

keeping warm this winter 2009-10

social work ... putting people first



Falkirk Council
Social Work Services

contents

Introduction	1
Winter Fuel Payments	2
Fuel Poverty	2
The Energy Assistance Package	3
Switching Fuel Supplier	4
Special Services for Gas and Electricity Customers	4
Benefits for Pensioners	6
- Pension Credit	6
- Disability Living Allowance and Attendance Allowance	7
Carer's Allowance	8
Direct Payments	8
Preventing cold-related illnesses	8
Beat The Freeze – protect your home this winter	11
Carbon Monoxide Poisoning	12
Useful Contacts	14



introduction

Cold, damp weather can often make you feel tired and run down.

That's why it's really important to eat well, stay warm and if possible, stay active.

This booklet contains ideas, information and advice to help you beat the effects of the cold weather and hopefully avoid catching a cold or the flu. This should in turn reduce the risk of bronchitis and pneumonia.

Recent studies have shown that as temperatures plunge hospital admissions for breathing problems rise. Hence Health Chiefs and the Met Office are advising people to wrap up warmly. Other conditions, such as heart attack, bronchitis, broken bones, aches and pains, depression, as well as coughs, colds and viral infection also increase. So remember: 'wrap up warm to keep the cold out'.

It's tempting to rely on snacks and convenience foods as an easy answer when you feel under the weather, but that is just when you should make sure you have regular meals. Eating a well-balanced diet with regular meals gives you the energy to cope with the cold and enjoy life. You can also enjoy company while you eat by attending one of the many lunch clubs run by Social Work Services. Contact the Disability Information Service for details (see contact details on page 15).

If you feel up to some exercise or learning some new skills, there are many classes run by the Forth Valley College of Further and Higher Education and Falkirk Council. So why not learn how to surf the net, keep fit or take up photography?



winter fuel payments 2009/2010

The government is making Winter Fuel Payments to people aged 60 or over to help with the costs of keeping warm this winter.

is this for me?

If you are aged 60 or over on or before 27 September 2009, and normally live in Great Britain, this tax-free payment could be for you.

what is it?

If you are aged 60 to 79 and you are entitled to receive a Winter Fuel Payment, you will get either £125 or £250, depending on your circumstances in the qualifying week (21-27 September 2009).

If you are aged 80 or over and you are entitled to a Winter Fuel Payment, you will get an extra £75 or £150, so you could get up to £400, depending on your circumstances in the qualifying week.

what do I do?

If you got a Winter Fuel Payment last winter, The Pension Service will automatically send you a payment *as long as your circumstances have not changed*.

Some people will need to claim. Contact The Pension Service to find out if you are eligible and whether you need to claim (see contact details on page 14). Ask for a Winter Fuel Payment leaflet (WFPL1).

Or for more information you can phone the Winter Fuel Helpline (see page 14).

fuel poverty

A person is living in fuel poverty if they are required to spend more than 10 per cent of their household income on fuel.

what are the causes of fuel poverty?

There are three main factors which influence whether or not a household is in fuel poverty:

- **low household income** - the costs of heating a property forms a greater proportion of total income for those on low incomes
- **fuel costs** - higher prices reduce the affordability of fuel. Prices of different types of fuels can vary considerably, and the availability of different fuels in different areas affect consumer choice
- **energy efficiency** - the thermal quality of the building and the efficiency of the heating source determine the amount of energy that must be purchased to heat the home adequately.

The Scottish Government has set a target to abolish fuel poverty by November 2016.

how will this be done?

The Energy Assistance Package is a holistic package to help maximise incomes, reduce fuel bills and improve the energy efficiency of homes. It replaces the Central Heating and Warm Deal programmes.

the energy assistance package what can it offer you?

The package has four stages:

- Stage 1 offers energy advice on how to make your home as energy efficient as possible.
- Stage 2 provides a benefit and tax credit check and access to the lowest-cost energy tariffs
- Stage 3 provides a package of free insulation from an energy supplier to make your home more energy efficient (cavity wall and loft insulation)
- Stage 4 offers a package of enhanced energy efficiency measures to those who are most vulnerable to fuel poverty

who benefits?

Stage 1: Everyone who phones the Energy Efficiency Advice network will receive free expert energy advice.

Stage 2: Those at risk of fuel poverty may be offered benefit and tax credit checks and advice on low cost energy tariffs

Stage 3: Private Sector: You may qualify for a package of standard insulation measures (cavity wall and loft insulation) if you are a home owner or the tenant of a private landlord and you or your partner is:

- aged 70 or over and you have no central heating; or
- aged 75 or over; or
- receive a qualifying benefit.

Stage 3: Social Sector: if you are a social sector tenant renting from either a local authority or Registered Social landlord similar insulation measures may be available to you funded through a partnership between your landlord, the Scottish Government and energy companies. For information about this you should contact your landlord.

