

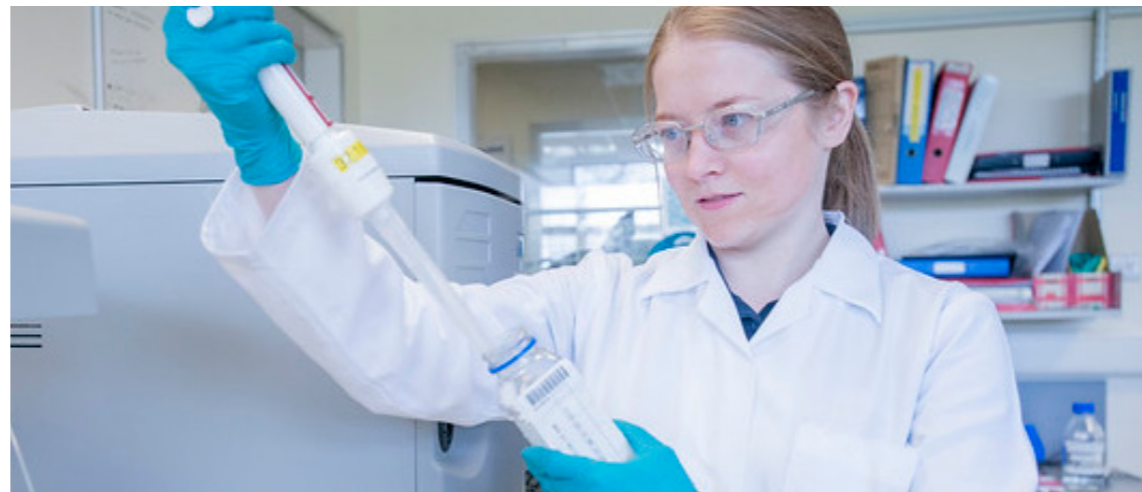


# Our promises

Our Code of Practice for household customers



**Scottish Water**  
Trusted to serve Scotland





# Our promises

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Decisions in Scottish Water are made with customers and communities in mind, and this document will help you understand the promises we make to household customers. This includes detail about what you can expect from our service standards, how we will compensate you if we fail to keep any of our promises and also how we will engage with and listen to you. We have developed a number of customer principles to help ensure your experience of our services is positive. We are working to continually improve our customer service so these promises will be regularly reviewed and updated as our service develops further.

All of our staff are familiar with the promises we make to you and will always be aware of the impact of the work they are doing.

### We promise:

- to provide a reliable water supply to your home
- to supply safe, clean, great tasting drinking water
- to minimise the risk of flooding to your home or garden with waste water
- to engage in active, two-way relationships with our customers and communities
- to deliver our service in a sustainable way that protects the environment
- that we are always here for you so you can contact us, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- to explain what you can expect when we fall short of our promises.



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Our promise to supply safe, clean, great tasting drinking water



Our promise to minimise the risk of flooding to your home or garden with waste water



Our promise to engage in active, two-way relationships with our customers and communities



Our promise to deliver our service in a sustainable way that protects the environment



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## Our promise to deliver a reliable water supply to your home



**This is what we are here to do. Most of us do not ever think about water until it's not there.**

### When we know we have to turn your water off

In order to take care of the water supply in your community, sometimes we may need to turn off your supply to carry out essential maintenance on our pipes. We always try to minimise disruption but if we expect this work to last longer than 4 hours, we will give you at least 48 hours notice to let you know when the water will be off. We may send you a letter and use local radio and social media to let people know too. If this doesn't happen you may be entitled to claim some money from us.

### When something goes wrong

Unfortunately, every so often things can go wrong. We have a huge network of assets – pipes and treatment works that could experience a problem, or burst, at any time. Our teams work round the clock and we will always try to fix any issue as quickly as possible so you are not left without water for too long. When something like this happens we always aim to get your water back on or provide you with alternative supplies within 12 hours of us learning about the issue. If we fail to do this, you may be entitled to claim some money back from us.

