

## 2-3 Gas, Water and Electricity

The first thing you need to do is to find out if you are responsible for paying your own utility bills. It is uncommon, but some landlords pay the utilities themselves and include the cost in the rent. If your landlord handles the utilities, you should find everything working when you move into your apartment. If he does not, you will need to make arrangements to get service and pay the bills by yourself. You should ask your realtor about the conditions when signing the contract for your apartment.

### Gas

There are two common types of gas used in Japan. One is natural gas (city gas or *toshi gas*), and the other is propane gas (LP gas). When you move into a new place, find out which type of gas is used and call the gas company (again, you should get the information from your realtor). At the scheduled time, the company will send an employee who will check and then activate your gas lines, for which you must be present.

If you live in Fujisawa City, City Gas (*toshi gas*) is provided by Tokyo Gas.

<https://www.tokyo-gas.co.jp/en/index.html>

Tel: 0570-00-2211 or 0466-26-0111 (for Fujisawa), Mon-Sat, 9:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. (Japanese language only)

In case of LP gas, the closest LP gas company is Kanagawa Prefecture LP Gas Society.

Tel.: 0120-244-566, Mon-Fri 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Sat 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (Japanese language only)

<http://www.kanagawalpg.or.jp/060201.html>

Please keep in mind that not using gas properly is very dangerous. If you notice the smell of gas, turn off the heat and open your windows. Please contact with the gas company immediately at any time including weekends and at night if you think there is a problem with the gas.

### Water

You will have water service the moment you move in, but you will have to call the local water company to open a billing account.

Contact your local water company office when you start using water and also if there is any trouble with the service such as not having running water. You must notify them of the date when you wish to start using water. Your realtor will give you the corresponding telephone number of the company you have to contact, but you can also find the number via the links below.

●Bureau of Waterworks, Tokyo Metropolitan Government

<http://www.waterworks.metro.tokyo.jp/eng/index.html>

●Yokohama Waterworks Bureau

<http://translate-en.city.yokohama.lg.jp/suidou/>

\*Telephone numbers may vary depending on the area you live. Please check the websites for more information.

●Fujisawa Waterworks Bureau

<http://www.pref.kanagawa.jp/div/3113/>

Tel.: 0466-27-1211 (Japanese language only)

## Electricity

There are ten different electricity companies in Japan, organized by geographic region. The largest of these companies is Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO).

If you do not have electrical power when you move in, you will need to find the apartment's circuit breaker. Turn all the switches on the breaker board to "ON," and confirm whether the electricity is being supplied or not. Once confirmed, contact your local electricity company to notify your name, address, the date of occupancy, and your customer number, which is written on the envelope placed near the breaker or the meter. In some cases there is a small card somewhere near the breaker. Fill it out with the required information and mail it back to your regional power company (the card will usually be pre-addressed). This will allow the power company to establish an account in your name and bill you monthly for the electricity.

TEPCO also offers an online service in English to open an account.

●Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) <http://www.tepco.co.jp/en/index-e.html>

\*Phone numbers vary according to your area of residence. Please check TEPCO's website for more information.



If a circuit shorts or you use more electricity than the electrical capacity of your residence, the circuit breaker will trip and your electricity supply will be cut automatically. If this happens, reduce the number of electrical appliances you are using before resetting the circuit breaker. Find out the electrical capacity of your residence and try not to use too much electricity at one time. In case of emergency or difficulties, call the electricity company using the phone number written on your electricity bill. Make sure to keep your bills and receipts for reference.

Electronics from your home country may require voltage and plug adapters. Electrical voltage in Japan is 100 volts – 50/60 Hz AC. 50 Hz is common in eastern Japan, including the Yokohama and Fujisawa area, and 60 Hz in the west. The 10 Hz frequency difference does not affect most electrical devices, but you may want to check when it comes to valuable items like computers or cameras. Japanese outlets and plugs come in the two-pronged, North American style, but only in the non-polarized form (prongs are equal sizes). Some North American plugs may require adapters because of this.

## Note on Paying Bills

After receiving a calculation notice, electricity, gas, and water bills will be sent to your home. You can pay them and other fees at convenience stores, banks, and post offices. Hand the clerk your bill and the amount due in cash and your payment will be processed. You can pay in the same way at your utility companies' offices. Please note that if you are behind in your utility payments, the service may be discontinued.