Stage 4: You may qualify for enhanced measures if you are a home owner or the tenant of a private sector landlord and you or your partner is

- aged 60 or over and have no central heating system in your home
- you are a home owner or the tenant of a private sector landlord and you live in an energy inefficient home and you or your partner:
 - is aged 75 or over
 - is aged 60 or over and receives a qualifying benefit
 - has a child under 5 and receives a qualifying benefit
 - is pregnant and received a qualifying benefit
 - has a disabled child under 16 and receives a qualifying benefit

For the first time help may also be available for those in mobile homes.

what are the qualifying benefits for stage 4?

- Attendance Allowance
- Child Tax Credit - where income less than £17,474
- Council tax benefit
- Housing benefit
- Income support
- Income-based jobseekers allowance
- Disability living allowance
- Disablement pension which includes a constant attendance allowance
- State Pension Credit - with Guarantee element
- War disablement pension which includes a mobility supplement or a constant attendance allowance
- Working Tax Credit - where income less than £17,474
- Employment and Support Allowance

what does the enhanced package include?

Depending on individual circumstances, the package may consist of but is not limited to:

- Installation of a new central heating system including where appropriate air source heat pumps;
- A new boiler;
- Draught-proofing;
- Internal or external wall insulation;
- Cavity wall insulation;
- Loft insulation;
- Room thermostats and heating controls;
- Insulation of tanks and pipes

who do I contact to find out more?

To find out if you qualify, please call the Energy Saving Trust

on 0800 512 012

If you have access to the internet visit www.energyassistancepackage.com.

Switching Fuel Supplier

For many years now customers have been able to switch supplier to another utility who may offer a better service or who can provide a more competitive tariff.

If you decide to switch supplier it is recommended that you use a price comparison site to help work out what fuel supplier best suits your need (see page 14).

No one supplier will ever be cheapest in all departments. The overall cost of each bill will vary in relation to fuel tariff/consumption, standing charge, payment method, capped offers and discounts i.e. dual fuel. It is important to ensure you sign up for a package that will best suit your individual circumstances.

Some useful questions to consider prior to changing supplier:

1. What are the fuel charges per kWh and how long are they guaranteed for?
2. What payment methods are available?
3. Is there a discount for dual fuel?
4. Is there a discount for managing the account online (paperless billing)?
5. What is the best tariff?
6. Is there a standing charge?
7. Does the supplier have high numbers of complaints?

The “switching process”:-

Step 1. Make contact with the chosen supplier and agree a contract.

Step 2. Give old supplier 28 days notice by telephone.

Step 3. Give old supplier 28 days notice in writing.

Step 4. Settle existing bills with the old supplier.

Step 5. Take a meter reading on the day of changeover.

This whole process should take around six weeks to complete and your new supplier will be able to update you on progress.

Social Tariffs

All energy providers have to offer social tariffs to help their most vulnerable customers cope with the high costs of gas and electricity. According to new Ofgem rules, all social tariffs must equal the supplier’s cheapest deals.

Suppliers also agreed to increase their collective spend on social tariffs by £225 million between 2008 and 2011 - so if you’re struggling to keep up with the rising cost of heating your home, why not talk to your provider and see if you can be moved to a cheaper tariff?

Priority Services Register

All utility companies offer a Priority Service Register for all their gas and/or electricity customers who are elderly, disabled or chronically sick. It enables the utility to record any specific requirements the customer may have and helps to provide the right services appropriate to the customer's needs. These services include:-

- Meter Reading ~ If no one in the household is capable of reading a gas or electricity meter the supplier can arrange for the meter to be read every quarter and for bills to be based on these readings.
- Moving Meters ~ If it is difficult to reach or read a meter the supplier will consider moving it to a more convenient position free of charge.
- Password Scheme ~ A unique password can be set up which will be used every time company staff visit their home.
- Special Controls and Adaptors ~ Special controls which may help make gas and electricity controls easier to use can be fitted.
- Advanced Notice ~ If the electricity supply needs to be turned off for planned work extra notice will be given.
- Special Assistance ~ If the gas supply needs to be turned off or disrupted for safety reasons alternative cooking and heating facilities will be provided.
- Bill Nominee Scheme ~ Bill copies can be sent to a friend, relative or carer's address for checking.
- Services for the Visibly Impaired ~ Customers can access bills in Braille, large print or on tape.

who is eligible?

Customers who fall into the following categories will be suitable to access the services described above: -

- Of pension age
- Disabled
- Chronically Sick
- Deaf or Hearing Impaired
- Blind or Visibly Impaired

To register simply contact your gas or electricity supplier (see "useful contacts at the back of this booklet")

Benefits for Pensioners

Every year billions of pounds worth of benefits go unclaimed.