If you experience two or more interruptions to your water supply in the year, due to issues on our network we are aware of and not related to any planned maintenance work we are carrying out (such as making a complex repair to a burst water main), you can claim at least a 25% rebate of the water charge you have paid for the year, up to a maximum of 100%.

Sometimes a large number of customers are affected by an issue. In these circumstances we promise to keep you updated via our website and social media channels, rather than in person. Depending on the situation, we may use leaflets, local radio, TV or even loud hailers in your street. If the issue is not going to be fixed within 24 hours we promise to provide an alternative water supply. If you have a disability or medical condition or any other reason for additional support, you can register your details on our free, confidential Priority Services Register (PSR). You can find out more about the PSR at [www.scottishwater.co.uk/support](http://www.scottishwater.co.uk/support)

### Alternative water supplies

We are often able to keep your water flowing by redirecting water from somewhere else in our network or use water tankers to keep your water flowing while a repair is carried out. This means many customers may not notice any interruption at all. Sometimes in larger incidents, we may need to provide customers with a limited supply of bottled water for essential purposes.

### How do we calculate the timescales?

The clock starts ticking once we're aware of an interruption to supply and have all the relevant information to arrange our attendance. This could be from a phone call, email or message on social media. The clock stops ticking once we provide access to water, normally when the supply is restored to your cold water kitchen tap. This may be just a trickle initially (depending on where your property is on the network) and it may be discoloured, however it will return to normal. In the rare event where we can't restore your supply, we'll provide a limited supply of bottled water.

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### Water Pressure

We aim to provide at least 1.0 bar of pressure at the point of connection or stopcock (which is normally found at the boundary of your property). If there are no issues with any of your pipework, this level of pressure should provide enough flow to fill a 1 litre bottle with water from the cold water kitchen tap in around 7 seconds.

If you think your water pressure has changed, or is too low, just get in touch and we will explain why (there may be an issue or burst pipe nearby) or we will come out and investigate it for you if required. If it turns out the pressure at your boundary is too low or high, and it is not caused by an issue that can be fixed, we can discuss what we can do to help and we'll also add you to our low pressure register if your property qualifies for it.

If you report a water pressure issue not related to work we are carrying out on the network and we fail to get back to you within 5 working days following investigation, you may receive a service standard payment.





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## Our promise to supply safe, clean, great tasting drinking water



Supplying safe, clean, great tasting drinking water

We constantly sample and test our water at reservoirs, treatment works and at customers' taps to make sure it meets the standard set by the **Drinking Water Quality Regulator for Scotland**, so you can trust that your water is always safe to drink and use. If you ever find your water has an unusual taste, smell or colour, let us know straight away and we'll look into it. You can find more information about water quality, including taste and odour issues on our website.

Information about what we do in our treatment process to make your drinking water safe and a postcode search of water quality in your area is also available on our website.

Very occasionally we may have to let you know your water cannot be used safely. In these instances, we always work to provide you with an alternative supply. If we fail to do this, you may be able to claim a service standard payment. If the restriction lasts more than seven days, again, you may be entitled to a service standard payment.

### Lead pipes

Lead pipes can cause issues with the quality of the water coming out of your tap. We have more information about lead pipes and the potential harm they cause, on our website. If you think you might have lead pipes, get in touch with us and we can arrange a visit to your home to carry out a test.

If we discover you have any lead in your water supply, we will advise you on what you should do. If the lead is coming from pipework belonging to us, we commit to replacing this within 28 days after our investigations. For full details on our Lead Replacement process, check out our lead pipe replacement booklet.

### Connecting to our network

If you require a water or waste water connection, you are required to submit a formal application and any supporting designs and details of consultations with relevant bodies. You can find out more information about our connection process on our website. If all the required information is submitted and approved, we will provide you with approval and a quotation to connect within 28 days. If there is any reason we are unable to provide a connection, we will clearly explain the reasons why.

