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## Demand Flexibility Service

Over the winter of 2022/23 The National Grid, in conjunction with Octopus Energy trialled a Demand Flexibility Service to see how the grid, during times of peak demand could reduce consumption to ensure a continuous supply to households without the need for blackouts or the need for emergency generators (usually coal fired) to be brought into service.

After the initial trial, 26 other energy suppliers joined the scheme, inviting customers with smart meters to voluntarily reduce electricity usage usually between the hours of 4pm to 7pm (the time when the grid is under greatest demand.) The energy saving sessions usually lasted an hour and customers were asked to reduce consumption by some 30%.

Those joining the scheme were given a day's notice to opt in or out depending on circumstances. They were encouraged not to use energy intensive appliances, (cookers, washing machines, tumble driers, electric heating etc.) and were rewarded with a bill refund of around £3.00 for every kilowatt-hour saved. Through their smart meter, energy usage was, during these periods compared every half hour of normal usage. Some energy companies ask that all electrical consumption is stopped for the prescribed time, others just that energy intensive appliances, e.g. electric cooker is not used.

Octopus Energy encouraged participating customers to switch off heat pumps for two hour periods and afterwards asked how much discomfort it caused.

The trial was deemed a success. The National Grid is facing increased pressure over the coming years as demand for electricity increases and “smart technology” will play a role in managing peak demand – reducing consumption at critical times and helping to reduce customers electricity bills. Those who fully participated were rewarded by as much as £100 off their bills.

Longer saving sessions could be introduced in future if necessary.

### **Caution - Please Read this:**

*Our Advice Note has been carefully prepared and is, as far as we know, accurate at the date of publication. However, things change very fast in the world of technology and in government schemes. Sometimes parts of Advice Notes become outdated and may not offer best advice very soon after publication. We do our best to keep them up to date with the limited resources we have. Furthermore, our advice may not be appropriate for your particular circumstances. We advise that you get advice from a relevant expert before making changes. We may be able to offer further advice or make suggestions on who to contact if you get in touch with us. We are not technical experts but have many years of offering common sense advice and we recommend you should not rely on our Advice Note alone for making decisions. The national advice centre Energy Savings Trust is a good source of information.*

See <https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/>