The only way to get what is rightfully yours is to make a claim for the benefits you may be missing out on. Too often people are put off because they do not know which benefits they can claim or they are unsure how to go about making a claim. This brochure can help.

pension credit

Pension Credit is a tax free weekly payment which could mean extra money each week for people aged 60 or over. People aged 65 or over may be rewarded for some of the savings and income they have provided for their retirement.

People may be entitled to Pension Credit if:

- they or their partner are aged 60 or over; and
- they normally reside in Great Britain

how much is pension credit?

Pension Credit currently guarantees a minimum income of at least:

£130.00 a week for a single person; or

£198.45 a week if you have a partner

Entitlement may be higher if any of the following apply:

- you are severely disabled and live alone, or with another severely disabled person;
- you are a carer entitled to Carers Allowance; or
- you have certain housing costs that are not covered by Housing Benefit (for example mortgage interest payments).

what if I have savings or investments?

If your savings and investments are less than £10,000 then they are ignored. If your savings and investments are over these limits any Pension Credit paid is reduced by £1 for every £500, or part of £500 you have over these limits. This is called assumed income from savings.

For example, if you have savings of £11,050 you will be deemed to have an income of £3 per week from your savings; if you have savings of £15,300 you will have a deemed income of £11 per week.

can people continue to work and apply for pension credit ?

Yes. People can work as many hours as they like and still apply for Pension Credit. However, the earnings they receive may affect their entitlement.

how much pension credit could people get each week?

Guarantee Credit: if your income is below £130.00 a week for a single person; or £198.45 a week if you have a partner then the guarantee credit makes up the difference.

Savings Credit: can be paid if you or your partner are aged 65 or over. It is intended to provide extra money for people who have made modest provision for their retirement. So if your income is less than £181 per week (or £266 if you have a partner) then you should make a claim.

Some types of income do not count for Pension Credit Purposes. These include:

- Attendance Allowance
- Disability Living Allowance
- Housing Benefit
- Council Tax Benefit.

how do people apply for pension credit?

You can apply by phone, on-line or by post (see contact details on page 14).

Over three million people are receiving extra money through Pension Credit. Could you join them? Make sure you don't miss out. If you apply for Pension Credit and are eligible, you may receive a payment backdated (for up to 3 months from the day you were first entitled to the date you first applied).

The Pension Service and Falkirk Council work in partnership to provide the following service for you:

- we will provide a friendly and confidential place, or visit you at home, to discuss any issues regarding your State Pension or Pension Credit.
- we will be able to:
 - help you complete claim forms.
 - deal with any queries you may have about benefits you are already receiving.
 - verify documents to save you from having to send them to the Pension Centre.
 - signpost you to other services you may need.

disability living allowance and attendance allowance

Depending on how your health problems affect you, you may be entitled to Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Attendance Allowance (AA).

DLA has two components, a care component and a mobility component. You must claim DLA before you reach 65 years of age. The care component is payable if you need personal attention or supervision from another person because of your health problems. The mobility component is payable if your walking is severely restricted or you require guidance or supervision when walking out of doors in unfamiliar areas.

If you are aged 65 or over, you will need to claim Attendance Allowance instead. This can only be paid if you need help with personal care. There is no separate mobility component, although mobility problems may be taken into account when considering your need for personal attention or supervision.

You can get these benefits even if you live on your own and have no-one looking after you. You may be entitled to Attendance Allowance or the care component of Disability Living Allowance if you find it difficult to:

- get in or out of bed,
- get dressed
- manage stairs
- take medication
- cut and eat food
- hear or see
- get washed
- get in/out of bath
- walk indoors
- go to the toilet
- cope with anxiety
- speak to people
- cope with mental illness

or you ...

- are unsteady on your feet
- might fall
- might have fits or blackouts
- are forgetful
- wander away from home
- might become mentally confused
- may put yourself or others at risk.

If you get either of these benefits, you may be entitled to extra Pension Credit and/or higher rent and council tax rebates.



how much is payable?

Care needed -	DLA	AA
Night and day	£70.35	£70.35
Night-time only	£47.10	£47.10
Day-time only	£47.10	£47.10
Part of the day only	£18.65	-
Mobility problems - Severe difficulties walking:	£49.10	-
Guidance/supervision needed when walking:	£18.65	-

carer's allowance

Carer's Allowance is a benefit currently available to people who regularly spend 35 hours per week caring for a severely disabled person. You don't need to be related to, or live with, the disabled person but they must be in receipt of Attendance Allowance (AA) or the Disability Living Allowance (DLA) care component at the middle or high rate. Carer's Allowance can include an adult dependant's addition and is taxable.

direct payments

A direct payment is money paid to you instead of Community Care Services so you can arrange and purchase your own services, including short breaks/respite. It's therefore an alternative Social Work service to help you live independently.

