

REAL Assurance Scheme



REAL Assurance Scheme
7th Floor
Capital Tower
91 Waterloo Road
London SE1 8RT

Telephone: 020 7981 0850
Fax: 020 7925 2715
Email: info@realassurance.org.uk
Web: www.realassurance.org.uk



Thinking of generating
heat or power
in your own home?



Look for the REAL Assurance Scheme Logo

Your assurance of the highest standards of service

The Consumer Code is completing stage two (the final stage) under the Office of Fair Trading's self-regulation initiative, the Consumer Codes Approval Scheme. You can find more information about this from www.offt.gov.uk

The Consumer Code dovetails with the Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS), an important quality-assurance mechanism that certifies installers and products www.microgenerationcertification.org

Certification to the MCS standards is a requirement of the Government's Feed-In Tariffs scheme. See: www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/Generate-your-own-energy/Sell-your-own-energy/Feed-in-Tariff-scheme and www.realassurance.org.uk/consumers/feed-in-tariffs

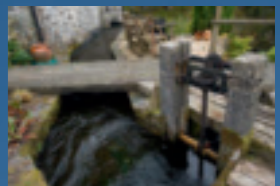
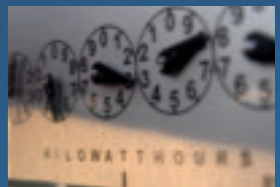
The principles set out in the Consumer Code are not intended to interpret, replace or restrict the law, and none of the conditions of the Code will affect consumers' rights under any existing consumer protection law.

Company Name and Address

The Renewable Energy Association takes care of the environment by using a CarbonNeutral® printer certificated to ISO 14001 and registered to EMAS environmental management systems. This brochure was produced using electricity generated from 100% renewable sources and 100% vegetable oil based inks.



CarbonNeutral® company



Only responsible companies display the REAL logo

They carry it proudly to show their commitment to exceptional service.

We want you to have full confidence in companies who sell or lease small scale renewable heat or power generators. We recognise that most people are not experts in these technologies and will need help in working out which is the most suitable system and how to get the best from it.

That is why the REAL Assurance Scheme Consumer Code sets out clearly what you are entitled to expect from a responsible company that you can have confidence in.

The Code recognises that you have a right to expect that goods and services supplied will perform properly, and meet the quality standards you would reasonably expect. You have the right to complain if standards are not met.

A full list of REAL Assurance Scheme members is available on the website: www.realassurance.org.uk/search

The Code covers all these technologies

- ✓ solar power for electricity, heat and hot water
- ✓ wind and hydro power for electricity
- ✓ biomass, such as wood, for heat
- ✓ heat pumps (from all sources)
- ✓ combined heat and power (from biomass, gas or oil)
- ✓ fuel cells.

The Code is relevant to you no matter whether

- ✓ you're buying or leasing a system
- ✓ you're looking at a system using a renewable or other low carbon energy source.



The REAL Assurance Scheme was set up by the Renewable Energy Association (REA). The REA is the UK's leading trade association representing 600 members active in the renewable energy industry including electricity, heat and transport fuels.

The Code covers your contacts with the company

Pre-sales activity

- ✓ advertising and promotion
- ✓ behaviour of sales staff
- ✓ performance information and predictions
- ✓ proposals, estimates and quotes
- ✓ permission and approval

Contracts

- ✓ terms of business
- ✓ cancellation rights
- ✓ deposits and prepayments
- ✓ timetable and any preparation needed

Completing the order

- ✓ responsibility for the work
- ✓ design, delivery and installation
- ✓ testing and commissioning

After-sales activities

- ✓ guarantees
- ✓ fuel supplies
- ✓ maintenance & service agreements
- ✓ service and repair.

Some of the important provisions set out in the Code

Company sales staff must not use any high-pressure selling techniques, including:

- ✓ staying in your home for an unreasonably long time
- ✓ offering you a high initial price followed by a discount
- ✓ offering you a discount for signing on the day
- ✓ withholding price information from you until the end of the visit
- ✓ claiming that there is limited availability of a product.

Companies must give you a written estimate of how the heat or power generator will perform in an accepted format. The estimate must make clear whether it is specific to the property or based on some standard or 'average' premises instead.

Any proposal a company makes to you must give a clear description of the system being proposed and how it will work. This must also explain any 'side effects' of the system in terms of noise, heat radiation, electro-magnetic radiation, or any other effects.

Cancelling the contract

The company must give you seven working days after you have signed a contract to cancel without paying a penalty. This is the 'cooling off period'. They must explain how you can cancel the contract, and give you the name and address of the person to contact. And they must provide you with a cancellation form at the time the contract is signed.

The laws that govern the length of the 'cooling off period' differ depending on how and where the agreement takes place. If the relevant law requires a longer cooling off period, then this should take precedence over the requirements of the Code.

If at all possible you should not start to install the system during the cooling off period. If you cannot reasonably avoid this, you should be aware that there may be some adverse consequences should you later decide to cancel the contract.

If things go wrong

Companies who sign up to the Code are committed to providing you with high standards of service and expertise. We have every confidence that heat or power generating units sold or leased to you by members of this scheme will be free from problems.

Occasionally, however, problems can develop. If you need to complain about the advice given, the standard of service or any other aspect of the contract, you should use the procedure set out in the Consumer Code. You can find it at:

www.realassurance.org.uk/how-to-complain

If you are unable to resolve your problem with the company the Code offers a conciliation service and an independent arbitration scheme.

Companies are obliged to protect any money you pay them in advance of an installation, including the deposit. First, they must place it in a third party client account separate from their own funds. Second, they must register your contract with the Deposit and Advance Payment Insurance Scheme run for us by QANW, or another equivalent scheme. You can find details at www.realassurance.org.uk/consumers/insurance

