

Keeping up to date and getting in touch

We are always working so the cycle never stops – find out more about Scottish Water, our services and keep up to date with what we are doing in your area:

Visit

 www.scottishwater.co.uk

Follow us

 facebook.com/scottishwater

 [@scottish_water](https://twitter.com/scottish_water)

Email

 customer.services@scottishwater.co.uk

Call

 Customer Helpline free 24/7
0800 0778778

Text (SMS)

 To receive free texts (SMS)* to keep up to date about our work or service updates, such as having no water supply, in your area – please text **'Update' with your postcode to 82228**.

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 call our Customer Helpline.

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 Additional Support Register.

We record all calls for quality and training purposes.

* For more info and T&Cs visit www.scottishwater.co.uk/textterms



Our promises to you

Code of practice

Our promises to you

Code of practice

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What Scottish Water does for you

At Scottish Water we believe in quality. That's why every day we work to provide you with clear, fresh water and with waste water services around the clock.

Our customers are at the heart of everything we do. We aim to deliver on our promises and do what we say, when we say we will do it.

This booklet contains essential information about Scottish Water and our commitments to you. It outlines:

- who we are
- what services we offer you
- the service standards we promise to meet
- advice on contacting us with queries, requests and complaints



We take our responsibilities seriously:

- to safeguard the health of everyone in our communities
- to ensure the highest level of customer experience
- to take care of the natural resource of Scotland's water and the environment
- to take your views in to account where we can and to keep in touch with you whether as individuals or community groups
- to be as efficient as we can and invest in our services wisely

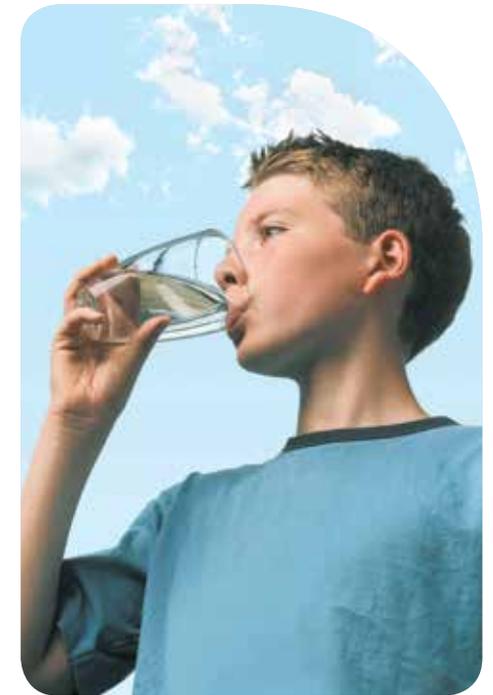
We welcome any contact you make with us whether face to face, over the phone, by letter, email or social media. We will endeavour to seek your opinion on our plans and projects, either from you or through the organisations that represent you.

We promise to work in partnership with you – our customers – to continually look for ways to improve our services and the way we do business. We are particularly keen to increase the choices we offer you in the ways we keep you updated and how you can contact us.

Delivering services to you

What exactly does Scottish Water do?

We supply quality drinking water to the people of Scotland. We also remove and treat waste water from your home and surface water from roads. We work to strict standards so that you can be sure the water we return to Scotland's rivers and coastal waters does not damage the environment. We treat trade effluent from commercial and industrial premises to standards set to protect the environment and we provide a service to de-sludge private septic tanks.



Keeping you safe

How you know it's us at the door

We are committed to helping reduce crimes carried out by people impersonating Scottish Water workers.

We are doing everything possible to minimise the risk of anyone impersonating our employees. Anyone calling on behalf of Scottish Water will always carry an identification card with a photograph. They will usually drive vehicles clearly marked with our logo.

Our employees will not ask for, or accept, any money from you at your home.

We recommend that when you answer the door to anyone claiming to be from Scottish Water, that you follow our 'Three C's' rule:

CARD, CHECK, CALL

1 Card

You can ask callers to pass their ID card or letter through the letter box in order to check their identity.

2 Check

Check the identity card carefully:

- Is the photo on the card the same as the person at the door?
- Does the ID card or letter contain the Scottish Water Customer Helpline number?
- Has the card been tampered with in any way?

If you are not confident that they are a genuine caller, then send them away!

3 Call

If you are in any doubt about the caller's identity please call our **Customer Helpline** on **0800 0778778**. We advise you to contact Scottish Water by using phone numbers found in telephone directories or the internet, but not from ID cards or letters, because these could be false. If you are still suspicious contact a neighbour or call the police.

