

Can an energy supplier break into my home?

News that Eon entered one customer's house to check a smart meter had not been tampered with has raised alarm bells — Ali Hussain explains your rights

Customers worried about the reach of technology may have been alarmed to hear how the energy firm Eon broke into a 67-year-old man's home after its artificial intelligence software indicated that his smart energy meter had been tampered with.

Eon instructed engineers to enter Alan Knight's house in Waterlooville, Hampshire, using a locksmith while he was at work on October 31. The company has apologised and admitted that its AI technology "needs further work" after the meter was found to be working normally.

Knight, a gas engineer, told the BBC that it was "almost like being burgled" and his experience may have raised concerns among many other customers about their rights. Here's what you need to know.

Can a supplier enter my home without my permission?

Yes, but under very specific circumstances and with a warrant from a court.

For example, a company could get a warrant if you refuse to pay your bills, rack up debts, and

do not respond to any offers of help. It can apply for a warrant to replace your energy meter with a pay-as-you-go prepayment meter that charges you based on how much you add to the meter.

However, suppliers have been criticised for their heavy-handed approach to installing prepayment meters when dealing with vulnerable customers.

In February 2023, [an investigation by The Times](#) exposed how British Gas routinely sent debt collectors to break into customers' homes to force fit prepayment meters. It prompted an investigation by the regulator Ofgem and British Gas sacked the firm it had hired to install the meters.