If following approval, there is evidence we have caused a delay in connecting you, you may be able to claim a rebate of your physical connection fee. The payment is £30 per day where it is up to and including a 32mm outside diameter pipe or £150 per day where the pipe is greater than 32mm outside diameter. Payments are up to a maximum of 100% of the connection charge. Please note this rebate does not include other charges such as application, infrastructure and inspection fees.

**Information**  
We provide useful information, when you need it, in simple language





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## Our promise to minimise the risk of flooding your home or garden with waste water



Our promise to minimise the risk of flooding your home or garden with waste water

Occasionally, sewers can block and cause flooding – they may collapse, overflow because of heavy rain, or they might block due to the wrong items being flushed down the loo or put down the sink.

If the worst happens and waste water from our sewers enters your home we promise to send someone out to you, normally within 4 hours, although in the event of extreme weather conditions this time may vary. When we arrive, we will investigate what has caused the issue and let you know what we find out. Usually we recommend you claim on your household insurance policy to cover any losses, because the claim is often processed more quickly and legal liability, or responsibility, does not need to be proved.

If you suffer waste water flooding from our sewers within your property, following our investigation, you may receive a payment equal to your total waste water charge unless the flood was caused by extreme weather conditions or your own actions (such as inappropriate items flushed down the toilet or drain).



If your property has been identified as being at risk of internal flooding, and added to our internal flooding register, you will receive a letter with an annual offer of a payment of your waste water charge while your property remains on our register.

If you are flooded externally from waste water from our sewers within the boundary of your property and it affects access to your property or destroys your land, you may be able to claim a service standard payment.

Our flooding payments offered to customers are the equivalent of at least a waste water charge band D rate.

**Resolution**  
If things go wrong, we work to make them right





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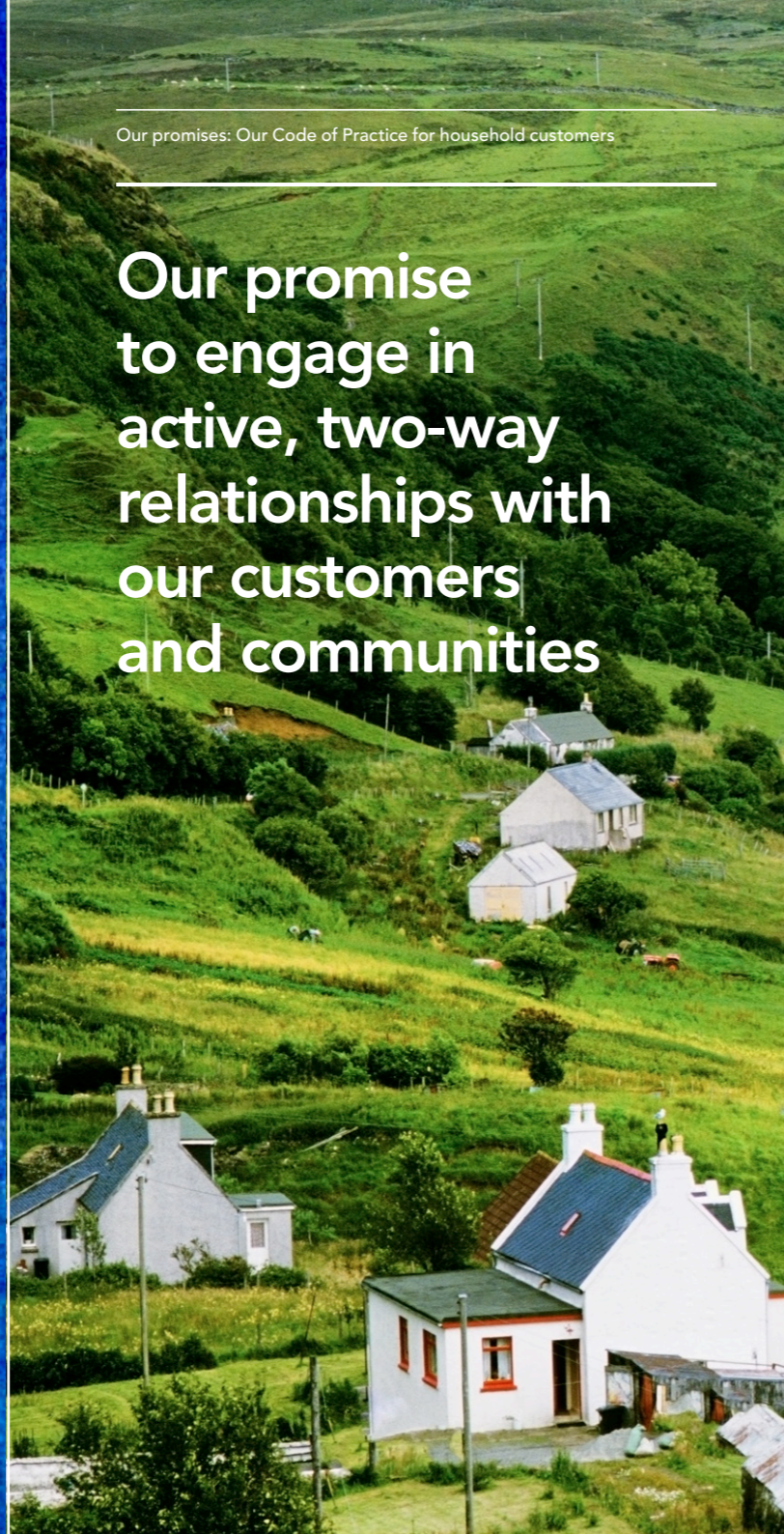
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# Our promise to engage in active, two-way relationships with our customers and communities