A Community Care Assessment is necessary first of all to establish what you need, to determine whether you are eligible, and the amount of direct payment required.

Direct payments give you more control and enable you to choose who supports you, how and when. You can use your direct payment to pay an agency/organisation to provide a service or employ your own staff.

You will not be charged for services delivered in your home. You may be asked to contribute towards the cost of a short break /respite care service.

who can receive a direct payment?

- you must be able to manage, with help if you need it, your direct payment.
- you must have a disability and be over 16 years of age or be over 65 years.
- if you are the parent of a child with a disability you can receive direct payments to buy services for your child.
- if you have a disability and have children you can receive direct payments to buy services for them.
- attorneys and guardians with the relevant powers may be able to receive direct payments.

For more information, contact your local Social Work Office. If you have someone in Social Work involved in your care, speak to them about it.

Or to find out more contact the Forth Valley Direct Payments Support Service (see page 14).

Direct Payments do not affect your benefits

preventing cold related illnesses

Older people are at a greater risk of developing bronchitis or pneumonia. The best way to beat these cold related illnesses is to prevent them happening in the first place. Do this by following the practical steps outlined below.

hypothermia

Many older people are concerned that they may succumb to hypothermia during the winter. Hypothermia occurs when your core body temperature drops to 35°C (95°F) or below. You may not actually feel cold but if you sit in a cold room and do little or nothing to keep warm then you may run the risk of becoming hypothermic or becoming ill with bronchitis or pneumonia. Both are cold related illnesses.

Watch out for the danger signs:

- drowsiness
- very cold skin on parts of the body normally covered, e.g. stomach or armpits
- general slowing down of speech, breathing and pulse
- confusion
- unsteady movements
- pale, puffy face

If you are in doubt:

- move the person into warmer surroundings if possible
- wrap the person in a light layer of blankets or a duvet to avoid further loss of body heat
- give them warm, nourishing drinks
- call the doctor or nurse (or an ambulance if you think this is required)
- do not subject the person to any sudden extreme change of temperature - do not put them next to a fire or give them hot water bottles or heavy layers of clothes or blankets
- do not give them alcohol, as it will stimulate further heat loss through the skin

Prevention

Clearly, it is important to prevent people from becoming cold in the first place. Family, friends and neighbours in the community can look out for those who might be at risk from the cold. Prevention is always easier than cure!

Clothing

The clothes you wear can help you to keep warm this winter. Several layers of clothing are better than one.

Wear an extra layer when moving from room to room and always wear that extra layer if you get up during the night.

Dressing and undressing:

- dress and undress in an area which is warm
- daywear and nightwear can be warmed

before putting on. This will avoid using body heat to warm up cold clothing. Care must be taken to avoid any fire hazard

- warm the bed before getting into it
- speed up dressing and undressing by choosing clothes that are easy to put on and tie. Long zips, large buttons, Velcro closures etc. all help
- several layers of thin clothing are warmer than one thick layer due to the insulating effect of trapped air
- long sleeved vests can be worn under blouses or shirts. Long johns or thick tights can be worn under trousers
- a thin pair of socks worn under thicker ones gives extra warmth
- hats, gloves, scarves and stout shoes or boots will keep you warm outdoors
- wear well fitting shoes indoors. Slippers are better worn for short periods only. Well fitting shoes are warmer and can prevent accidents.

Food

Each day have a hot meal which includes at least one of the following - meat, fish, cheese or eggs with either potatoes, rice or pasta and a green vegetable. Porridge and soup are good warming foods which can be used at any time of the day.

Have at least 6 cups of non-alcoholic fluid a day - choose from tea, coffee, milky drinks, fruit juices and water. Try to eat some fruit daily, or at least drink some fruit juices.

Exercise

Exercise is very good for helping keep warm. A cold environment often makes people feel less like keeping active and their reactions become slower. To prevent this do not sit still for long periods.

Ideas to keep warm with exercise:

1. Before getting out of bed:
 - take a few deep breaths, have a good stretch.
 - lying on your back, press your heels, shoulders and head into the bed, count to five and let go.

- bend your knees with feet flat on the bed. Lift your bottom off the bed pressing on your heels. Count to 5 and let go.
 - keeping knees bent, roll your knees to each side. This exercise helps the blood to circulate.
2. In the chair:
- wriggle your toes, pull your toes up towards you, circle your feet, lift your heels off floor.
 - sitting back in your chair, straighten each knee in turn.
 - bend at the waist to the left and right.
 - rub thighs, tops of arms and waistline.
 - clasp hands together, stretch them forward and above your head then lower them.
 - bring each knee towards your chest then lower.
 - once your hands, feet and lower back are warm, the rest of your body will be much warmer.

