



## Our Charges

Full details of all our current charges are available free of charge on request from our office. These charges are approved by the Water Services Regulation Authority (Ofwat). You can ring us on **01429 858030**, or write to us at:

Hartlepool Water  
3 Lancaster Road  
Hartlepool TS24 8LW  
Website: [www.hartlepoolwater.co.uk](http://www.hartlepoolwater.co.uk)

## Unmeasured Charges

In Hartlepool, customers who don't have a meter pay a standard charge or "Licence Fee" for water services. We abandoned the use of water charges based upon rateable value many years ago in favour of a simple Licence Fee.

## Metered Charges

Most customers with a meter pay a standing charge plus a charge for water based on the amount used, as measured by the meter.

Most of our water supply costs vary with the amount of water taken. We reflect these in our charges for the amount of water used. Other costs don't vary in that way and we recover them through standing charges. They fall into two main groups:

- the costs of reading, maintaining and replacing meters, keeping records, sending out bills and so on
- the much greater costs of keeping a supply available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, including treating the water and providing and maintaining our network of water supply mains.

If you would like to know more about having a meter installed free of charge please ring us on 01429 858050 or you can see our leaflet "Living with a Meter". Opting for a water meter can save you money on both your water and sewerage charges depending on

## Understanding Charges For Domestic and Commercial Customers

your personal circumstances especially if you are a low water user.

## Alternative Water Tariffs for Metered Household Customers

Did you know there are alternative metered tariffs available to the standard household tariff?

These are:

SoLow - this tariff has no standing charge but a higher volume charge and will benefit customers who use less than 75 cubic metres of water per year .

- **Watersure** – this tariff caps the bill at the average household charge and is available where a customer or another person residing at the premises, is in receipt of one of the following benefits:

council tax benefit; housing benefit; income support; income-based job seekers' allowance, income related employment, support allowance, working tax credit; child tax credit (except families in receipt of the family element only) or pension credits

**and**

is either entitled to receive child benefit for three or more dependent children under 19 who live at the premises

**or**

is diagnosed as suffering from any of the medical conditions listed below requiring the use of a significant additional water:

desquamation (flaky skin loss), weeping skin disease (eczema, psoriasis or varicose ulceration), incontinence, abdominal stoma or renal failure requiring dialysis at home ulcerative colitis, crohns disease or any other condition requiring significant amounts of water supported by a medical certificate.

- **Aquacare Plus** – this tariff has a higher standing charge but a lower volume charge and is available to customers who are in receipt of one of the following benefits:

Council tax benefit; housing benefit; income support; income-based job seekers' allowance, income related employment support allowance, working tax credit, child tax credit (except families in receipt of the family element only) or pension credit. This tariff will benefit those customers who use more than 75 cubic metres of water per year.

## Assessed Charges

If we cannot fit a water meter to your supply pipe for technical reasons, you may be eligible for assessed charges. We ask you to complete a simple form giving some information about your water use and you are charged accordingly. We will send you information about assessed charges if we cannot fit a meter.

If you would like more details about changing to a different tariff which may be more suited to your needs, please call us on 01429 858030.

## VAT

Value Added Tax is payable on certain charges and this is detailed on bills where it applies.

## Sewerage Charges

We collect charges for sewerage services on behalf of Northumbrian Water. These are made under Northumbrian Water's Charging Scheme who use rateable values to determine the charge if you do not have a meter. If you have a meter, your sewerage charges are also based on the volume that passes through your meter plus some standing charges. If you'd like more details about Northumbrian Water's charging policies, you can ring them on Lo-call number **0845 717 1100**.

## Surface Water Drainage Charges

your rent, please check with your landlord first.

You may be entitled to a rebate in charges if your property does not drain any of its surface water or ground water to Northumbrian Water's sewerage systems. Call us on 01429 858030 for more details and an application form.

