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THIRD TIME UNLUCKY FOR CONSUMERS AS SSE INCREASES PRICES

- **SSE is putting its prices up by an average of 18% or £118 for gas and 11% or £49 for electricity from 14 September^[1]**
- **Increase will affect around 5.2 million electricity customers and 3.6 million gas customers^[1]**
- **Average household bill for a dual fuel SSE customer will now go up from £1,094 to £1,265 – an increase of £171 or 16%^[2]**
- **SSE last increased its prices in December by 9.2% or £55 for gas – it didn't increase its electricity prices^[1] making it the only supplier not to hit customers on both fuels**
- **Price promise: SSE promises not to raise its prices again before August 2012**
- **In total, SSE customers will have seen their bills shoot up by £227 or 22% within a year, taking them from £1,038 a year to £1,265^[2].**

SSE has become the third of Britain's big six energy suppliers to announce a second price increase in under a year. It will be increasing its prices by 18% or £118 for gas and 11% or £49 for electricity from 14 September^[1]. The move will hit around 5.2 million electricity customers and 3.6 million gas customers^[1] and will add an extra £171 on to SSE's average annual standard dual fuel bill, which will increase from £1,094 to £1,265 as a result^[2].

SSE last increased its prices in December by 9.2% or £55 for gas. However, it didn't increase its electricity prices^[1] making it the only big six supplier not to hit customers with hikes on both fuels. In total though, within a year SSE's customers will have seen their bills hiked by £227 or 22%^[2]. This compares with increases of £239 or 21% seen by ScottishPower customers and £258 or 25% seen by British Gas customers^[3].

The news will pile further woe onto cash strapped consumers who have already seen household energy bills rocket by £472 or 71% in just over 5 years^[4] while recent uSwitch.com research suggests that 6.3 million or almost a quarter of households (24%) are living in fuel poverty^[5].

Ann Robinson, Director of Consumer Policy at uSwitch.com, says: “Despite household energy bills having rocketed by almost £500 or 71% in just over 5 years^[4], consumers are still being asked to pay more. Household finances are creaking and groaning under the weight of price hikes, but the biggest concern in this has to be the impact on fuel poverty. Already almost a quarter of households can be classed as fuel poor^[5] and a string of substantial price increases in the space of a year will be pushing many more into this pit.

“There is no room for complacency and I would urge consumers to act now to ensure they are paying the lowest possible price for their household energy and to reduce the amount they use. Fixing your energy prices is an option that offers security and peace of mind, especially for those worried about the impact of price hikes on their household budget. But, whatever type of plan you opt for, always make sure you get an independent and impartial comparison based on your own personal circumstances before signing on the dotted line.”

Average bill sizes:

Supplier	Current bill size	New bill size
British Gas	£1,096	£1,286
EDF Energy	£1,118	£1,118
E.ON	£1,123	£1,123
Npower	£1,149	£1,149
SSE	£1,094	£1,265
ScottishPower	£1,211	£1,391
Average	£1,132	£1,222

Source: uSwitch.com

Based on a medium user consuming 3,300kWh electricity and 16,500kWh gas a year on a standard plan paying on receipt of bill with bill sizes averaged across all regions.

For more information visit www.uSwitch.com or call 0800 093 06 07

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Notes to editors:

1. SSE's announcement issued today. Previous price increase took effect on 1st December, 2010.
2. Based on a medium user customer using 3,300 kWh of electricity and 16,500 kWh of gas, on a SSE standard Dual Fuel plan, paying quarterly by cash or cheque with bill sizes averaged across all regions.

3. Based on a medium user customer using 3,300 kWh of electricity and 16,500 kWh of gas, on a ScottishPower standard Dual Fuel plan and on a British Gas standard Dual Fuel plan, paying quarterly by cash or cheque with bill sizes averaged across all regions.
4. Based on a medium user customer using 3,300 kWh of electricity and 16,500 kWh of gas, on a standard Dual Fuel plan, paying quarterly by cash or cheque with bill sizes averaged across all regions and all big six suppliers.
5. Research conducted by YouGov on behalf of uSwitch.com. Total sample size was 2,323 adults with bill paying responsibility for their household. Fieldwork was undertaken 12th-15th April 2011. The survey was carried out online. The figures were weighted and representative of all GB adults (aged 18+). The groups identified as in fuel poverty were calculated by cross referencing type of household and social grade with net monthly household income and average monthly energy spend. Respondents who answered "Don't Know" or "Prefer not to say" have been excluded from fuel poverty calculations. Fuel poverty calculation = Monthly energy bill divided by net monthly income. Those who were spending 10% or more of their net monthly income on energy bills are classified as being in fuel poverty. Number based on 26 million households in the UK and 24.4% of respondents classified as being in fuel poverty.

About us

uSwitch.com is a free, impartial, online and telephone-based comparison and switching service, helping consumers compare prices on gas, electricity, water, heating cover, home telephone, broadband, digital television, mobile phones and personal finance products including mortgages, credit cards, current accounts and insurance. In 2010 uSwitch.com celebrated ten years of saving customers money.

uSwitch.com is the first comparison website to achieve the Plain English Campaign's Internet Crystal Mark, which is recognised as a standard that a website has clear language, is accessible and easy to use, and has been tested on a sample of its users.

uSwitch.com is dedicated to helping consumers save money whether they have internet access or not. It offers a dedicated call centre, manned by uSwitch customer service representatives, as well as a freepost 'Send us your bill' service, whereby customers can post their latest energy bills with their telephone number to FREEPOST USWITCH, to get a free call back from a dedicated customer services representative. The service is also available via fax, email and post. Consumers should fax 0203 214 8417, email CustomerServices@uswitch.com or write to Customer Services, uSwitch.com, Centro 3, 19 Mandela Street, London, NW1 0DU with their postcode and usage details.

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