Engaging in active, two-way relationships with our customers and communities

We are committed to continuing to build relationships with our customers and communities, making them active and two-way. We have a statutory duty to consider the views of customers affected by any investment work we carry out. By embracing jointly working with you, we believe we will create a better place to live and work.

We hope that by constantly improving our stakeholder and community engagement and beginning conversations earlier, communities are empowered and can influence our decision making by incorporating their thoughts, concerns and ideas.

Our projects are reviewed whilst they are being planned to assess whether there are opportunities to involve and empower customer and communities in their development. For example, in cases where the work we will be carrying out has very little impact on an area or your experience of our services, we will inform customers and the wider community before we start work. Where our work could have a bigger impact, or where there are difficult decisions to be made, we may take more of a collaborative approach, involving customers and communities in supporting us to decide the right way forward.

Whenever we engage with customers we will:

- Be clear on the purpose of the engagement
- Be clear as to what customers can influence, how they can get involved, and what they cannot influence
- Use ways of engaging with customers and communities that reflect their needs and the type of project



- Make it easy for customers and communities to participate if they wish to
- Be transparent about how decisions have been made

We carry out annual reviews of our investment programme looking at examples of where customer and community feedback has influenced how we work, ensuring that lessons learned are shared across the organisation.

Extracts of these are published annually.