Don't be fooled by bogus callers! If you are in any doubt, the caller should not be allowed access.



If you have a complaint

If you have a complaint about Scottish Water we promise to respond by the times set in our Service Standards (see pages 19 to 26) and do our best to resolve the issue to your satisfaction. Full details of how to contact us can be found at the back of this booklet but please contact our **Customer Helpline** on **0800 0778778** in the first instance.

Through contacting us by phone we can start to resolve your concerns sooner. We aim to deal with your telephone contact there and then. If we cannot do this we will ring you back. In the event that your concern is not resolved to your satisfaction you can contact our **Service Review Team** by email on **customer.concerns@scottishwater.co.uk** or write to **Service Review Team**, Scottish Water, PO Box 8855, Edinburgh, EH10 6YQ.

We will offer you a written response. For those instances where we need to investigate your complaint, we will respond within 5 working days. It may reassure you to know that we keep a record of all written complaints.

Compensation and goodwill payments

If we have caused damage and you want to claim financial losses

You may be able to claim compensation if we have damaged your property, possessions, land or crops while carrying out our activities, whether that be laying a pipe or doing repairs. If we've made mistakes or caused you inconvenience we may be able to offer you a goodwill payment which does not affect your legal rights and doesn't mean that we accept legal liability. We often use third party claims handlers to manage formal third party claims.

Please contact our **Customer Helpline** on **0800 0778778** if you would like to learn more.

How you can be sure the water is safe

Water for your home

Where does the water in my tap come from?

We collect raw water from lochs, rivers and boreholes and treat it at our treatment works to make sure it is clean and safe for you to drink when you turn on the tap. The average customer in Scotland uses around 150 litres of tap water every day and it's our job to treat every drop of it.

There is usually enough of the raw untreated water but occasionally (during long, dry spells, for instance) we may struggle to keep supplying this volume of water and may ask you to use less. Very occasionally, we have to introduce a hosepipe ban to ensure that a level of supply can continue to be provided to all our customers and during these events you will be kept fully informed.

Water quality

How do I know my water is safe to drink?

You can be confident that your water is safe to drink because we are regularly checking the quality to ensure it meets the required standards. Sometimes we will ask if we can take a sample from your tap for routine testing. All of our representatives carry photographic identification. Over 99% of these samples pass all of our tests. If your water has been sampled as part of this programme then your individual property results are available on request from our Public Health team.

Drinking water in the UK is subject to some of the tightest regulations in the world and Scottish Water must comply with stringent regulatory standards.

If water quality in an area repeatedly falls short of these standards we agree to a plan of improvements with the Scottish Government and the Drinking Water Quality Regulator (DWQR). You are free to contact the DWQR yourself. You can write to them, email or visit their website:

**Drinking Water Quality Regulator for Scotland
Area 1-D South, Victoria Quay
Edinburgh EH6 6QQ**

Email: regulator@dwqr.org.uk
Website: www.dwqr.org.uk

Water sampling

Can I have my water quality checked?

You can ask us to check the quality of your tap water. After we have taken a sample, the full range of tests can take 10 to 14 days to complete. However, if you let us know in advance, we can provide you with initial test results 5 days after the sample was taken. If we discover any cause for concern, we promise to let you know as soon as possible (within 48 hours). We will send you a full written response.

Only on rare occasions do water samples fail to meet high standards. If there is a serious problem, we may advise you not to use your tap water or to boil it first. If we tell you not to use it, we will provide you with an alternative supply.

If there is a serious problem with the water quality, we must notify the local health board, the Local Council and the DWQR as soon as possible.

What to do about low water pressure

Water pressure

What if my water pressure is low?

Before you install a shower or a pressurised hot water system, you will need to check your water pressure to make sure it is sufficient for these appliances.

We aim to provide your water at a pressure of at least 1 bar at the boundary of your property. This level of pressure should allow you to fill a bucket with 10 litres of water in around one minute. If you think your pressure is lower than 1 bar, please contact us and we will investigate.

Leaking pipes can reduce pressure, damage property and allow bacteria to enter into the water supply. If you're responsible for a leaking pipe, you must fix it as soon as you can. If you see a water leak in the street please report it to our **Customer Helpline** on **0800 0778778** and we will investigate it.

We operate a low pressure register and have procedures in place to identify properties at risk of low pressure so that we can restore the correct water pressure. We are continually working to ensure everyone has adequate water pressure in their homes.



