

'Significant risk' of UK gas supply emergency, energy regulator warns

The energy regulator has warned the UK is facing a "significant risk" of gas shortages this winter.

The information, which was revealed in a letter sent from Ofgem last week and first revealed by The Times, spoke of the possibility of "gas supply emergency" measures to help preserve stocks due to the impact of Russia's war in Ukraine which has starved Europe of its main source of natural gas.

A gas supply emergency can be declared when suppliers are unable to safely get gas to homes and businesses.

It could mean that some customers, starting with the largest industrial consumers, will be asked to stop using gas for a temporary period.

The aim would be to keep gas and gas-generated electricity supplies stable for households for as long as possible.

The stark warning emerged as [energy bills](#) come under the [protection of government caps](#), shielding both households and businesses from the worst in the wholesale price surge ahead of winter.

Sky News was expecting a statement from Ofgem to clarify its official position.

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The regulator spoke up just days before electricity system operator (ESO) National Grid was due to give an update to its winter outlook for spare capacity.

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3:36

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It had said at the [end of July](#) that it expected supply to be tight but did not expect the lights to go out despite the Europe-wide battle to secure supplies.

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A separate report on Monday justified nerves over the approaching winter months.

The International Energy Agency (IEA) warned of “unprecedented risks”, adding that prolonged cold snaps would place supplies at particular risk.

Its quarterly report found that European Union countries would need to reduce use by 13% over the course of the winter months in case of a complete Russian cut-off.

Supplies from Russia – which accounted for 40% of the bloc’s natural gas needs ahead of the war – are currently only

running at a tiny fraction of usual capacity.

The EU has accused Moscow of weaponising supplies by turning off the taps on the main Nord Stream 1 pipeline.

The supply crisis has seen businesses on the continent, particularly Germany, cut back on natural gas use as prices soar.