Heating

- stop draughts from floors and windows by using draught strips. It is also recommended that the letterbox has a draught cover plate fixed to the inside of the door.
- fill in the cracks in the floorboards or skirting board with material from local DIY outlets.
- if you have radiators check that they are not blocked by furniture as this will prevent heat circulating. It is very important to have enough ventilation for coal, gas and oil heaters to work safely. Never seal chimneys and doors completely.
- fix aluminium foil behind radiators which are on outside walls to reflect heat back into the room. You can buy special foil but ordinary kitchen foil will do.
- safe and adequate heating appliances are very important and should be maintained.
- appliances can be made more efficient by regular cleaning, for example, the reflector on some electric fires.
- if you do not have central heating and

need to use other forms of heaters, ask for advice on ones to suit your room size. Ideally heaters should be fitted with a thermostat. The Scottish Government has introduced a scheme called the Energy Assistance Package which offers free central heating. To find out more information and to see if you are eligible refer to page 3.

- keep open grates filled, when burning, with a 3 - 4 inch layer of fuel and regulate the burning rate by careful use of the air control at the front. Use the poker sparingly and gently. A long thin poker is best to clean the ash between the grate bars without losing unburned fuel. All open fires should be protected by a fire guard.
- lag the hot water tank with a jacket. Lag hot and cold water pipes in roof spaces. These steps can cut the cost of heating water by over a third. You may need assistance with this. Perhaps a friend, neighbour or relative can help.
- close the curtains at dusk and ensure that they are above or behind the radiators. Thick, lined curtains help even more to stop heat being lost through windows. Wall-to-wall carpets can often help keep warmth in.
- maintain the room temperature at 21°C/70F - 23°C/73.5F depending on preference. All other rooms can be heated to 18° C/65F.
- use a wall thermometer to help set the correct temperature.
- For more information on energy efficiency please go to www.falkirk.gov.uk and search for "Household Energy Advice". If you do not have internet access then you can receive the same information and advice from Staff at your Local One Stop Shop (see useful contacts p15 for details).

beat the freeze - protect your home this winter

Cold weather can cause damage to your home and belongings, but there are steps which you can take to avoid this:

KNOW where the main stopcock for your water supply is located.

It is usually near where the water pipe enters the house or under the kitchen sink and you should locate it and check that it turns easily.

KNOW where the isolating valves for the hot and cold supply are.

Again, you should learn where these are and check that you can turn them easily.

Avoiding Burst Pipes

- keep your home reasonably warm day and night.
- during cold weather, keep the heating on.
- if you have radiator valves with an anti-frost setting, make sure they are used.

Heating the loft and insulating your home

- in the event of very low temperatures, you should open the hatch to the loft space (if you have one). This will provide additional protection if your water tank and pipes are located in the loft.
- the current recommendations are to have 270mm of insulation in your loft. If yours has less than this then contact your utility company to enquire about discounted insulation. You may also qualify for free insulation under the **Energy Assistance Package**, see page 3 for details.
- all energy companies are currently discounting cavity wall and loft insulation. Over 70's should qualify for free insulation.

Going on Holiday

- if you are going away this winter, you should keep your heating on at a low level and leave the loft hatch open to allow warm air to circulate in the loft space.

- if you expect low temperatures while you are away, pour some salt into the toilet pan and other waste pipes to stop the water in the traps freezing.
- do not forget to make arrangements for emergency access to your home before you leave.
- ask someone to check your house regularly while you are away.

Frozen pipes

If water will not flow from a tap or a cistern will not fill in cold weather, ice may have formed in one of your supply pipes. There cannot be ice in a pipe supply where taps are working normally, so you should be able to trace the blockage fairly quickly.

What you should do

- turn off the water supply at the main stopcock
- turn on all cold taps to drain the system
- flush the toilet
- do not turn hot water taps on as the hot water cylinder may collapse if the pipes feeding into it are frozen
- switch off the central heating and immersion heater and let any solid fuel fires die down
- collect water in the bath for washing and flushing the toilet

If pipes freeze, you can attempt to defrost them by using warm air (from a hairdryer perhaps) or warm water. Start by warming the pipe as close as possible to the tap or valve, then work along it.

REMEMBER to defrost pipes slowly and avoid the use of fierce heat or a naked flame as it may cause the pipes to burst.

If you are unsure how to contain a burst pipe DO NOT attempt to defrost pipes yourself.

Burst pipes

If you get a burst pipe take the following steps:

1. turn off the water supply at the main stopcock.
2. switch off the electricity at the mains.

