



Memo: Energy Costs

Dear tenants!

You have signed (or will sign) a rental agreement that does not include energy costs. These costs will be settled directly between the respective energy provider and you and your flatmates.

Recently there have been repeated problems with the energy bills within the flat-shares (Wohngemeinschaften), probably due in part to the rapidly rising energy costs. The Studentenwerk would like to help avoid these conflicts by offering the following advice:

- One or more of the flatmates are required to sign a contract with the provider, such as the Stadtwerke. The Studentenwerk suggests that this contract be signed by **all** occupants of the flat-share. This makes all occupants liable.
- One flatmate is required to open a bank account (these are not overdraft accounts!) from which the bills of the service providers are paid. This account should be kept separately and should be treated as a communal account for the members of the flat-share, from which only the energy bills are paid.
- We advise you to find a method for distributing the costs equally, right from the start. A written record of the agreement reached between the members of the flat-share, which should be binding for all occupants, helps to solve or avoid possible misunderstandings at a later point in time.
- In accordance with the agreement between the flatmates, each occupant must transfer his or her portion of the energy costs onto the communal energy account in a timely manner.
- Please note that a monthly advance payment helps to avoid billing problems!

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- Make sure to plan for monthly installment payments that are generous enough to cover the likely rising costs!
- Review the account transactions and the billing together!
- Should irregularities occur in payments and/or billing, make sure to address them early on and to reach a solution together. Changes in student life can occur unexpectedly. During such phases, payments to other flatmates are all-to-easily neglected.
- Make sure to think of a solution for the time periods in which flatmates are absent (internships, vacation)!
- If you plan to move, inform your fellow occupants well in advance and settle the energy costs accordingly. Note that you are obligated to make energy-bill payments for the complete duration of your contract, regardless of your actual moving-in and moving-out dates.
- If several members of the flat-share move out at the same time, providers such as the Stadtwerke can create a final invoice outside the normal billing period. You should inform the Stadtwerke in time and give them the current meter reading. It takes approximately two weeks to receive the final invoice.

The Studentenwerk recognizes that this method of energy billing may pose a challenge to our tenants. However, this provides you with the opportunity of governing your own energy consumption in small groups, allowing you to decide on the amount of the costs incurred. We assume that you, as responsible tenants, will find a way to meet this challenge in a collective manner.

Please be aware that you and your flatmates carry the sole responsibility for the energy bills. The Studentenwerk as your lessor is not in the position to make decisions in the case of disagreements within flat-sharing communities. We further alert you to the fact that the security deposits paid by the tenants are not at our disposal for the purpose of balancing unpaid flat-share bills.

The Studentenwerk wishes you a pleasant stay!

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