**Representation**  
We seek and take into account your feedback and views in all that we do



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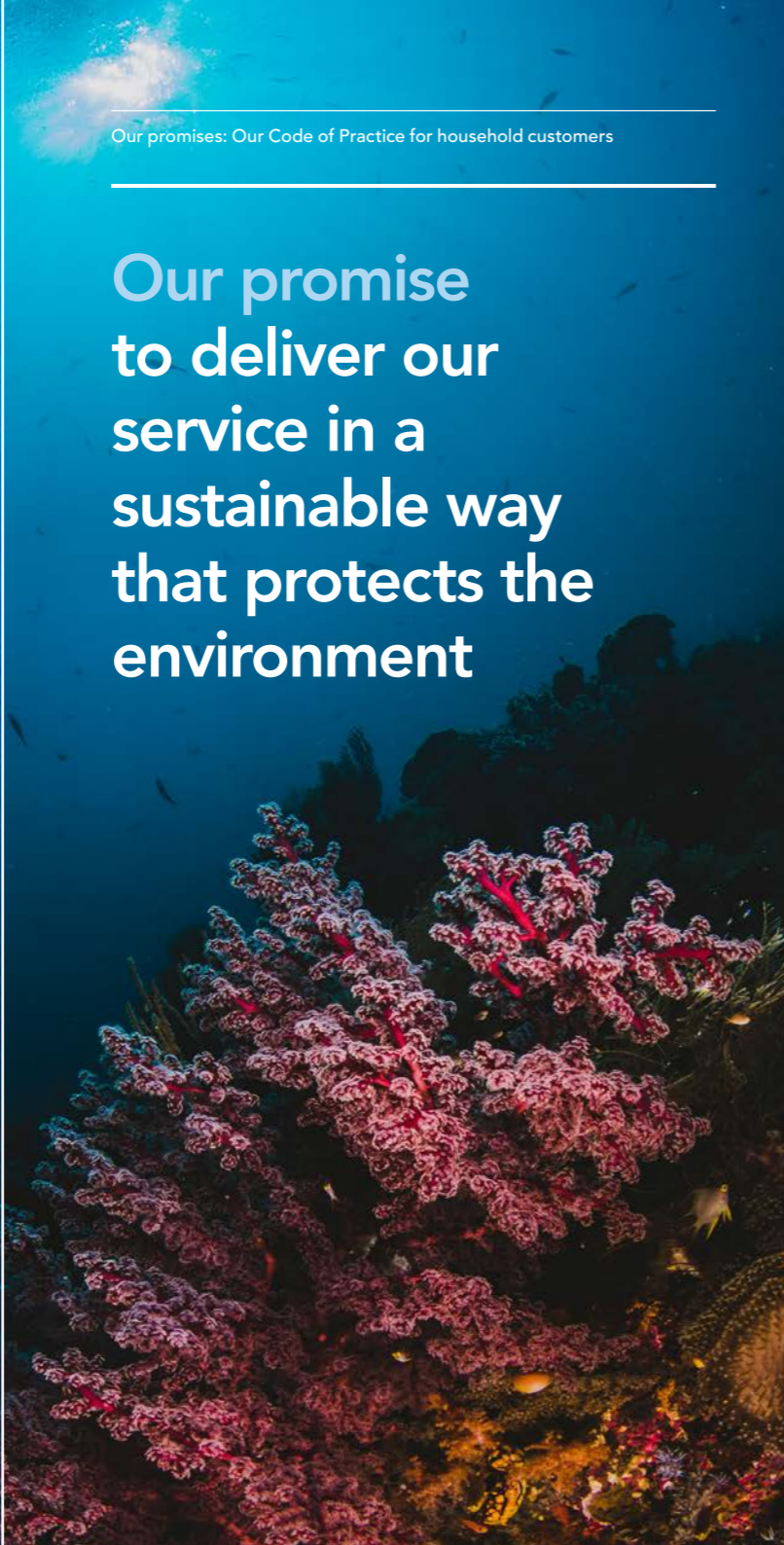
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## Our promise to deliver our service in a sustainable way that protects the environment



Delivering our service in a sustainable way that protects the environment

Climate change is the biggest issue of our generation, and there has been a huge change in public attitude towards its future impact on the environment in which we live. We have made a commitment to get to net zero emissions by 2040, and beyond, by eliminating all emissions associated with our activities – whilst delivering excellent service and great value to our customers.

We are also investing heavily in our assets to ensure they meet the demands of a changing world, and support the delivery of a reliable service to all of our customers.



**Accessibility**  
We ensure our services and people are accessible to all our customers and communities



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## Our promise that we are always here for you so you can contact us, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week