3. switch off any water heaters.
4. switch off the central heating system.
5. let solid fuel fires die down.
6. turn on all taps to drain your system.
7. if possible, collect water in the bath for washing and flushing the toilet.
8. warn neighbours who may suffer damage.
9. try to contain any leaks or use buckets to collect the water. Blankets can also be useful to soak up water and limit the damage to your home and belongings.
10. if your ceiling begins to bulge, place a bucket under the bulge and, using a screwdriver, pierce a hole to allow the water through. This could prevent additional damage to your ceiling and belongings.

home contents insurance for falkirk council tenants

If you rent your house or flat from the local authority, it is sometimes assumed that the Council will have an insurance policy covering loss or damage to your personal property. This is NOT the case. The Council is responsible for insuring the building you live in but not your contents.

It is worthwhile to take out home contents insurance, and you may be surprised how little it costs. Take a few moments to work out how much it would cost to replace each item in each of your rooms and you'll find that it soon mounts up. Making sure you are covered means that you don't have to think about it too much. It's worth it to avoid having to find the money to replace your property all at once. It's worth it for peace of mind.

For more information on low cost Home Contents Insurance, contact your local One Stop Shop (see page 15).

carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning

Carbon Monoxide from gas appliances kills on average 30 people a year. In many cases this is caused by CO escaping from poorly installed or maintained gas appliances such as fires, central heating boilers, water heaters and their flues.

carbon monoxide kills

You are at risk from CO poisoning if:

- your appliance was poorly installed
- your appliance is not working properly
- your appliance has not been checked for safety or maintained regularly
- there is not enough fresh air in the room
- your chimney or flue gets blocked up
- you allow unqualified people to install or maintain your appliance

CO is widely known as "the silent killer". It is highly poisonous. CO is undetectable to human senses - you can't see, smell or taste it.

what signs can you look out for?

- yellow or brown staining around or on appliances
- pilot lights frequently blowing out
- increased condensation inside windows
- yellow rather than blue flame

symptoms to look out for:

- fatigue
- headaches
- flu-like symptoms such as nausea
- chest pains
- sudden giddiness when standing up
- sickness, diarrhoea and stomach pains
- erratic behaviour

If you think your appliance is spilling CO or you feel you have the above symptoms:

- switch off the appliance - and don't use until remedial action has been taken
- open doors and windows to ventilate

the room - do not sleep in it

- visit your GP urgently and inform them that you believe these symptoms may be related to CO. They will be able to tell by means of a blood test.
- call a CORGI registered installer

Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Battery operated)

Order one now for only £23.00 (inc. V.A.T., postage and packing).

To order, please call 0845 223 5150

or by post to: SPEEC Response Centre,
Unit 18 Sandback Business Park, Dunoon,
Argyll, PA23 3PB.

Cold Alarm

Cold Can Kill - Guard Against It

Cold related illnesses lead to an alarming number of deaths in the UK each year. The exclusive GTI Limited Cold Alarm provides an early warning against low temperatures in the home. It's so easy to use and it could help to save a life.

The GTI Limited Cold Alarm follows the configuration of traffic lights: If the room temperature drops below 12°C, the red light will flash continuously. If it falls to under 7°C, the alarm will also sound, indicating ACT NOW!

If the temperature drops to between 18°C and 12°C, an amber light will flash, signalling that the room temperature is posing a risk to health.

If the room temperature is above 18°C, the green light will flash approximately every 10 seconds to show that the environment is safe.

The GTI Limited Cold Alarm is similar in size to a smoke alarm. It can be mains or battery operated, allowing it to be moved from room to room.

Order Now

Order one now for only £18.95 (inc.VAT, postage and packing). You can also order your cold alarm with an adaptor for only £22.95 (inc.VAT, postage and packing).

To order, please call 01369 702070 (allow 10 days for delivery).

Energy Saving Light Bulbs from Scottish Power

Pack A: 2 x 20Watt Lamp Philips Softone Saver - Price £4.70 (saving 53%)

Pack B: 2x20W & 2 X 12Watt Lamp Philips Softone Saver -Price £10.80 (saving 46%)

Pack C: 3 X 20W & 3 X 12Watt Lamp Philips Softone Energy Saver - Price £15.90 (saving 47%)

Philips Softone 20W = 100W
standard light bulb.

Philips Softone 12W = 60W
standard light bulb.

Energy saving light bulbs are much more efficient than conventional light bulbs. Not only do they use less energy to provide the same amount of light but they normally last longer (up to six times longer). So they have the double benefit of saving you money on your electricity bill and helping to save the environment by using less energy.

To order:

- call 0845 601 7025, or
- online at www.scottishpower.co.uk/softone, or
- by post to: SPEEC Response Centre,
Unit 18, Sandback Business Park,
Dunoon, Argyll, PA23 8PB

Please note this offer is restricted to a maximum of 10 lightbulbs per household

useful contacts

Energy Saving Scotland advice centre (ESSAC)

This organisation is dedicated to achieving energy efficiency within the region. A home energy check, based on individual circumstances, can be produced at your request detailing specific measures and grants suitable to your situation.

