



Understanding Charges For Domestic and Commercial Customers

Our Charges

Full details of all our current charges are available free of charge on request from our office. 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

Unmeasured Charges

Customers who don't have a meter pay a standard charge for water services. These charges are approved by the Office of Water Services (Ofwat).

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.

Alternative Water Tariffs for Metered Household Customers

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

These are:

- **SoLow** – will benefit customers who use less than 80 cubic metres of water per year.
- **Watersure** – 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, 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 16 who live at the premises

or

is diagnosed as suffering from, and is receiving treatment for 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

- **Aquacare Plus** – 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, 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 100 cubic metres of water per year.

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'd like more details you can ring them on Lo-call number **0845 717 1100**.

Surface Water Drainage Charges

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 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 factor is 2.5% for 2008/09, 2.7% for 2009/10. We can't exceed this figure but we may choose to set out charges below RPI.

For example: if RPI is 1.5% the average increase must not be more than $1.5\% + 2\%$

for 2008/09 but individual bills may increase by more or less than this.

Our price limits will be reviewed in 2009 for the charging period 2010-2015.

Your Bill

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. 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

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. 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.

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)
- Code of Practice for Pipelaying in Private Land
- Water watchdogs

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 858007. Or you can write to us or call in at our office:

3 Lancaster Road, Hartlepool, TS24 8LW
email: enquiries@hartlepoolwater.co.uk