

# Business connections and contracts

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Information about how businesses can connect to the electricity or gas network in Northern Ireland.

## New business electricity connection

If you run a small business, charity or organisation, you can contact NIE Networks to get connected to an existing supply or apply for a new connection.

You can shop around for the best deal as some elements of the connection work can be done by accredited electrical contractors. NIE Networks will give you a list of contractors who can carry out those elements of the work so you can obtain additional quotes. These contractors are known as Independent Connection Providers.

The connection process may require significant planning and design and you might need planning permission or approval from landowners. If you are planning to build a new property, you should contact NIE Networks as soon as possible.

## New business gas connection

If you want to install natural gas in your business, you can contact the relevant gas network operator for your area to enquire about a connection.

- **Greater Belfast and Larne** – contact [Phoenix Energy](#)
- **Ten Towns area (Antrim, Armagh, Banbridge, Craigavon, Newry, Ballymena, Ballymoney, Coleraine, Portstewart, Limavady and Derry/Londonderry)** – contact [Firmus Energy](#)
- **Gas to the West (Strabane, Dungannon, Cookstown, Coalisland, Magherafelt, Omagh, Enniskillen and Derrylin)** – contact [Evolve](#)

Once you are connected to the gas network, depending on where you are located there are different suppliers available.

- **Greater Belfast and Larne** – you can choose between [Firmus Energy](#), [Go Power](#) or [SSE Airtricity](#) as your supplier.
- **Ten Town areas** – [Firmus energy](#) is the supplier in this area
- **Gas to the West** – [SSE Airtricity](#) is the supplier in this area
- If you are not on the gas grid, you can purchase LPG (bottled gas) from [Flogas](#)

## Understanding your business energy contract

Business electricity and gas contracts are not the same as domestic contracts.

When entering into a new contract, check all the Terms and Conditions to make sure you understand what you are signing up to. Unlike with domestic consumers, there is no cooling off period for businesses, meaning you won't be able to change your mind after signing a new contract.

Things to look out for:

- Check the length of the contract, typically between 12 and 24 months, or it could be open ended
- Check what notice must be given to your supplier to terminate your contract (some suppliers ask for up to 150 days)
- Check if there are any penalties for things such as late payment or to cancel the contract early
- Ask how the price is made up and calculated, including VAT, pass-through costs, discounts and all other charges and levies
- Check if the price you have agreed is variable or fixed (this is very similar to how mortgage rates work)
- Check what payment methods are available and if you will have to pay a security deposit
- Understand what will happen at the end of your contract. Diary the date your contract ends so you have time to negotiate a new contract or switch supplier, otherwise you will automatically go on the standard tariff, that has no discount applied to it and therefore will be more expensive
- Ask if your supplier can change the Terms and Conditions mid- contract and will you be notified if this happens.
- Energy contracts may preclude electricity and gas companies from certain liabilities, for example unforeseen circumstances such as loss of revenue if the electricity or gas goes off. You should have a back up plan consider taking out insurance to cover your business in case such things happen.
- If your business is moving into new premises, or vacating your existing ones, you should inform your electricity and/or gas supplier of the date you are leaving or moving in. Otherwise, you may be liable for the energy that the new, or previous tenant, has used. You should also provide a meter read to your supplier when you leave, and a forwarding address for the final bill.