

News Release



May 2013

a new brand; a new HVCA



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RISING UTILITY BILLS NOW THE NUMBER ONE CONCERN FOR UK CONSUMERS

New research by Nielsen reveals that rising utility bills is now top of the list of UK consumers' worries – ahead of the economy and rising food prices. The Heating Helpline reminds householders that there are many things they can do to help cut these bills, some costing nothing and other measures costing very little.

23 May 2013 – New research reveals that rising utility bills are now the single biggest concern for twice as many UK consumers as they were two years ago.

The survey, undertaken by Nielsen, found that of UK consumers' top six worries utility bills were ahead of the economy and rising food prices, the top six being:

1. Rising utility bills (31%)
2. The economy (23%)
3. Rising food prices (22%)

4. Debt (19%)
5. Job security (18%)
6. Rising fuel prices (14%)

Chris Morley, Nielsen's managing director for UK & Ireland, said: "It's hardly surprising that finances dominate our concerns. Almost 1 in 3 UK consumers have no spare cash once they've covered their essential living expense and 9 in 10 think we're in a recession and only 15% think we'll be out of it within a year."

Blane Judd, Chief Executive of B&ES (the Building & Engineering Services Association) who operate the free consumer advice service the Heating Helpline, comments, "With the average dual fuel tariff now around £1500 per year, taking a substantial chunk of the household expenditure, perhaps this new research should not come as a surprise. Hard-pressed families are now desperate to get their energy bill down but they shouldn't hold out for much help from the energy giants such as British Gas, EDF and npower – they are facing a massive public backlash over record energy price rises.

"One of the main reasons we set up the free Heating Helpline advice service is to help households save money on energy, and the good news is that there are some simple steps that families can take to get these bills down – many cost nothing and some cost very little."

The Heating Helpline website is packed full of money saving tips and also has an easy-to-use search facility to find local reputable registered heating engineers. The Heating Helpline have also just introduced a new range of leaflets on all things related to home heating and energy saving including one leaflet specifically covering energy saving tips. Visit www.heatinghelpline.org.uk for advice, and for a complete set of these new leaflets call the Heating Helpline free on 0800 810 8303.

Ends

Issued on behalf of B&ES (the Building & Engineering Services Association) by Next Step Marketing Ltd

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Notes to editors

Since its formation in 1904, B&ES, the Building & Engineering Services Association (formerly the HVCA) has represented the interests of companies engaged in a wide range of building and engineering services including domestic heating and renewable technologies.

B&ES members are subject to regular, third-party inspection and assessment of their technical competence and commercial capability, carried out by an independent certification body at least every three years.

B&ES members who undertake gas installations are registered with Gas Safe – the gas safety watchdog body – and are also members of TrustMark, the Government-endorsed scheme designed to direct customers towards reliable tradespeople.

B&ES operates the *Heating Helpline* (www.heatinghelpline.org.uk) to provide consumers with free, impartial advice on every aspect of home heating, including gas safety.

Picture Caption:

"Turn your appliances off when you've finished using them – £1 billion worth of energy is wasted in the UK every year by appliances left on standby. Switching off the standby on gadgets and appliances could save you around £50 a year on your bills – just one of the many energy saving tips from the Heating Helpline."