

Press Release



Watch out for “win back” calls from energy suppliers, energywatch warns small businesses

Energywatch

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Small businesses who have switched from **British Gas Business (BGB)** and agreed terms with a new supplier are getting last minute sales calls from BGB offering to beat the competition's new deal.

Business consumers are complaining to consumer watchdog energywatch that they have been charged penalties by their new supplier when accepting a new deal by British Gas.

Paul Savage, Business Services Manager for energywatch said: “We are all for business consumers getting a better deal, but only if they are not penalised for changing their mind.

“Where a business has agreed to move suppliers, even over the phone, the new supplier is entitled to enforce their new contract, even before they have actually taken over the supply. As a result, small businesses can easily find themselves tied into two contracts with different suppliers at the same time and at the risk of paying substantial penalties.”

John Holbrow, Energy Policy Chairman of the Federation of Small Businesses says “British Gas know full well that small businesses can't get out of these contracts and we would ask them to stop their hard sell techniques. Loopholes in the current gas and electricity legislation mean that small businesses have to fend for themselves.”

energywatch is pressing the energy regulator Ofgem to increase protection to small businesses and representation of the rights of this consumer group.

“In the meantime”, advises Paul Savage, “small businesses should be very wary of win back calls. They might ask themselves why their old supplier didn't offer them such a good deal while they were still in contract with them. The deal may not be so good if they factor in the extra costs of terminating their new contract”.

Notes to Editors

- Energywatch has developed a dedicated help and advice service for small businesses: www.smallbusinessenergy.org.uk. Complaints and enquiries can be addressed to: business.enquiries@energywatch.org.uk or phone 08459 06 07 08
- As the independent gas and electricity watchdog, our mission is simple: to get the best deal we can for energy consumers.
- This includes providing free and impartial advice - and even taking up your case if you feel you're being treated unfairly by your gas or electricity supplier.