

# Home Utility Suppliers - UK - September 2009

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## What is this report about?

At a time of recession, the dominant issue among consumers in the home utilities market is price, but for the companies the bigger, longer-term issue is that of reducing carbon emissions to tackle the problem of climate change. In the gas and electricity markets there has been a great deal of volatility in wholesale energy prices, which resulted in soaring energy bills through much of 2008. While the recession has resulted in prices falling back in the short term, the long-term trend is still upwards.

## What have we found out?

- In 2008, almost a quarter of households (6 million) changed their gas or electricity supplier (or both).
- A third of people (16 million) are apathetic about changing energy suppliers and can't be bothered with the hassle of switching.
- The internet now plays an important part in making price comparisons and switching suppliers: 14% (7 million) had switched suppliers via the internet, with 6% (3 million) having done so on more than one occasion.
- The higher price of green tariffs is holding back this sector: 28% (14 million) would like to use a supplier that used renewable energy, but only half this number (7 million) would be willing to pay more for it.
- With high energy prices, 30% (15 million households) have chosen dual fuel (same supplier for gas and electricity) as a good way to save money.
- At a time of recession, disadvantaged groups need more help: 8% (4 million) admit that they often struggle to pay their energy bills.

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