

Household water charges

Charges for mua Water customers
within the Northumbrian Water
network area

2024-25

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Introduction

We are mua Water, the independent water and wastewater services company operating in your area. We own and operate water, gas and electricity networks nationwide.

This document explains your water and wastewater charges from 1 April 2024 until 31 March 2025. These charges apply to households in areas served by Northumbrian Water, which includes Northumberland, Tyne and Wear, Durham and parts of North Yorkshire, and also Essex and Suffolk (and where the bulk services come from Northumbrian Water).

If you are a new customer, we're delighted to welcome you to our growing base of water customers, and we look forward to bringing you the benefits and fresh approach that an independent operator provides.

About our household charges

As a mua Water customer, you will not pay any more for your water than if you were being supplied by your local water and sewerage provider. We have different charges depending on where you live, mirroring the charges you would pay with the local suppliers.

All of our customers are metered, which means all of our charges are based on the volume that your household uses. All new properties in England are charged in this way. Our charges are structured as follows:

- Clean water – we charge for the costs of supplying clean drinking water to your property. We base this on the volume of water your household uses, plus a fixed charge covering the cost of billing, reading the meter and maintaining the meter.
- Wastewater – we charge for the costs of removing, treating and/or disposing of the used water from your property. This is also based on the volume of water your household uses. For most customers, we assume that the volume of 'water in' is the same as the volume of 'water out', meaning 100% of the water you use will be returned to the public sewer. We apply standing charges for foul sewage, highway drainage and surface water drainage.

We calculate all standing charges daily based on the annual amounts set out in our schedule of charges.

We will send you a bill every six months. This will either be based on a meter read or on an estimate of how much water your household has used. We aim to read your meter at least once a year. If you receive an estimated bill, you can submit a correct meter read through [your online account](#).

If there is a change in regulation or service provision from the region's incumbent supplier, we reserve the right to adjust our charges during the charging year. We may also make changes to your charges if our services have changed or you have been incorrectly billed.

If you believe you may be exempt from the surface water drainage charge, you should contact us on 0333 009 5219 or by email at billing@muawater.co.uk. You will need to provide evidence to us that none of the surface water from your property drains into our assets.

If you use a large amount of water that will not be returned to the sewer, for example, watering a garden, you can apply for a reduction in sewerage charges. To do this, you'll need to provide evidence, such as using a sub meter.

Other tariffs – WaterSure

If you receive benefits and need to use a lot of water for medical reasons or because your household has three or more school-age children, you could be eligible for our WaterSure tariff.

The scheme enables us to cap your water bill, meaning you will not pay any more than the average metered bill in your area.

You must meet the criteria in two areas to qualify for the tariff.

Firstly, you or any member of your household receive any of the following benefits or tax credits:

- Housing Benefit
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (except families in receipt of the family element only)
- Working Tax Credit
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Universal Credit

Secondly, you need to either:

- Be responsible for, and receive Child Benefit for, three or more children under the age of 19 living at the property, or
- Have (or someone living in the property must have) a medical condition that requires significant additional use of water. Examples of medical conditions include:
 - Desquamation (flaky skin disease)
 - Weeping skin disease (eczema, psoriasis, varicose ulceration)
 - Incontinence
 - Abdominal stoma
 - Crohn's disease
 - Ulcerative colitis
 - Renal failure requiring home dialysis (except where the health authority contributes to the cost of the water used in dialysis)
 - Any other medical condition that uses significant volumes of water and can be supported by a doctor's certificate.

If you think you may qualify for this tariff, you can call us on 0333 009 5219. If you need help with the form or the evidence, just let us know.

Who pays the bill?

You are responsible for the water and sewerage charges if:

- You are the owner of the property
- You have sufficient control over the property to owe a duty of care towards those who come lawfully onto the premises
- You own or maintain property, furnished or otherwise, ready for occupation, letting, sale or commercial use.

The occupier is liable for charges applied to every connected water and sewage service point where we provide a service. If more than one person shares a property, everyone is responsible,

even if the bill is only in the name of one occupier. All occupiers are jointly and severally liable, meaning that we can recover our charges from any one or all occupiers.

If two premises are supplied by one meter, the occupiers of each of the premises supplied through that meter shall be jointly and severally liable for the whole of the charges calculated by reference to the water passing through that meter.