Your pipework responsibilities

Who's responsible for water pipes

If a pipe bursts in or around your home, you will need to know what is your responsibility and what is the responsibility of Scottish Water. The diagram below shows an example of the pipework found in a typical street that will apply to most customers' properties.

There are many more complex arrangements and pipe connections than we show in the diagram. Further information about your pipework responsibility can be found at: www.scottishwater.co.uk/responsibility

You are responsible for the maintenance and repair of water pipes within the boundary of your property. However if you have a problem with your supply pipe there are things that we can do to help resolve the problem as quickly as possible. This also benefits the environment by minimising leakage.

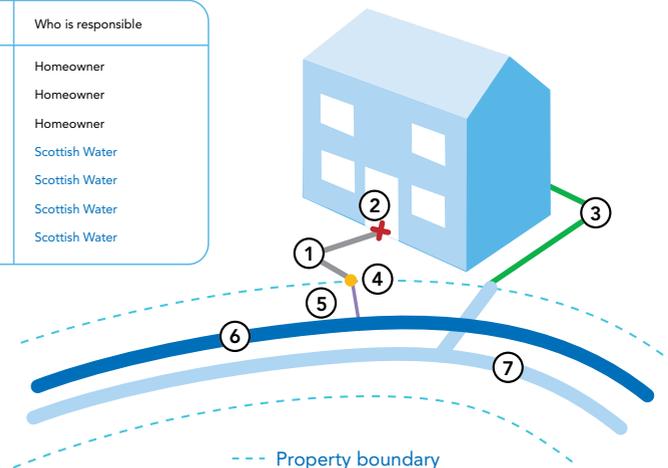
For more details on how we can help you with your supply pipes or to clarify questions on your responsibility, visit our website at www.scottishwater.co.uk or call our **Customer Helpline** on **0800 0778778** and we can advise you or send you our leaflet.

Here are some guidelines to help you with a plumbing problem:

- use a registered plumber. You can find one by phoning Scottish and Northern Ireland Plumbing Employers' Federation (SNIPEF) on **0845 224 0391** or visit the website www.watersafe.org.uk
- get a quote in advance and don't pay for any work until you are satisfied
- check your house insurance – it may cover the repair

This shows a typical property

Water and waste water pipes		Who is responsible
①	— The water supply pipe	Homeowner
②	✗ Stop valve	Homeowner
③	— Private drain	Homeowner
④	● Stopcock/meter	Scottish Water
⑤	— The communication pipe	Scottish Water
⑥	— The water main	Scottish Water
⑦	— Sewer	Scottish Water



What you should do about lead pipes

Protecting your water supply

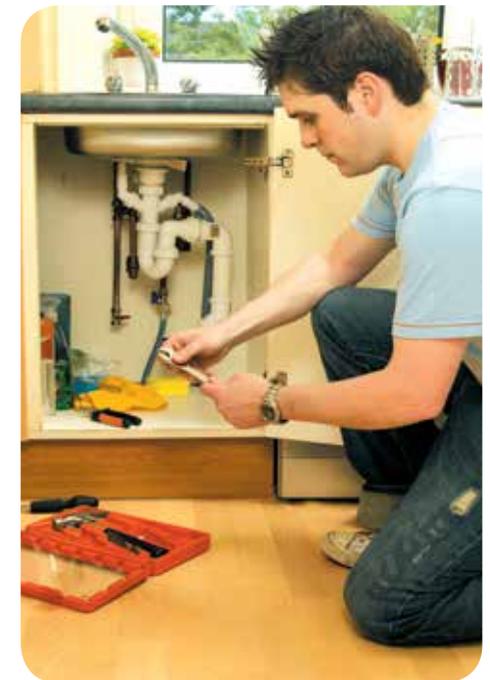
What to do about lead pipes

The use of lead service pipes was phased out during the 1960's and officially became illegal in 1969 as they can cause problems with water quality. Modern service pipes are made of blue plastic.

Exposure to significant quantities of lead can be harmful to health especially for unborn babies and young children. For this reason it is important that lead levels in drinking water are kept down to the lowest levels, particularly for those at special risk.

Older buildings are more likely to have lead plumbing. We will replace our part of any lead pipe when you are replacing pipework that is your responsibility. As a matter of course we replace any of our own lead pipes when we do major works on water mains. Your Local Council may be able to advise you on applying for a grant to help you replace any lead pipes. If you would like us to check if our communication pipe is lead, please call our **Customer Helpline** on **0800 0778778** to arrange an appointment.