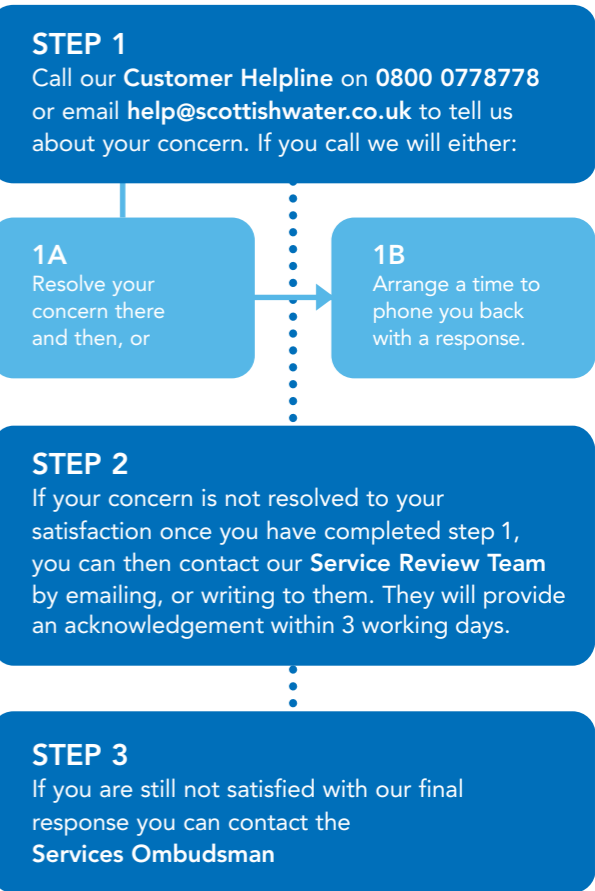
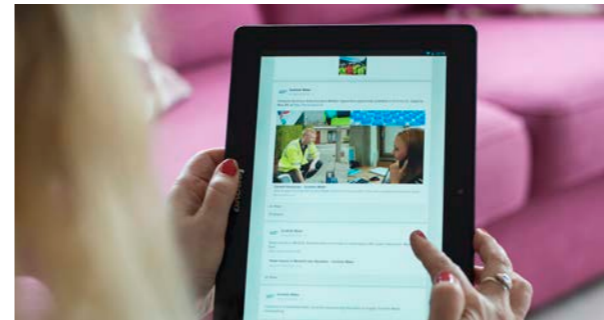
We are always here for you so you can contact us, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

We are always here for you. You can call, use social media or write to us, any time of the day, any day of the year. You can use our website to find out about any current issues on our network which might be affecting you, or you can contact us directly.

Sometimes we will make an appointment to come to your home to investigate your issue. We promise to attend within the agreed time slot, and if we don't, we may provide a service standard payment. If, for any reason, we do need to reschedule, we will only do so with your agreement.

### Our complaints process

If we haven't resolved an issue to your satisfaction and you feel you need to formally complain about our service as per step 2 of our service review process, we will respond to acknowledge receipt of your complaint and assign a Service Review Manager to you within 3 working days. They will then conduct a full review of the service you have received from Scottish Water and advise you on their findings and any appropriate action.





The Service Review Team can be contacted by emailing: [customer.concerns@scottishwater.co.uk](mailto:customer.concerns@scottishwater.co.uk)


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## Our promise to explain what you can expect when we fall short of our promises



We are fully committed to providing a great service to all of our customers, however there are times when things can go wrong. Our service standards are in place to compensate you if we fall short of our promises. Some of these standards are paid automatically and for others you may need to make a claim. It's important to remember you must do this within 3 months of the incident occurring. For claims made for multiple events, such as repeat water supply interruptions, they must all have occurred within the same financial year (April to March), and any rebates are made to a maximum of 100% of the charges you have paid for the year.

For automatic payments, you will receive a payment within 10 working days, once we have received the required information. If you do not receive our payment within this timescale, we will pay you a further £30.

If you think you may be eligible for a payment, you can raise a request on our website at [www.scottishwater.co.uk/ourpromises](http://www.scottishwater.co.uk/ourpromises) or contact us directly.



Sometimes there are circumstances we cannot control, such as the actions of others, such as a third party. In these circumstances we cannot guarantee our promises. However, we will clearly explain to you our reasons why.