T: 0800 512012 (Mon-Fri 9am - 5pm).

Web: www.energysavingtrust.org.uk

Or email them at sustainability@thewisegroup.co.uk

The 'Home Heat Helpline'

This helpline is jointly funded by six major energy supply companies and offers advice on a wide range of issues such as insulation grants, benefits take up and whether special reduced rate tariffs would be available. Calls will also be accepted from third parties such as social workers and family members.

T: 0800 33 66 99.

website:-

www.homeheathelpline.org.uk

Priority Services Register

Scottish & Southern Energy (Hydro)

Careline

0800 622 838

Scottish Power Carefree Register

0845 2700 700

British/Scottish Gas Home Energy Care register

0845 955 5404, open 24 hours, every day of the year.

Textphone: 18001 0845 955 5202 Lines open Mon-Fri 8am-8pm, Sat 8am-6pm.

E.ON CaringEnergy

0800 051 1480

Npower The Warm Response Service

0808 172 6999

Textphone 0845 603 0652.

Age Concern Scotland offer advice and information on a variety of topics relevant to older people.

Tel: 0845 833 0200

Web: www.ageconcernscotland.org.uk

N.H.S. Helpline (Scotland)

"Keep Warm This Winter" aims to provide advice in order to increase public awareness of the dangers posed by cold related diseases and hypothermia, and to encourage preventative measures to avoid ill health.

Freephone 0800 224488

Minicom 0800 317160

(8am - 10pm, 7 days per week)

Pension Credit application line:

FREEPHONE 0800 991234.

Monday to Friday, from 8am - 8pm and Saturday, from 9am-1pm.

W: www.thepensionservice.gov.uk

Winter Fuel Helpline

T: 08459 151515

(8.30am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday)

www.thepensionservice.gov.uk/winterfuel

The Pension Service:

0845 6060265

Dundee Pension Centre:

0845 6060265

Attendance Allowance Unit:

0845 7123456

Carer's Allowance:

01253 856123

Forth Valley Direct Payments Support Service

T: 01324 508794

E-mail: directpayments@fsmail.net

Forth Valley College of Education

You can obtain information on the wide variety of courses available in your local centre. The courses are available to people of all ages and all abilities.

T: 01324 403001

Carers Centre

5 Newmarket Street, Falkirk

T: 01324 611510, F: 01324 622022

W: www.carers.org

Citizens Advice Bureaux

W: www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Falkirk

27-29 Vicar Street, Falkirk

T: 01324 611244, F: 01324 679654

Denny

24 Duke Street, Denny
T: 01324 823118, F: 01324 826063

Grangemouth

1 Kerse Road, Grangemouth
T: 01324 483467, F: 01324 666935

Energy Price Comparison Websites

www.energyhelpline.com

T: 0800 074 0745

www.uswitch.com

T: 0800 404 7908

www.ukpower.co.uk

T: 0845 009 1780

www.energylinx.co.uk

T: 0845 225 2840

www.theenergyshop.com

T: 0845 330 7247

falkirk council advice services

Falkirk Council has a range of advice services to help people claim benefits, deal with debt problems and with enquiries on disability and consumer issues.

one stop shops

If you need advice or information on a range of Council Services or on how to claim benefits contact one of our Council Service Advisers at your local One Stop Shop. They can also offer assistance with form filling, although you will need to book an appointment first.

Falkirk One Stop Shop

Callendar Square, Falkirk

Tl: 01324 506965

F: 01324 506881

E: housing.falkirk@falkirk.gov.uk

Camelon One Stop Shop

256 Main Street, Camelon

Tel: 01324 503640

Fax: 01324 503641

E-mail: housing.camelon@falkirk.gov.uk

Grangemouth One Stop Shop

5 York Lane, Grangemouth

T: 01324 504540

F: 01324 504551

E: housing.grangemouth@falkirk.gov.uk

Stenhousemuir One Stop Shop

398 Main Street, Stenhousemuir

T: 01324 503338

F: 01324 503341

E: housing.stenhousemuir@falkirk.gov.uk

Bo'ness One Stop Shop

East Pier Street, Bo'ness

T: 01506 778770

F: 01506 778900

E: housing.boness@falkirk.gov.uk

Denny One Stop Shop

Carronbank House, Denny

T: 01324 504234

F: 01324 504281

E: housing.denny@falkirk.gov.uk

Dawson One Stop Shop

Dawson Centre, David's Loan, Falkirk

T: 01324 501450

F: 01324 501451

E: housing.dawson@falkirk.gov.uk

welfare benefit advice service (WBAS)

This service offers advice on complex benefit issues and appeals. The WBAS can advise you on how to ask the Department for Work and Pensions to review or appeal its decision. Help and advice on how to maximise your entitlement to benefits is also available.