We ask you to let us know if you intend to alter your existing plumbing or install new plumbing into your property so that it can be checked by one of our representatives to make sure it meets with Water Byelaw standards. These byelaws protect the public water supply against the risk of contamination by waste or other substances. You can get a copy of the current Water Byelaws and arrange for a property check by calling our **Customer Helpline** on **0800 0778778** and ask to speak to the Water Byelaws team or email byelaws@scottishwater.co.uk.



All about drains and sewers

Taking waste water from your home

What you get for the waste water charge you pay

The waste water charge covers the following Scottish Water services:

- removing sewage and waste water from homes (everything you flush away or pour down the sink)
- collecting rainwater from roofs, roads and public areas
- getting it to the waste water treatment works (through the sewers)
- treating it to remove and destroy harmful substances
- safely returning the water to rivers, lochs and coastal waters

It also helps to pay for new and upgraded treatment works to take care of the environment.

Every year there are over 40,000 blocked drains and sewers across Scotland. This can cause flooding, especially during periods of heavy rain, which affects you and your neighbours and pollutes rivers and burns in your local area. That's why we spend millions every year tackling the problems caused by waste. Around 80% of these blockages that clog up the cycle are caused by either inappropriate items being put down the toilet, or fat, oil and grease being put down the sink.

We believe the best way to tackle blocked drains and sewer flooding is to work together with you to help prevent blockages that can clog up the cycle in the first place.

What you can do to keep the sewers free from blockages

The waste water drain which runs from your house to the public sewer is usually about 4 inches wide, which is less than the diameter of a DVD. This drain is designed to only take the used water from sinks, showers and baths and pee, poo and toilet paper from the toilet. Even though other things may seem to flush or pour away, they could be causing your drains to block.

Here are some things that should never be flushed down the toilet or poured down your kitchen sink:

- all wipes (baby, personal cleansing, toilet and household cleaning) – even if the pack says 'flushable';
- sanitary items (sanitary towels, tampons, liners, applicators and backing strips);
- cotton wool, cotton buds, disposable nappies and nappy liners;
- condoms, incontinence pads, colostomy bags, used bandages and contact lenses.
- Fat, oil and grease – leave to cool and then scrape into a sealable container and put it in the bin.

* Please check with your local Council/waste contractor for information on how to dispose of used fat, oil and grease.

What you can do if a sewer is blocked

We respond to blockages as quickly as possible, unless we agree with you that it isn't urgent. Please call our **Customer Helpline** on **0800 0778778**.

If the problem is in your private drains, we'll advise you to call a registered plumber to clear them. If you ask us to clear them, we may then charge you. If you think there is a risk of flooding, we'll do all we can to help until a plumber arrives.

Who to call if your property is at risk of flooding

Call our **Customer Helpline** on **0800 0778778**.

In the event of flooding from our sewers, we will do all we can to assist. Scottish Water will work hand in hand with the local Council, emergency services, utility companies, the Scottish Government and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) if necessary.

Who monitors Scottish Water's waste water treatment works

SEPA sets the standards that we work to in our waste water treatment works. We closely monitor how our treatment works perform and SEPA also carries out regular checks.

We understand the nuisance that smells and noise from these treatment works can cause to nearby residents and we do our best to prevent them. We promise to respond promptly to any reported problems and will investigate all complaints. Where it is appropriate, we will develop an odour management plan in conjunction with the Local Council Environmental Health team.

To report a problem with smells or noise from our treatment works contact our **Customer Helpline** on **0800 0778778**.



Connecting a new property to the main

Connecting your home or household site

If you are building a new home or developing a new site, we would ask you to contact us as early as possible in the planning process so that we can give you the best advice possible and confirm the feasibility of your development for both water and waste water connections.

To submit an enquiry to our business team you must complete our Pre-Development Enquiry form, and provide as much information as possible.

On many occasions we will advise that the development can proceed. If further investigation is required through a Water or Drainage Impact Assessment, we can provide a quote for this service or you can source this service via an accredited consultant.

Getting a water connection

If you require a water connection, you must submit a formal application and any supporting designs and details of consultations with relevant bodies. If all information is provided and approved, we will provide you with approval and a quotation to connect within 28 days. Once you make all payments, and have laid any required pipe work, we ask that you call us to arrange a track inspection and one of our advisors will visit your site.

