or South West England please call us on **01208 892235** or email wpdpriorityservices@westernpower.co.uk

If you live in the Midlands please call us on **0845 724 0240** or email wpdpriorityservmids@westernpower.co.uk

If you are deaf or hard of hearing you can call these numbers by using the 18001 prefix. The 18001 informs the telephone system that a call is being made from a textphone and a Text Relay Operator will then join the line.

Or you can visit our website at www.westernpower.co.uk and click on "Priority Customers" at the top of the page.

Or you can write to us at the addresses on the opposite page.

Please tell us your name, address, telephone number, details of your equipment and how regularly you use it. We will pass your details onto your supplier, with your agreement.

You can also register your details by contacting your supplier who can also register you for their other services under their Priority Services Register. Their number is on your latest bill. Your supplier will then pass your details on to us.

What we offer our Priority Services customers

If you register with us;

- We will let you know in advance of a planned interruption to your electricity supply.
- We offer a dedicated telephone number for Priority Service Customers to use. During times of bad weather and when our phone lines are busy, it means Priority Service Customers can get in touch with us more quickly. Once you are registered we will write to you to tell you your dedicated number.
- We will keep you informed in the event of a power cut.
- We work with the WRVS and oxygen providers to provide assistance during longer power cuts.

3. Power cuts - helpful advice

Be prepared for a power cut:

- Keep wind-up/ battery/solar powered torches or lanterns ready. Don't use candles or paraffin heaters.
- Keep a wind-up/ battery/solar radio ready.
- Many modern telephones, especially digital or cordless ones won't work in a power cut. Keep an ordinary one to use.
- Protect sensitive electrical equipment such as computers & faxes with a surge protector plug or an Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS). Please see our website www.westernpower.co.uk for more details.
- If you have a mains operated stair lift, check to see if there is a manual release handle that can be used to return the stair lift safely to ground level if it stops working.
- Many stair lifts have battery back-up. If yours does not, it may be possible to get one fitted. Contact the manufacturer for details.
- If you or a member of your family has a serious health problem please ensure that you have plans in place in the event of a long power cut. Make sure any medical equipment has a battery back-up.

What to do during a power cut:

- Check to see if your neighbours have lost their supply. If they have not, the problem could be with your own fuses.
- Check your trip switch is in the 'on' position. If your trip switch has operated, switch off all your appliances and try to reset the trip. The supply may then come back on.
- If the trip switch has not operated, and you can find no other reason, please let us know.
- Turn off and unplug any electrical appliances that get hot, as you may forget they are switched on when the power comes back.
- Turn off and unplug any appliances that you are not using and any sensitive equipment such as computers or faxes.
- Keep your freezer shut – depending on the type of freezer you have, the contents should stay frozen for up to 12 hours. You may be able to claim for spoiled freezer contents on your Home Insurance.
- During cold weather dress warmly using several layers of clothing.
- During bad weather, for technical reasons we can't restore supply to just your property. We aim to restore supplies to everyone as quickly as we can. If you are having difficulties, please call us – we have arrangements with the WRVS to provide assistance to vulnerable customers.
- If you have no gas for cooking, your neighbours may be able to help you with warm drinks and hot food.
- If you are suffering from serious health problems please call the NHS Direct Helpline on 0845 4647. In an emergency, please contact your local hospital.

4. Planned interruptions to your electricity supply

Sometimes we have to interrupt the electricity supply to carry out maintenance on our network. We will write and tell you about a planned interruption to the electricity supply at least 2 days in advance. If you are blind, partially sighted or if interruption of supply to your medical equipment would be life threatening (kidney dialysis, life support equipment), and you are registered with us, we will also telephone you.

If you need any further information or advice about a specific planned interruption please contact us using the phone number on the top of the notification letter advising of the interruption.

Please note it is not possible to guarantee a constant supply of electricity and it is *essential that you have alternative arrangements to fall back on.*

5. When we visit your home

We make most visits to your home when you have made an appointment with us. Sometimes we may need to visit your home to inspect or maintain our equipment without an appointment.

Visits will either be made by one of our staff or a contractor working for us. WPD follows a code of practice so that customers can be sure that all WPD visits are made by properly trained, genuine staff or contractors:-

All WPD employees and contractors will show an identity card showing their Company name, their own name and reference number and a colour photograph of the individual. Always check a caller's identity card before letting them into your home.

- Where possible, all vehicles used for visits to customers' premises will carry the WPD or contractor's logo.
- Where possible, all WPD employees will wear clothing indicating they are from WPD.

- All WPD employees and contractors will be able to inform you of the relevant emergency telephone number upon request.
- WPD employees will be able to give you explanations and information on matters relevant to the purposes of their visit.
- WPD will take all necessary steps to ensure that all ID cards are returned when an employee leaves the Company or following the expiry date of the card.

If you have any doubts about whether a caller is genuine do not let them into your home.

WPD will ensure that its employees and contractors are aware of the contents of this Code and will comply with it at all times. They will be suitable, appropriately qualified and fully trained for the purpose of the visit and will be courteous at all times in their dealings with you and give clear and accurate explanations as well as respecting your premises.

Passwords

If you are blind, have poor sight or you would just like to feel more secure, you can agree a password with us when you make an appointment.

Keeping Appointments

If we agree an appointment with you, we will do our best to keep it, unless we agree an alternative date with you.

We are able to offer 'am' and 'pm' appointments when we arrange to visit you. The 'am' slot means that we will arrive between 8am and 12noon, the 'pm' slot means that we will arrive between 12noon and 4.30pm. You can also ask for a more specific appointment time within a 2-hour time band.

6. Complaints - how to contact us

At WPD we are committed to providing you with excellent customer service, first time every time. However sometimes things do go wrong. We want to know when this happens, so that we can sort out any problems as quickly as we can.

Telephone: please call us on **0800 0556833**.

Email: you can email us at ttaylor@westernpower.co.uk Please tell us your address including postcode with a contact telephone number in your email.

In writing: to Tony Taylor, Information Centre Manager at Avonbank, Feeder Road, Bristol BS2 0TB. Please tell us your address including postcode with a contact telephone number in your letter.

Personal visits: you can also visit your local WPD office. Please contact us first to make an appointment to ensure that the right person is available to speak to you.

Other sources of advice and information

These organisations may be able to provide you with independent information and advice.

Consumer Direct – www.consumerdirect.gov.uk
or call 08454 040506

Citizens Advice – www.citizensadvice.org.uk to find your nearest branch

Age UK – www.ageuk.org.uk to find your nearest branch

Western Power Distribution (East Midlands) plc. Registered in England and Wales No 2366923
Western Power Distribution (West Midlands) plc. Registered in England and Wales No 3600574
Western Power Distribution (South West) plc, registered in England and Wales No 2366894.
Western Power Distribution (South Wales) plc, registered in England and Wales No 2366985.
Registered Office: Avonbank, Feeder Road, Bristol BS2 0TB

Website: www.westernpower.co.uk