

# UTILITY GUIDE FOR TENANTS



## MOVING

Keep things on track by managing your utilities effectively while moving.



When moving in or out of a rental property, it's important to make sure you have a plan to deal with your utilities. Use this guide to help you navigate the process.

### Things to consider



#### Are you moving to another location where you pay for utilities?

You may be able to transfer services from one location to another, depending on the retailer. Your first bill for your new home might be higher than expected, especially if there was an overlap between the properties.



#### Figure out your last day of service.

If you move out before your lease ends, you may be required to continue services at the property. Discuss with your landlord what your last day for services will be.

#### Check your contract!

If you are currently under contract with a utility retailer, double-check for any exit fees or additional costs associated with ending services early. If you're unsure whether you are under a contract, check your bill! If you are on the Regulated Rate, it will be noted on your bill.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_  \$ \_\_\_\_\_  \$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### Give your utility provider plenty of notice.

It is the account holder's responsibility to close their utility account with the service provider. If the utilities are provided through a regulated retailer, call the provider at least a week in advance. Some competitive retailers may require up to 30 days' notice.

### Helpful reminders when moving out

#### Provide a forwarding address.

You are responsible for ensuring your retailer has a way to contact you with your final bill. It is a good idea to provide a forwarding address to your landlord and retailer.

#### Do not request services be disconnected.

The property owner will be responsible for disconnecting services if they choose to do so. As a tenant, make sure that any services in your name are canceled. If an account remains open in your name at that location, you will be responsible for any charges.

#### Your final bill.

Make sure to pay your final bill. Even if you don't receive it, you are still responsible for the charges and could be sent to collections if you fail to pay. Your final bill may be higher than expected due to exit fees or the billing cycle.



#### What happens to my deposit?

If you are the account holder and have paid a deposit to a retailer, that money will be returned to you. If you paid a deposit to your landlord, review your rental agreement and discuss with your landlord how and when that money will be returned.

### Handling issues/disputes

#### Stay informed.

Refer to the Residential Tenancies Act (RTA) Handbook for Landlords and Tenants for comprehensive rights and responsibilities.

#### Resolve disputes.

Use the Residential Tenancy Dispute Resolution Service (RTDRS) for conflicts related to unpaid utilities or other lease issues.

#### Ask for help.

Contact the Utilities Consumer Advocate (UCA) for advice on utility rates, disputes, or other related issues.



utilitiesconsumer  
advocate



310-4UCA (4822) | UCAhelps@gov.ab.ca  
UCAhelps.alberta.ca

# MOVING-IN

Moving can be overwhelming, but managing utilities doesn't have to be.



As a tenant, it is important to be aware of your utility rights and responsibilities. Use this guide to help ensure you are prepared!

## Before you sign a lease



### Are utilities included in the rent?

Ask the landlord which utilities, if any, are included in the rent. The terms of your utility agreement should be clearly outlined in your rental agreement. As a tenant, you are entitled to see how your energy costs are calculated each month.



### Is the residence sub-metered?

Sub-metering is often used for electricity services. If your property is sub-metered, you will need to go with the utility company your landlord chooses for electricity. You will still need to set up an account with that company.



### Who pays for utilities in shared spaces?

Tenants should clarify with the landlord how utility costs are handled in building common areas.



### Is proof of setup required?

The landlord cannot confirm your application directly with your utility provider. Keep your confirmation information from the retailer in case the landlord requests it.



### Moving to a rural location?

Many rural land locations have separate meters for building and yard lights. To ensure your services are connected to the correct meter and location, ask your landlord for the Site IDs or meter numbers for which you are responsible.

## Helpful reminders

### You may be required to pay a prudential

Some utility retailers will charge a prudential, which is a deposit for services. Some companies will waive the prudential if customers sign up for automatic billing. It's a good idea to always double-check with the retailer regarding their terms.

### Watch for your upcoming bill

Check with your retailer about how you will receive your first bill. Some retailers use paper billing, while others are completely electronic. It's a good idea to confirm when you will receive your bills and what your billing cycle will be. The account holder is responsible for all charges, even if they do not receive a bill.

### Pay your bills!

Paying your bill is important! If you do not pay your bills, your services may be disconnected. This could nullify your lease and/or create additional charges if utilities need to be reconnected or if there is damage due to disconnection.

### Research and choose utility providers

If you are moving into your new residence with less than 30 days' notice, you may need to start with the regulated retailer in your area. Visit [ucahelps.alberta.ca](http://ucahelps.alberta.ca) to review your retailer options. If you are moving from a residence where you already pay utilities, you may have an overlap in utility services. Account for this in your budget.

## Use the Cost Comparison Tool

Scan



Select



Select your property type and enter in your city/town or postal code

Compare



See all the options in your area. Compare providers and plans

Save



Need help?  
Call our mediation team