## Why Charges are Changing

Water charges pay for the massive investment programme needed to meet the rigorous standards set by UK and European legislation. We have made significant progress but much still remains to be done. To finance this investment we may need to increase charges. If you would like to know more about how we put your money to work, please call us on 01429 858050.

The formula which limits the charges we can make for our services is laid down in the licence under which we operate. The formula is RPI + K. RPI is the rate of inflation, or Retail Price Index, in the November before the start of the charging year. K is the charging limit and is set individually for each water company by Ofwat. For Hartlepool Water, as part of Anglian Water Services, the K factors for the coming years are:

2010/11	-1.5%
2011/12	+1.6%
2012/13	+2.2%
2013/14	+1.4%
2014/15	+0.4%

We can't exceed this figure but we may choose to set our charges below RPI.

For example: RPI for 2010/11 is 0.28%. Bills in 2010/11 must not be more than (0.28% - 1.5%) on average. Individual bills may increase or decrease by more or less than this.

Our price limits will be reviewed in 2014 for the charging period 2015-2020.

## Your Bill

Water and sewerage charges are normally charged to the occupier of the property unless we have an agreement with your landlord if you are a tenant. If you think your water and sewerage charges are included in

### **For customers without a meter**

Bills are usually sent out before 1 April for the forthcoming year and you can pay in any of the following ways:

- in full on 1 April
- in two instalments on 1 April and 1 October (we'll send you a reminder for the October instalment) in 10 monthly instalments from 1 April
- in 22 fortnightly instalments from 1 April
- in 44 weekly instalments from 1 April

### **For customers with a meter**

Industrial customers who use large quantities of water are billed monthly. For all other customers bills are sent out every three months for commercial customers and every six months for domestic customers. Bills are produced from Company meter readings in most cases. We only use estimated readings where access to the meter is restricted. Payment is due within 21 days of the date on the bill. We will send you a bill within seven days of reading your meter or estimating your reading. Domestic customers can also opt to pay by our budget plan scheme on a weekly, fortnightly or monthly basis.

If we need to estimate your bill, we will look at your consumption history and make our best estimate based on this. You can also read the meter yourself if you receive an estimated bill. We accept customer readings by phone, by post or email and will reissue your bill if a customer read is received within 10 days of issuing your bill. For more information on how to read your meter, our leaflet "Living with a Meter" is available by ringing **01429 858050** or via our website [www.hartlepoolwater.co.uk](http://www.hartlepoolwater.co.uk)

Full details of payment methods are provided on the back of your bill. If you need help and advice to find the best payment option for you, please call us on 01429 858030.

### **Moving House**

If you are moving house, please give us at least two working days' notice. You can

telephone us on 01429 858030 or write to us or email us. If you don't you may have to pay charges after you have left the property. If you pay metered charges we will read your meter on the day you move, as long as you give us two days' notice or we will accept your own reading when you move if you are able to read your meter yourself.

- When you tell us you are moving into a house and it is charged on an unmetered basis, we aim to send you a first bill within ten working days.
- When you tell us you are moving out of a house and it is charged on an unmetered basis, we aim to send you a final bill or refund within ten working days.
- When you tell us you are moving into a house and it is charged on a metered basis, we will send you a first bill within seven working days of the next routine meter reading being taken.
- When you tell us you are moving out of a house and it is charged on a metered basis, we aim to send you a final bill within ten working days of a final meter reading being obtained.

### **Questions about your Bill**

If you don't understand your bill, or have any questions you'd like to ask, please either ring us on 01429 858030 or write to us. Our office is open from 8.30 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. Monday to Friday.

If you have a query about the accuracy of your bill we will try to deal with this over the telephone or by letter or email. Our guarantee is that we will resolve your query within 10 working days otherwise we will compensate you. Similarly, if you ask us to change your payment arrangement, we guarantee to respond to you within 5 working days otherwise we will compensate you. More details of our promises to you can be found in our "Customer Charter" leaflet as part of this series.

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