

MOVE-IN UTILITY GUIDE FOR TENANTS

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



As a tenant, it's important to understand your utility rights and responsibilities.
Use this guide to help ensure you are prepared!

What to ask 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.

Which appliances and/or systems use gas?

Determine what in your property uses natural gas. This typically includes a furnace and hot water heater, but could also include stoves, BBQs, or fireplaces. Asking about these items can help you understand your potential energy costs.



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.

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.

Notes:

utilitiesconsumer
advocate



310-4UCA (4822) | 1-888-644-6608
UCAhelps@gov.ab.ca | UCAhelps.alberta.ca

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Helpful reminders

Set up services early!

It is recommended to set up services at least two weeks before taking possession. While some providers can set up services right away, competitive retailers may take up to 30 days.

Do you already have a utility account?

You may be able to transfer services to your new property. If you will have services for two properties at the same time, it's a good idea to inform your utility company to avoid any confusion.

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 default provider in your area. Visit 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.



You may be required to pay a prudential

Some utility retailers will charge a prudential, or 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.

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

What to do after you move-in

Watch for your upcoming bills and make sure to pay them

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. 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.