

## Removal of subsidies from network connection charges



At Northern Ireland Electricity (NIE), we connect new customers to the electricity network and alter existing connections whether it is a new home, housing development, business premises or farm.

From 1 October 2012, charges to connect to the electricity network or increase the capacity of an electricity supply will increase. This follows a decision from the Utility Regulator in April that all subsidies would be removed from connection charges.

Previously the 40% subsidy on connection costs was paid for by the majority of customers through their electricity bills. This policy was put in place in the early 1970s to encourage rural electrification and the expansion of the electricity network. The removal of this subsidy means that the general customer base will not pay towards the cost of new connections. Rather only those customers who want to make a new connection to the electricity network will now pay the full amount.

### **How does NIE work out my connection charge?**

All connections are quoted individually and will be determined by the amount of work required and the amount of materials needed. You can find out more about the connections process on our website [nie.co.uk/connections](http://nie.co.uk/connections).

All quotes are based on the NIE Statement of Charges for Connection to the Northern Ireland Electricity Distribution System. This statement is available on our website and it details a range of indicative costs (minimum and maximum costs) for materials and labour. This connections charging statement is reviewed and agreed at least once a year by the Utility Regulator.

### **When will these new charges come into force?**

The latest NIE Statement of Charges for Connection was approved by the Utility Regulator on 24 September 2012 and will come into effect on 1 October 2012.

### **I have already applied for my new or increased electricity connection. Will I have to pay more with these new charges?**

If you applied for your electricity connection before 1 October 2012, the former charges will apply ie including the 40% subsidy.

However, to secure this quote, you must accept it within 90 days and provide a deposit payment. All the construction work required for your electricity connection must then be completed by 1 October 2014.



### **Safety first**

*Electricity can kill. Please be aware of the dangers associated with carrying out work close to live electricity equipment.*

### **What happens if I apply for my connection before 1 October 2012 but my quotation is not issued by 31 December 2012?**

This situation may occur if you have not provided all of the information required to accurately quote for your connection. For example, we may require specific information such as maps, meter position details, load details and permission from your neighbours. We would urge you to provide us with all the requested information as quickly as possible to enable your quote to be issued before 31 December 2012. Otherwise your connection will have to be re-quoted with the new pricing structure.

### **What happens if my quotation needs to be re-quoted?**

Re-quotes may be issued for a number of reasons such as a customer change or third party consents. If you require a re-quote we would urge you to provide us with all the necessary information as quickly as possible to enable your quote to be issued before 31 December 2012. Otherwise your connection will have to be re-quoted with the new pricing structure.

### **How can I make my electricity connection as low cost as possible?**

As each connection is quoted based on the work required there are some practical steps you can take to reduce costs. For example:

- Shorten the distance between the electricity network and your meter position. It is worth talking to your architect about this when designing your property.
- Accurately calculate your load requirements (ie the maximum amount of electricity you require). Either underestimating or overestimating the amount of electricity you require could incur additional costs or require changes to your connection at a later date.

Appliances such as electric showers, electric heating or ground/air source heat pumps can all increase your load requirements. You should discuss this carefully with your electrical contractor before submitting your application form to NIE.

### **I am a developer and want to connect a number of houses to the distribution system. Will there still be a standard connection charge?**

Yes, the standard connection charge will still apply for development sites with 12 or more individual connections. However, this fee will be increasing to reflect the Utility Regulator's decision to remove charging subsidies and increases in NIE's labour and material costs.



*Sign up to our free newsletter to stay up-to-date with the latest news, events and activities. Sign up online at [nie.co.uk/connections](http://nie.co.uk/connections)*

## **NIE connection depots**

There are three depots in Northern Ireland which manage the network connections and alterations in their areas.

