

EDF suspends forced installation of prepayment meters after British Gas controversy

The energy company EDF has suspended the forced installation of prepayment meters while it reviews its processes.

The French energy company, which has five million customers, says it carries out transfers to prepayment meters as a “last resort only when it is safe to do so”.

In a statement, EDF outlined its processes for dealing with customers who build up debt.

“We have a range of tailored support packages for customers in need,” it said.

“If a customer does not respond and remains in debt within three months of our first contact, we try to visit the customer’s home and find a solution.

“The visit is also an opportunity to look for any signs of vulnerability and ensure this is recorded on the account.

“EDF only seeks to move a customer to prepayment without their consent as a very last resort and only when we determine it is safe and practical.”

The company said in 2022 it applied for 13,766 warrants related to domestic customer debt.

“In around half of these cases we took the decision not to proceed once the customer had engaged and we understood their circumstances,” EDF said.

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“We regularly review and update these processes and so we are confident they are fit for purpose. Nonetheless we are currently reviewing them again to reconfirm they are robust and see if we can make any improvements.”

EDF also called for the government to cancel the reduction to the Energy Price Guarantee in April.

It comes as the [head of British Gas apologised after an investigation by The Times](#) alleged the company forced its way into vulnerable customers' homes to install the meters.

Speaking to Sky News, the CEO of British Gas's parent company Centrica said he could not “justify” customers being treated in such a way.

“I am really, really sorry. We've clearly got it wrong here and we are going to fix that,” Chris O'Shea said.

The meters can leave households without gas and electricity if they are not topped up with cash.