

Relief for district heating customers

Customers of STEAG Fernwärme GmbH, STEAG Fernwärme Essen GmbH & Co. KG and Fernwärmeversorgung Gelsenkirchen are to receive a one-off payment under the Natural Gas and Heating Emergency Assistance Act

Essen/Bottrop/Gelsenkirchen. A few days ago, the two houses of the German parliament passed the Natural Gas and Heating Emergency Assistance Act (EWSG). The Act also includes provisions on the so-called electricity and gas price brake. As those provisions also apply to district heating, customers of STEAG Fernwärme, STEAG Fernwärme Essen and Fernwärmeversorgung Gelsenkirchen will also benefit from it.

Financial relief under the Natural Gas and Heating Emergency Assistance Act is provided from federal funds and paid directly by the district heating suppliers. The aid is intended to compensate consumers for increased energy costs and will bridge the period until the introduction in spring 2023 of the “gas and heating price brake” announced by the German government. All eligible customers will receive a one-off bank transfer from their district heating supplier by December 31, 2022. The district heating suppliers will use the bank details stored in the customer data they hold.

“In the few cases where the customer data does not contain banking information, we are already writing to the customers concerned and asking them to provide their account details,” says Michael Zimmermann, who heads the heating billing department at STEAG Fernwärme.

It is important to note that the one-off payment will not be offset against the instalment due for December 2022. In other words, customers must pay the full amount of the December instalment. The one-off payment also has no effect on the amount of the heating account for the year as a whole. However, it will be shown as a separate item on that account.

Who gets the one-time payment?

Customers whose annual consumption does not exceed 1.5 gigawatt hours or 5,400 gigajoules receive a payment. Furthermore, the entitlement extends to landlords whose supply connection is used to bill the heat consumption of several households, and tenants whose heat consumption is billed exclusively via a

supply point assigned to them, and to homeowners' collectives. Other customer groups entitled to a relief payment are listed in the Natural Gas and Heating Relief Act (Section 4, para. 1).

How much is the payment?

The amount of the one-off payment is calculated for all customers on the basis of a uniform system. However, since individual factors such as the relevant consumption and the amount of the instalments paid also play a role, the amount of the relief payment is not the same for all recipients. "There is, then, no single lump sum for all our customers. We have posted a sample calculation on our website for a better understanding of how the payment is calculated," says Michael Zimmermann.

All the relevant information on the subject of the relief payment is also available on the website www.steag-fernwaerme.de. Due to the extraordinarily high workload currently involved in preparing the relief payment, Michael Zimmermann asks customers to bear with him and accept that individual telephone enquiries cannot currently be answered as promptly as usual: "All the available employees are currently working flat out to ensure that the money the federal government has made available to ease people's financial burdens will now actually reach them by the end of December. That is an absolute priority now."

Please submit customer enquiries by e-mail

In the light of that situation, as Michael Zimmermann says, it is urgently requested that any enquiries be directed to the district heating suppliers by e-mail. The e-mail address waermeabrechnung-fernwaerme@steag.com is available for that purpose: "We will answer all enquiries as soon as payment of the relief amount has been organized for all our customers," Michael Zimmermann promises, and appeals for understanding in the current exceptional situation.

About STEAG Fernwärme

As a regional energy service provider, STEAG supplies private households, public buildings, hospitals, industrial and commercial enterprises and real estate companies in the Ruhr region with environmentally friendly district heating, mainly from highly efficient cogeneration plants. Each year, STEAG makes around 1.6 billion kilowatt hours of thermal available to its customers – equivalent to the needs of over 275,000 households. This makes STEAG the largest district heating company in North Rhine-Westphalia. More than 90 percent of our heat is generated using the combined heat and power (CHP) process and distributed to the inner-city district heating networks in Bottrop, Essen and Gelsenkirchen through the Fernwärmeschiene Ruhr, the first supraregional district heating network in Germany. By means of this extensive supply network with a total length of more than 700 kilometers, STEAG ensures the demand-led supply of “turnkey” heat to residential units, public buildings, swimming pools, hospitals and industrial and commercial enterprises. The reduction in CO₂ emissions achieved through the use of district heating makes a significant contribution to relieving the burden on the environment. District heating is safe, clean and convenient – a friendly form of energy. Since 2018, MEAG - MUNICH ERGO AssetManagement GmbH has held a 49 percent stake in STEAG Fernwärme. Find out more at www.steag-fernwaerme.de

About STEAG Fernwärme Essen

STEAG Fernwärme Essen GmbH & Co. KG is a company jointly owned by STEAG Fernwärme GmbH and Stadtwerke Essen AG (50% each). STEAG Fernwärme Essen GmbH & Co. KG was founded in 2017 to expedite the supply of district heating to 19 urban districts in Essen.

About Stadtwerke Essen

Stadtwerke Essen is a network operator, supplier and service provider established over 150 years ago. It supplies the city of Essen with natural gas, drinking water and electricity. In the areas of natural gas and drinking water, Stadtwerke Essen is not only a supplier but also a network operator. Electricity has been a separate sales division and part of the company's portfolio since 2009. In addition, the municipal utilities grouped in Stadtwerke Essen provide supplementary services such as full-service contracting. The maintenance and upkeep of the wastewater network and the operation of Essen's port are also among the many functions of Stadtwerke Essen.

About STEAG

For 85 years, STEAG has stood for efficient and reliable power generation, both in Germany and abroad. As an experienced partner, we support our customers comprehensively in all phases of power supply. We design, develop, implement, operate and market highly efficient energy solutions – from distributed generation facilities and those based on renewable sources to large central power plants. Together with

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customized solutions in the field of electricity and heat supply, we also provide a wide range of energy services – increasingly on the basis of renewables. Successfully so: From 1990 to the end of 2021, STEAG permanently reduced its own CO₂ emissions in Germany by more than 80 percent.

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