We aim to complete your connection within 14 days of the preparatory work being completed. This relates to the preparation of a suitable track for laying the pipe. Once complete we ask customers to call us on **0800 389 0379**, so that we can have an advisor check this track for compliance. We request that you provide us with 5 days working notice when contacting us to request these visits.

Getting a waste water connection

If you need a waste water connection, we would ask you to send a formal application to us with any supporting information. On receipt, we will either send you a request for further information if needed, or we will send you an approval along with a quotation of charges for the connection. There are two elements to the quotation; the infrastructure charges and the inspection charges. The infrastructure charges relate to when you physically connect your property to our sewer network and use it to discharge wastewater from the premises. This is a statutory charge and the cost is used to maintain, repair or replace our infrastructure. The inspection charges relate to a visit from one of our Field Service Advisors to inspect and ensure the connection has been completed correctly. However, should you require more information please refer to our scheme of charges, which can be found on our website.

We will assess your application in accordance with current standards and specifications for connection and if all is as it should be, we will issue a permit to you for connection of both your waste water drainage and your surface water drainage. Your permit will be valid for 6 months.

It will be your responsibility to ensure that a competent contractor carries out a supervised connection on your behalf. We will be happy to provide advice on how to manage this process, and request that you advise us of the contractor employed to carry out the waste water connection.

When your contractor is ready to complete your connection, and has laid all drainage pipework, please call us on **0800 389 0379** so that we can have an advisor check your pipework.

More detail on our quotes

When we provide a quote (for water only) following receipt of a fully completed application form with supporting information, it will contain our costs for the following key elements:

- water only connection charge
- water and waste water drainage infrastructure charge
- building water charges
- inspection charge

Looking after your septic tank

Your septic tank service

We offer a range of septic tank de-sludging services. These services are available to household and business customers (business customers should contact their Licensed Provider to arrange this service) who own a private septic tank which takes standard waste, such as sewage and waste water. There are 3 levels of service that are available to all septic tank owners in Scotland:

- scheduled service
- unscheduled service
- urgent response service

We can send a tanker to de-sludge your septic tank. We can do this by responding as quickly as possible to your request or by making an arrangement to do it regularly if you sign up for our Scheduled Service.

Further details regarding our costs can be obtained through our Scheme of Charges leaflet, which is reviewed annually.

We want to support the sustainable development of Scotland and will work with you to get you connected as easily and quickly as possible.

To get connected to the public water supply and the waste water system, please call our **Customer Helpline** on **0800 0778778** and we will be able to provide you with copies of all application forms.

Further information, leaflets and application forms are also available on our website at: **www.scottishwater.co.uk/connections**

We need to make sure that there is sufficient access to your septic tank because our tankers are large vehicles — up to 44 tonnes in weight, 15 metres long, 2.5 metres wide and 3.3 metres high. The layout of your property needs to be such that the tanker can gain proper safe access. We also ask that the tank is well-maintained and has been regularly de-sludged in the past.

If you decide to make an arrangement with us to have your septic tank de-sludged at regular intervals, you will avoid the worry of potential flooding or pollution problems.

You can find out more about our septic tank services and get an information pack with our terms and conditions by calling our **Customer Helpline** on **0800 0778778**.

What we are doing about climate change

Our services and the environment

What is Scottish Water doing about climate change?

A sustainable water environment is vital in enabling us to provide our water and waste water services to customers. We take the issue of climate change very seriously, both in terms of the impact of climate change on our environment and services we provide, as well as the greenhouse gas emissions we produce. Rainfall patterns are changing and we are working with our regulators and other bodies to ensure we address climate change on behalf of our customers.

The supply of water and waste water services requires a great deal of energy, and we are developing robust carbon management tools to help reduce our carbon footprint. We are working with regulators, Government and suppliers to agree emission reduction targets and a practical means of achieving this.

We are committed to striking the right balance between the needs of our customers and the protection of the environment. In this, we work closely with SEPA and land developers to connect new developments without putting unacceptable burdens on the environment.

We are also constantly embracing new technologies to deliver services as efficiently as we can. In doing this we aim to strike the right balance between reducing carbon emissions and our energy consumption and giving you a good service.

We have a dedicated team working across Scotland to find and fix leaks. Reducing leakage plays a key role in conserving water and protecting this natural resource. It also ensures that we continue to deliver the best possible service to our customers.

We are happy to offer advice to anyone wishing to use water more efficiently. This can range from providing you with simple tips and advice to help you use water wisely in and around your home, to having a meter installed.

