



## **WATER WATCHDOGS**

### **A Guide to the Independent Regulators for Water**

Our “customer first” philosophy means that we take account of the needs and preferences of our customers. By constantly monitoring customers’ views and comments, we can incorporate their priorities in developing our plans. This will increase customer satisfaction with our services even further.

As our service is so essential to the life of this country, the Government has set up some independent “Watchdogs” to make sure that we’re doing our job well and to look after your interests. The Department of the Environment, Food and rural Affairs (Defra) are the lead Government department responsible for setting policy relating to water supply matters.

The Secretary of State for the Environment awarded us a licence to provide water services. As a result, many laws and regulations govern what we do and the rights that you have as a customer. The independent regulators check that we keep to the rules.

### **Water Services Regulation Authority (Ofwat)**

Ofwat is a government body and is based in Birmingham. One of its duties is to protect the interests of customers. Ofwat makes sure that we comply with the conditions of our licence including provision of this Code of Practice as part of Licence Condition G.

These include:

- A limit on our price increases
- The delivery of agreed levels of service
- A requirement to give our customers information

You also have the right to refer certain disputes about our services to Ofwat for a decision. Details are given in our leaflet “What to do if you wish to complain” which is available free of charge by telephoning **01429 858050**.

Ofwat can be contacted at:  
Centre City Tower  
7 Hill Street  
Birmingham B5 4UA  
Tel: 0121 644 7500  
Fax: 0121 644 7699  
Website: [www.ofwat.gov.uk](http://www.ofwat.gov.uk)

### **Consumer Council for Water**

The committee members are chosen from the local community to make sure that all sections of the community are represented. Their job is to keep under review any matter which may affect your interests as a customer. One of their duties is to investigate customer complaints about us. If they are unhappy with our response to a complaint, they will take the matter up on your behalf. The local office is based in Darlington.

Consumer Council for Water  
Northern Region  
8<sup>th</sup> Floor Northgate House  
St Augustines Way  
Darlington DL1 1XA

Telephone: **01325 464222**  
LoCall: **08457 089367** (local rate)  
Website: [northumbria@ccwater.org.uk](mailto:northumbria@ccwater.org.uk)

### **Environment Agency (EA)**

The EA looks after rivers, underground water, estuaries and coastal waters. They are responsible for river quality, water resources, fisheries, navigation and flood and sea defences. The EA regulates how much water we take from our underground sources. The Environment Agency is based in Bristol with a regional office in Leeds. They can be contacted at:

National Customer Contact Centre  
PO Box 544  
Rotherham S60 1BY

Tel: **08708 506 506**  
Website: [www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk)

## The Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI)

The role of the DWI is to ensure that legal standards of drinking water quality are met. The DWI checks that we comply with strict Standards for drinking water quality as set out in UK regulations; which include requirements of European Union Directives. DWI is part of the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and is based in London.

The DWI can be contacted at:  
Drinking Water Inspectorate  
55 Whitehall  
London SW1A 2EY

Tel: **020 7270 3370**  
Website: [dwi.gov.uk](http://dwi.gov.uk)

## Your Local Authority

Both Hartlepool and Stockton Borough Councils have a role in checking that we meet the legal standards for water quality. Their Environmental Health Officers can give you independent advice on water quality and can visit you to take samples. Hartlepool Borough Council can be contacted on 01429 266522 Monday – Thursday 8.30am – 5pm and Friday 8.30am to 4.30 pm or visit [www.hartlepool.gov.uk](http://www.hartlepool.gov.uk).

Stockton Borough council can be contacted on 01642 393939 Monday – Thursday 8.30am – 5pm and Friday 8.30am – 4.30pm or visit [www.stockton.gov.uk](http://www.stockton.gov.uk)

The leaflets in this series are:

- Code of Practice for Domestic and Commercial Customers – Introductory Leaflet
- Your water supply for Domestic and Commercial Customers
- Understanding charges for Domestic and Commercial Customers
- How to pay your bill (including a Code of Practice on Debt Recovery)
- Living with a Meter (including a Code of Practice on Leakage)
- How to contact us (what to do if you wish to complain)
- Pipelaying in Private Land
- Water Watchdogs
- Customer Charter

In addition, we have a leaflet which gives details of our current charges.

You can get a copy of any of our leaflets, free of charge, by ringing us on 01429 858050 Monday – Friday 8.30am to 5pm (excluding Bank Holidays). Or you can write to us or call in at our office:

3 Lancaster Road, Hartlepool, TS24 8LW

Or email: [enquiries@hartlepoolwater.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@hartlepoolwater.co.uk)

Or visit our website [www.hartlepoolwater.co.uk](http://www.hartlepoolwater.co.uk) where you can download these leaflets.

Hartlepool Water  
3 Lancaster Road  
Hartlepool TS24 8LW:

Tel: 01429 858050  
Fax: 01429 858000  
Email: [enquiries@hartlepoolwater.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@hartlepoolwater.co.uk)  
Website: [www.hartlepoolwater.co.uk](http://www.hartlepoolwater.co.uk)  
For Emergency out of hours: Freephone 0800 028 1054