**Fairness**  
We treat our customers fairly and with respect





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Standard	Covering text	Amount	Payment type
<b>Appointments</b>	If you book an appointment and our representative does not turn up at the agreed time, you may receive a service standard payment.	£30	Automatic
<b>Unplanned interruption</b>	<p>If your water supply is interrupted for more than 12 hours due to an unplanned interruption you may be able to claim for a service standard payment.</p> <p>If you report at least 2 interruptions we are aware of in the same financial year, caused by a failure in the network that isn't related to work we are carrying out (such as making a complex repair to a burst water main), you may be able to claim for a rebate of at least 25% of your water charge. Following a water supply interruption where a repair is required, no payment is due if we are required to isolate the supply to complete the repair.</p>	<p>£30 for the first 12 hours and then £15 for each further 12 hours without water, up to a maximum of £90. We start our clock ticking the minute we are notified of the issue, and stop it when water is coming out of your kitchen tap or we provide you with a limited supply of bottled water.</p> <p>Rebate of 25% of your annual water charges for the first 2 interruptions and 25% for each subsequent interruptions, to a maximum of 100% of the water charges you have paid, minus any discounts you may receive.</p>	Claimed
<b>Planned interruption</b>	If we turn off your water supply to carry out essential planned work which is scheduled to last more than 4 hours and we don't give you at least 48 hours notice, or the interruption exceeds 12 hours you may be able to claim for a service standard payment.	£30 for non notification and/or £30 for each 12 hours without water.	Claimed
<b>Response to a complaint</b>	We hope you never have to, but if you submit a formal complaint after we have tried to fix your issue, as per stage 1 of our complaints process, and we fail to provide an acknowledgement within 3 working days, you may receive a service standard payment.	£30	Automatic
<b>Priority Services Register</b>	If you request to join our Priority Services Register and we fail to add you within 5 working days of receiving your request, you may receive a service standard payment.	£30	Automatic

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Standard	Covering text	Amount	Payment type
<b>Water quality</b>	If we issue a 'Do not use' water notice due to a water quality issue and do not provide alternative supply, you may be able to claim a service standard. If the notice is in place for more than 7 days, you may also be able to claim a service standard payment.	£30 for a failure to provide alternative supplies.  £30 for where a 'Do not use' water notice is in place for more than 7 days.	Claimed
<b>Pressure</b>	If you report a water pressure issue not related to work we are carrying out on the network and we fail to get back to you within 5 working days following investigation, you may receive a service standard payment.  If your property is placed on our low pressure register due to ongoing pressure issues, we'll be in touch for you to claim the water charges you have paid for the year.	£30  Rebate of the annual water charges you have paid.	Automatic
<b>Connections</b>	If you request a water connection and if there is evidence we have caused a delay in connecting you, you may be able to claim a service standard payment.	£30 a day if it is up to and including a 32mm outside diameter pipe (refund up to 100% of the physical connection fee you have paid).  £150 a day if it is greater than 32mm outside diameter pipe (refund 100% of the physical connection fee you have paid).  * Please note this refund does not include other charges such as application, infrastructure and inspection fees.	Claimed
<b>Lead replacement</b>	If you request a lead replacement of our pipework and we fail to complete this within 28 days after our initial investigations (not including factors outwith our control such as traffic management) you may be able to claim a service standard payment.	£30	Claimed

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Standard	Covering text	Amount	Payment type
<b>Internal flooding</b>	<p>If you suffer waste water flooding from our sewers within your home due to a failure in our network (not including extreme weather or inappropriate items in the sewers) you may receive a service standard payment.</p> <p>If your property is at a high risk of internal flooding due to overloaded sewers, and is added to our internal flooding register, we will offer to refund the waste water charges you have paid for the year. (minimum payment of Band D rate).</p>	<p>Payment equal to your yearly waste water charge per incident (minimum payment of Band D rate).</p> <p>Rebate of the annual water charges you have paid (minimum payment of Band D rate, minus any discounts you may receive).</p>	Automatic
<b>External flooding</b>	<p>If you are flooded externally from waste water from our sewers within the boundary of your property and it affects access to your property or destroys your land, you may be able to claim a service standard.</p>	<p>Rebate of 50% per incident of your annual waste water charges up to a maximum of 100% (minimum payment of Band D rate, minus any discounts you may receive).</p>	Claimed

- Water and waste water charges are paid through your Local Council and they are calculated based on your house banding.
- We have a register to work out known properties that are at risk from internal flooding or low pressure. We only use this register to identify customers that are eligible for a payment against these measures.
- For other payments relating to water or waste water charges we need a copy of your council tax bill and customers are only entitled to a maximum of one payment of water and/or waste water charges in any financial year. Payments are based on the charges you have paid, and subject to any reductions you may receive.
- The service standards and payments covered in this document are for household customers only.