Tel: 01324 501404

E-mail: cas@falkirk.gov.uk

debt advice service

The Debt Advice Officers can advise on debt problems. The service is free and completely confidential.

T: 01324 506735

E: cas@falkirk.gov.uk

disability information service

The Disability Information Service can give advice and information on all aspects of disability to people with disabilities, children with special needs, their families and carers.

Tel & Minicom: 01324 504304

E: dis@falkirk.gov.uk

consumer advice

A range of advice is offered at Development Services, David's Loan, Bainsford on consumer issues, including:

- Information and advice on the rights and responsibilities of consumers
- mediation in disputes between consumers and traders
- assistance in pursuing complaints and claims for compensation
- referral to technical expertise and arbitration schemes
- assistance with small claims actions

T: 01324 501414

F: 01324 501401

advice on homelessness

The Homeless Team provides advice and assistance on all aspects of homelessness. You can contact the Accommodation Resource Centre at 21-25 High Street, Falkirk.

T: 01324 503600

Freephone: 0800 587 4440

E: arc@falkirk.gov.uk

Social Work offices

Please contact your local Social Work office if you need advice or assistance. The offices are open **Monday to Friday 9.00am-5.00pm.**

Please note that sending e-mails is not secure as there is a risk that they could be intercepted and read by someone else. Please bear this in mind when sending personal information by e-mail.

Social Work Headquarters

Brockville,
Hope Street,
Falkirk
FK1 5RW
T: 01324 506400

Hospital Social Work team (for facilitating hospital discharge)

Falkirk Royal Infirmary
Social Work Unit (Hut 5)
Majors Loan
Falkirk FK1 5QE
T: 01324 616039

Grahamston Office

155 Grahams Road,
Falkirk
FK2 7BQ
T: 01324 506595
E: grahamston.swk@falkirk.gov.uk

Meadowbank Office (Community Care Service only)

1 Salmon Inn Road
Polmont
FK2 0XF
T: 01324 503883
E: meadowbank.swk@falkirk.gov.uk

Laurieston Office (Children & Families Service only)

1 James Street
Laurieston
FK2 9PZ
T: 01324 590300
E: laurieston.swk@falkirk.gov.uk

Denny Office

Carronbank House
Carronbank Crescent
Denny
FK6 6GA
T: 01324 504160
E: denny.swk@falkirk.gov.uk

Grangemouth Office

Oxgang Road
Grangemouth
FK3 9EF
T: 01324 504343
E: grangemouth.swk@falkirk.gov.uk

Stenhousemuir Office

130 King Street
Stenhousemuir
FK5 4HS
T: 01324 503503
E: larbert.swk@falkirk.gov.uk

Bo'ness Office

Kinglass Centre
Gauze Road
Bo'ness
EH51 9UE
T: 01506 778668
E: boness.swk@falkirk.gov.uk

Camelon Office

108b Glasgow Road
Camelon
FK1 4HS
T: 01324 501200
E: camelon.swk@falkirk.gov.uk

Emergency Duty Team If you need an urgent Social Work Service outwith normal working hours, please phone **01786 470500.**

If you would like this information in another language, Braille, LARGE PRINT or audio, please contact your local Social Work office.

Polish

Jeżeli chciałbyś/chciałabyś uzyskać owe informacje w języku innym aniżeli język angielski, w języku Braille'a, w DUŻYM FORMACIE lub zapisane na kasetach audio skontaktuj się z lokalnym biurem Opieki Społecznej (social work office).

Lithuanian

Jeigu jūs norėtumėte gauti šią informaciją kita kalba, Brailio šriftu, stambiu šriftu ar įgarsintą, prašome susisieki su jūsų vietiniu socialinės rūpybos ofisu.

Arabic

إذا كنت بحاجة إلى هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى, بريل, حروف كبيرة أو مسجلة صوتياً نرجوا منك الاتصال بمكتب الخدمات الاجتماعية المحلي.

Urdu

اگر آپ یہ معلومات دوسری زبان، بریل، بڑے حروف کی چھپائی یا آڈیو میں چاہتے ہیں تو برائے مہربانی اپنے لوکل سوشل ورک آفس سے رابطہ کریں۔

Chinese

如果你希望獲得此份資料的其他語言、凸字、大號字印刷或者錄音格式，請與你附近的社會工作辦公室聯絡。

Punjabi

ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਜ਼ਬਾਨ, ਬਰੇਲ, ਵੱਡੀ ਛਪਾਈ ਜਾਂ ਆਡੀਓ ਤੇ ਲੈਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਤਾਂ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਸਥਾਨਕ ਸੋਸ਼ਲ ਵਰਕ ਆਫਿਸ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