We apply charges when a supply of water is made available for your property, regardless of whether or not you use the supply, whether the wastewater from your property drains either directly or indirectly into a public sewer, or whether it benefits from any facilities that drain into a public sewer. This includes surface water drainage.

Unless we agree otherwise, charges remain payable when your premises are empty. If the property is empty due to death, long-term hospitalisation or care, we may waive all or part of the charges on request. If we find that the premises are occupied, we will levy full charges back to the last known date of occupation and may charge you a fee as shown in the schedule of charges.

If you're a tenant, you are responsible for paying the bill, unless your landlord has made another agreement with us. If there is no such agreement or we have not received written confirmation from the landlord that they are responsible for the bill, you will be responsible for paying the bill. In some cases, we will hold you and the landlord jointly responsible. This happens if the landlord has failed to provide us with the information that we need.

How to pay your bill

The easiest way to pay your bill is by direct debit from your bank or building society. You can set up a regular monthly payment and choose your payment date.

You can set up a direct debit through your online account and we'll take care of the rest.

Alternatively, you can also pay your bills by:

- standing order
- debit or credit card
- bank transfer
- cash or cheque at your bank or building society
- BACS or CHAPS

If you want to discuss which payment method and frequency is best for you, please contact our Customer Service team on 0333 009 5219 or by email at billing@muawater.co.uk.

Help paying your bill

We understand that managing your household bills can sometimes be difficult – and we're here to help.

If you are having difficulty paying your bills, please contact us as soon as possible so that we can explore options to help you avoid getting into further arrears. Wherever possible, we'll look to offer flexible payment options that suit your individual needs.

You can speak to our Customer Service team on 0333 009 5219 or by email at billing@muawater.co.uk.

If you receive Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance, Pension Credit, Universal Credit or Employment and Support Allowances (ESA) from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP),

you may be able to arrange to make payments directly from your benefits under the WaterDirect scheme. This only applies if you are in arrears with your water bill. Please contact DWP for more details and make sure you let us know.

If you are granted an Order for Bankruptcy which encompasses a water and sewerage charge debt, the debt will be limited to the charges that are outstanding at the date of the Order for Bankruptcy, including any charges accrued on a daily basis. Any charges that accrue from the day after the Order for Bankruptcy shall be due as if the property had been newly occupied on that day.

If you fall into arrears and we incur costs in securing payment from you, we reserve the right to recover those costs and interest on the outstanding debt. Our debt code of practice contains more information about what to do if you're struggling to pay and the process we use to collect unpaid bills. You can find this information on our website or you can call us on 0330 009 5219 if you want us to send it to you.

Commercial and mixed-use premises

If you are a commercial customer, this charges statement does not apply to you.

Charges may be made by agreement by our commercial retail partner, rather than by this charges scheme, and are subject to approval by Ofwat and Ofwat's customer protection code of practice. For more information about commercial charges and your option to switch supplier, please visit our website.

Mixed-use premises are used partly as a person's home and partly for business purposes, and receive a single supply of water. The household charges in this document will only apply if the property is primarily used as a home. If the property is used primarily as a business, then your retail provider's tariffs will apply to you as if the whole of the property was non-domestic.

VAT

We will apply VAT to our charges where we are legally required to do, according to HMRC legislation. There is currently no VAT on domestic water and wastewater charges. VAT may apply to work such as meter testing.

About your meter

Your water meter will normally be in the pavement outside your property boundary. If you live in a flat, the meter may be in a different place. For example, in the communal area outside your flat or the stairwell.

If you suspect your meter is faulty, you can contact us on 0800 011 4193 to ask for a meter test. If the meter is confirmed to be faulty, we will replace the meter for you at no cost. We will also adjust your charges from the point when the meter was known to have become faulty. If this is not known, we'll adjust your charges from the last but one bill or, if we think that consumption is not likely to be accurate, we'll use an estimate based on reliable records of your past consumption.

If the test finds that the meter is operating within statutory tolerance limits, we will charge you the cost of the test, replacing the meter and our administration costs up to a maximum of £70 plus VAT for household meters. If you are not happy with the outcome of a meter test, you can ask us to refer the dispute to an independent arbiter.

