

Ridgewater Energy Customer Complaints Policy

Policy Statement

Ridgewater Energy Limited (RW) believes that if a customer wishes to make a complaint or register a concern, they should find it easy to do so.

It is our company's policy to welcome complaints and look upon them as an opportunity to learn, adapt, improve and provide better services.

This policy is intended to ensure that complaints are dealt with **promptly**, properly and that all complaints, or comments by our customers are taken seriously.

The policy is not designed to apportion blame, to consider the possibility of negligence or to provide compensation.

We believe that failure to listen to, or acknowledge complaints will lead to an escalation of problems, customer dissatisfaction and possible litigation.

We support the concept that most complaints, if dealt with early, openly and honestly, can be addressed between the complainant and the representative of the company. If this fails, due to either the representative or the complainant being dissatisfied with the result, the complaint will be escalated to Senior Management.

Aim

Our aim is to ensure that the complaints procedure is properly and effectively implemented, and that our customers feel confident that their complaints, worries and concerns are listened to and acted upon promptly and fairly.

Objectives

Our goals are to ensure that:

- Our customers, and their representatives are aware of how to complain, and that we provide an **easy-to-access** system for them to register their complaints.
- A named person will be responsible for the administration of the procedure.
- Every written complaint is acknowledged within two working days
- Investigations into written complaints are held within 28 days
- All complaints are responded to in writing
- Complaints are dealt with promptly and fairly and with due regard to the upset and worry that they can be caused to both our staff and the complainant.

Complaints can be initially addressed to: info@ridgewaterenergy.co.uk or 01202 612726 and a Company Representative will be assigned to record and carry out initial investigations into the complaint.

The named complaints manager with overall responsibility for following through on any complaints to their conclusion is:

Peter Bywater – Managing Director – 01202 612726 peter@ridgewaterenergy.co.uk

Complaints Procedure

Oral Complaints

- All oral complaints, regardless of severity, will be taken seriously. There is nothing to be gained by staff adopting a defensive or aggressive attitude.
- Front line staff who receive an oral complaint, should seek to solve the problem immediately; if possible.

Written Complaints

- When a complaint is received in writing it should be passed on to the named complaints manager, who should record it in the complaints log (Project/Service Relevant) and send an acknowledgement letter within two working days. The complaints manager will be the named person who deals with the complaint through the process.
- If necessary, further details should be obtained from the complainant. If the complaint is not made by the customer, but on the customer's behalf, then consent of the customer/service user, preferably in writing, must be obtained from the complainant.
- If the complaint raises potentially serious matters, advice should be sought from a legal advisor to the company. If legal action is taken at this stage, any investigation by the establishment under the complaints procedure should cease immediately.
- If the complainant is not prepared to have the investigation conducted by the company, he or she should be advised to contact any overseeing authority (should that apply) and be given the contact details.
- Immediately on receipt of the complaint, the company will launch an investigation and within 28 days should be in a position to provide a full explanation to the complainant, either in writing or by arranging a meeting with the individuals concerned.
- If the issues are too complex to complete the investigation within 28 days, the complainant should be informed of any delays.
- If a meeting is arranged the complainant should be advised that they may, if they wish, bring a friend or relative or a representative such as an advocate.

- At the meeting a detailed explanation of the results of the investigation should be given and also an apology if it is deemed appropriate
- Such a meeting gives the establishment the opportunity to show the complainant that the matter has been taken seriously and has been thoroughly investigated.
- After the meeting, or if the complainant does not want a meeting, a written account of the investigation should be sent to the complainant. This should include details of how to approach any overseeing authority, if the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome.
- The outcomes of the investigation and the meeting should be recorded on appropriate documentation and any shortcomings in the company's procedures should be identified and acted upon.

Company Policy on Complaints

- If staff cannot solve the problem immediately, they should investigate, liaise with Management and then potentially escalate the complaint to Senior Management.
- All contact with the complainant should be polite, courteous and sympathetic.
- At all times staff should remain calm and respectful.
- Staff should not accept blame, make excuses or blame other staff.
- If the complaint is being made on behalf of the customer by an advocate it must first be verified that the person has permission to speak for the customer. It is very easy to assume that the advocate has the right or power to act for the customer when they may not. If in doubt, it should be assumed that the customer's explicit permission is needed prior to discussing the complaint with the advocate.
- After talking the problem through, the manager or the member of staff dealing with the complaint should suggest a course of action to resolve the complaint. If this course of action is acceptable, then the member of staff should clarify the agreement with the complainant and agree a way in which the results of the complaint will be communicated to the complainant.
- If the suggested plan of action is not acceptable to the complainant, then the member of staff or manager should ask the complainant to put their complaint in writing to the company and direct them to the website where they can obtain a copy of the complaint's procedure and request a form for completion.
- In both cases, details of the complaints should be recorded on a complaints form and handed to the Manager.