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BRITISH GAS INCENTIVE SHOULD BOOST ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN HOMES

British Gas is offering a £50 incentive to anyone who refers a 'vulnerable' person for free loft and cavity wall insulation as energy suppliers race to distribute money and hit energy efficiency targets before time runs out at the end of this year.

Commenting on the initiative, **Kevin Sears, energy efficiency expert at uSwitch.com, says:** "Over eight in ten people (83%) cut down or rationed their energy use this winter because of cost^[1]. For consumers battling high bills, energy efficiency is one of the biggest weapons they have. Loft and cavity wall insulation could cut bills by up to 40%^[2], but unfortunately some people are put off by the initial costs.

"But with suppliers desperate to hit carbon reduction targets set by the Government, they are falling over themselves to offer consumers great deals on products such as insulation. The real challenge to suppliers is raising awareness of the money on offer – our research shows that over half of consumers (52%) have no idea that they can get this help^[3] and just a fifth (21%) have been contacted by their supplier about the scheme^[4]. This offer from British Gas should help draw attention to the help available, and could help more people cut their energy bill."

For more information visit www.uswitch.com

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Notes to editors:

1. All research referred to below was conducted with the uSwitch.com Consumer Opinion Panel amongst 1,225 respondents in January 2012. In response to: 'Have you cut down or rationed your energy use this winter due to the increased cost of energy?' 83.3% said 'yes'.
2. Based on the following savings: loft insulation = £175, Cavity wall insulation = £135
3. Research is from survey conducted by YouGov online between 14th – 18th October, 2011. A total of 5,270 UK energy customers who have bill involvement with gas and/ or electricity took part in the survey. When asked "Have you asked your supplier for help in making your home more energy efficient?" 5% said 'Yes – and they

helped me'; 8% said 'Yes – but I wasn't able to get any help'; 35% said 'No – I didn't want to ask for help'; 52% said 'No – I wasn't aware I could ask for help.'

4. Research is from survey conducted by YouGov online between 14th – 18th October, 2011. A total of 5,270 UK energy customers who have bill involvement with gas and/ or electricity took part in the survey. When asked "Has your supplier been in touch with you offering help with making your home more energy efficient?" 21% said 'yes'; 70% said 'no'; 11% said 'don't know'.

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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