If you suspect a leak

We're responsible for the water pipes up to your external stop tap. If you have a leak inside your home or on the pipe between your home and the external stop tap, you'll need to contact an approved WaterSafe plumber to fix it.

A leak on your property could increase your water bill. If you fix it within four weeks of being made aware of it, we may be able to cover the cost of the lost water with a leak allowance.

You can find more information about how to claim a leak allowance in our leakage code of practice on our website.

Moving home

We know moving home is a busy time. If we provide water or wastewater services to your new home, please contact us with an opening meter read as soon as you can. You set up an online account at myaccount.muawater.co.uk to submit a reading, view your bills and make payments.

If you are moving out of the property, please make sure to give us at least two working days' notice so we can provide your final bill.

If you don't give us this notice, you will be liable for charges until whichever of the following happens first:

- The new occupier contacts us
- The twenty-eighth day after we are informed
- The date on which the meter would normally have been read.

Once we have the correct data, we'll issue you with your final bill. If there is a credit on the account, we'll provide a refund. If we don't receive a final meter read from you, we will use an estimated meter reading to calculate your final bill.

If a customer moves out of a property without notifying us and a new customer moves in without notifying us, we will take a meter reading to calculate the average daily usage and use this to estimate the amount owed by the new customer since they moved in.

We will backdate the bill as required, and as within our legal rights, if there is a delay in identifying a new customer.

Contacting us

If you want to speak to us about your bills, you can call us on 0333 009 5219 or billing@muawater.co.uk. Our team is available Monday to Friday between 8am and 7pm, and on Saturdays between 8am and 1pm.

For all other enquiries, you can reach our team on 0800 011 4193 or by email at support@muagroup.co.uk.

If you have a complaint

We want to deliver great service to our customers and put things right as quickly as possible if we get it wrong. If we haven't provided the high quality of service you expect, please let us know.

If you've got a complaint about billing, please contact us by phone or email at:

- 0333 009 5219
- billing@muawater.co.uk

If you've got a complaint about anything else, you can get in touch with us by phone or email at:

- 0800 011 4193
- support@muagroup.co.uk

We will respond to any complaints within five working days. Our customer code of practice contains more details about how we address complaints. It's available on our website or you can call us if you want us to send it to you.

If we have fully reviewed your complaint and you are still not satisfied, you can ask the Consumer Council for Water (CCW) to review your case. The CCW is an independent organisation, which helps consumers resolve complaints against water and sewerage companies in England and Wales:

- ccw.org.uk
- enquiries@ccwater.org.uk
- 0300 034 2222 (England) or 0300 034 3333 (Wales)

If your complaint remains unresolved after CCW has fully reviewed it, you may be eligible to refer your complaint to the Water Industry Redress Scheme (WATRS) for an independent binding decision:

- watrs.org
- info@watrs.org
- 020 7520 3801

Our regulators

mua Water is a regulated company operating in England and Wales. Our regulators are:

- Ofwat
- Consumer Council for Water (CCW)
- Defra
- Drinking Water Inspectorate
- Environment Agency

Ofwat regulates our charges, which must be no more than you would pay if you were served by the local provider. We also send our draft charges statements to CCW for review each year.

We have legal obligations to issue a Charging Scheme each year, and the legislation also sets out how we can charge our customers.

Schedule of household charges

The charges set out below apply to our operating areas in:

- Albert Street, Hebburn

Household measured water charges

These charges apply to all the operating areas listed above.

Household measured water charge	Units	Charge
Water volumetric charge	£ per cubic metre	£1.3920
Water standing charge (0-24mm meter size)	£ per year	£50.26

Wastewater charges

These charges apply to all the operating areas listed above.

Household measured water charge	Units	Charge
Sewerage volumetric charge	£ per cubic metre	£ 1.0767
Sewerage standing charge (includes surface water drainage)	£ per year	£100.47
Surface water drainage charge	£ per year	£64.62

WaterSure tariff

WaterSure charges	Units	Charge
Water supply	Capped charge, £ per year	£ 173.31
Sewerage services	Capped charge, £ per year	£187.70

Schedule of household charges



Sundry charges – water meter testing

Water meter testing charges	Units	Charge
Where the water meter accuracy is outside the prescribed limits of the Meter Regulations	£	No charge
Where the water meter accuracy is within the prescribed limits of the Meter Regulations	£	£70