

Theft Charter

BACKGROUND

CNG recognises that some of our customers face challenging circumstances which require an appropriate level of support. As a CNG customer, you must understand that anybody tampering with the meter or the energy supply is committing a criminal offence. They also put their premises, customers and the general public at risk.

The Theft Charter is a cross-industry commitment to ensure a consistent approach is taken whilst undertaking energy theft investigations. Where a customer is found to be vulnerable, the appropriate actions will be taken to ensure the welfare of the individual(s) is recognised whilst continuing to investigate a potential criminal offence.

SUPPLIER OBLIGATIONS

CNG is legally obligated to undertake a number of measures to proactively identify and investigate meter tampering. Where it is found that meter tampering has occurred we are obligated to make the site safe, which may involve disconnecting the supply. CNG will also be entitled to recover the associated costs and, depending on the severity of the tampering found, possibly take court action.

CNG will seek to identify who has committed the meter tamper and determine the appropriate level of enforcement. Depending on the extent and severity of the offence, action in the criminal courts may also be considered.

REASONABLE SUPPLIER ACTIONS

In checking for meter tampering, CNG can undertake the following reasonable actions:

- ♦ Gain access to premises to inspect the metering equipment; a visual check is essential to confirm tampering activity and assess whether the premises and equipment are safe.
- ♦ If access is refused, a supplier can apply to the courts for a warrant of entry, which gives the legal right to gain access to a premises, by force if necessary.
- ♦ Recover all costs associated with the tampering investigation, replacing, or repairing a tampered meter and the value of energy assessed to have been stolen.
- ♦ Install alternative metering equipment e.g. a pre-payment meter.
- ♦ Monitor ongoing energy consumption and maintain appropriate records to help determine whether there are any further attempts to use energy illegally.
- ♦ Disconnect the supply where co-operation is not achieved and/or premises upon inspection are found to be unsafe. The Supplier may be required to request the Network Operator to do this.
- ♦ Undertake action in the civil courts to recover all of their costs and the value of stolen and unbilled energy where a customer decides not to pay.
- ♦ Pursue action in the criminal courts either via private prosecution or via the police and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) or Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) in Scotland.