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### The Scottish Government Scottish Government Ministers

Phone 0300 244 4000

[www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)

#### Ministers:

- own us and report to Parliament on our activities;
- set up the legal framework we work to;
- set our aims;
- set out what charges are based on;
- provide us with funding; and
- consider some types of appeal.



### The Drinking Water Quality Regulator for Scotland (DWQR)

Phone: 0131 244 0190

[www.dwqr.scot](http://www.dwqr.scot)

#### The regulator:

- is an independent body appointed by Scottish Government Ministers to monitor the quality of drinking water;
- makes sure we keep to our drinking water quality standards;
- inspects and assesses our water treatment works;
- inspects and assesses our sampling and analysis procedures; and
- sets improvement targets for water quality.



### The Water Industry Commission for Scotland

Phone: 01786 430 200

[wics.scot](http://wics.scot)

#### The Commission:

- promotes the interests of customers;
- sets our charge limits at the lowest level possible;
- approves our Code of Practice;
- reports on our performance each year; and
- helps encourage competition in the water industry.



### Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO)

Phone: 0800 377 7330

[www.spsso.org.uk](http://www.spsso.org.uk)

#### The Ombudsman:

- investigates complaints which have not been satisfactorily sorted out;
- publishes reports and promotes the interests of customers;
- may make recommendations to Government Ministers, the Scottish Government, Scottish Water, the Water Industry Commission, Scottish Environment Protection Agency or the Drinking Water Quality Regulator; and
- is independent of us and the industry regulators.



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## Consumer Scotland

Luchd-Cleachdaidh Alba

### Consumer Scotland

[consumer.scot](http://consumer.scot)

#### Consumer Scotland:

- is the statutory body for consumers in Scotland. Established by the Consumer Scotland Act 2020, they are accountable to the Scottish Parliament;
- represents the interests of consumers within Scotland's water industry;
- enhances understanding and awareness of consumer issues in the water industry;
- by strengthening the evidence base through consumer research and analysis;
- serves the needs and aspirations of current and future water consumers by inspiring and influencing the water industry;
- enables the active participation of consumers in a fairer economy by improving access to information and support;
- seeks to address the challenges faced by consumers in relation to the cost of living and climate change, and for those in vulnerable circumstances.



### The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)

Phone: 0800 80 70 60 Pollution Hotline

Phone: 0345 988 1188 Floodline

[www.sepa.org.uk](http://www.sepa.org.uk)

#### The Scottish Environment Protection Agency:

- sets standards for and monitors waste water and other discharges into streams, rivers, estuaries and the sea;
- regulates new water schemes;
- keeps records of river flows and warns of possible floods from rivers.



## We want to make it easy to contact us – here's how:

We always have someone here to take your call, you can write to us or alternatively you can contact us through our website.

### Visit

 [www.scottishwater.co.uk](http://www.scottishwater.co.uk)

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### Email


 [help@scottishwater.co.uk](mailto:help@scottishwater.co.uk)

### Call

Customer Helpline free 24/7

 0800 0778778

### Write

 Scottish Water  
Fairmilehead Office  
55 Buckstone Terrace  
Edinburgh  
EH10 6XH

Alternative formats of this leaflet can be made available free of charge. For information on Braille, large print, audio and a variety of languages, please contact us.

If you have a disability, medical condition or other reason where you may need additional assistance from Scottish Water then please contact us and we can add your name, address and requirements to our confidential Priority Services Register.

We record all calls for quality and training purposes.