Further information can be found on our website at:

www.scottishwater.co.uk/savewater

How we are reducing leakage

Our leakage teams quickly identify and repair leaks across Scotland. This active approach, combined with a fast response time, reduces leakage and helps to deliver improvements in the level of service that we provide for you.

We aim to:

- fix leaks reported by you within 7 days
- fix leaks that we have identified within 7 days
- work with customers to help complete private water supply pipe repairs

All about water meters

Thinking about a water meter

You may be thinking about how much water you use and what you could do to save water in your home and garden. We are keen to encourage everyone to use water wisely and help you become more water efficient.

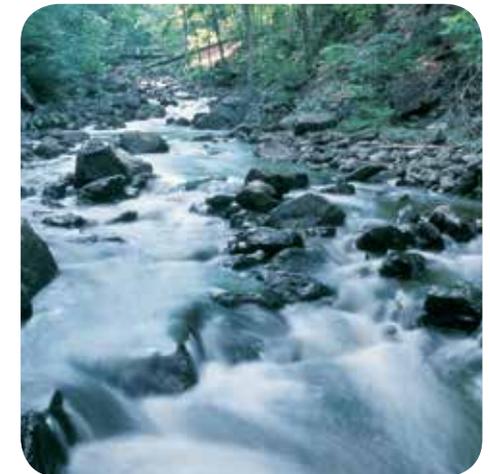
Most domestic properties in Scotland are charged based on their Council Tax band and do not have a water meter.

However, for those small number of homes which do have a water meter, it will track the amount of water that you use, and your metered water and waste water bills incorporate charges based on the volumes of water used. If you decide to apply for a water meter, we will provide a standard meter at our expense and this meter shall remain the property of Scottish Water. All other costs involved in creating the space for the meter to be installed must be met by the property owner. If you don't own the property then you must have the owner's permission to get a meter installed. These costs will include a survey charge and any installation charges. The survey will determine the size and preferred location of the meter. Normally the meter will be installed externally at the boundary of the premises. Where this isn't possible, the meter shall be installed in a location that allows meter reading in a safe environment with minimal risk of damage to the water meter.

For example, if the meter freezes, this can result in a loss of water supply and cost for you. You can help to protect your water meter as well as your property from cold weather by ensuring that the water meter and pipes inside your property are adequately insulated.

If the meter installed on the water supply to your property is damaged and needs replaced, then you, as the homeowner, or the property owner/landlord, will have to pay the actual cost of replacing the meter if the damage was caused by anyone other than Scottish Water, a representative working on our behalf, or by frost.

The amount you will pay for meter installation costs will depend on the size of the meter and the type of installation required. Standard costs are detailed in the current Schedule of Rates which you can view on our website. Please note that VAT is added to survey and installation charges. Standard installation costs of water meters may be subject to change should any additional work be required.



Keeping you in the picture

Working with you

How do I arrange for someone to visit and investigate my concerns?

If your call is to report that you have no water or to tell us that you've seen water running from the ground, we may not need to arrange an appointment with you, unless you specifically request one. In these cases, we will give you a timescale for attending and then let you know the outcome.

If your call is about water quality or water pressure then it is likely that we'll need to talk to you face to face, or gain access to your property. In this case, we'll arrange for someone to come out at a time that's convenient for you. We can specify a 2 hour time slot during normal working hours.

When it is unplanned

In the event of an unplanned interruption to your water supply, we may not always be able to warn you in advance that your water is going to be cut off. However, you can call our **Customer Helpline on 0800 0778778** and we'll provide an update. Current service updates are also available on our website and Twitter and Facebook pages. If we expect a long interruption, we'll tell you about alternative water supplies.

If there's a problem with your water quality and we have to advise you to stop using the water or to restrict your use, we'll let you know in person or by writing to you. If many properties in the same area are affected, we'll use loudhailers in the street as well as the media and our website to let you know. We will always tell you when your water supply is back to normal.

When it is planned

How will you let me know if you have to turn off my water supply?

In the event of work that we plan to do, we'll usually write to you in advance to warn you of any disruption. We always aim to minimise any disruption to your water supply. If we must do lengthy and disruptive work, we'll give you as much notice as we can that your water supply is likely to be affected. In this case, we'll issue leaflets or letters explaining what we are doing and why we have to do it.

What if you need access to my land?

If we need access to your land we'll always try to contact you in advance, either face to face or in writing. If we need to lay a new water main or sewer, we'll give you a legal notice in plenty of time so you can consider our proposals. However, some instances are urgent (when a water main has burst, for instance) and we may not be able to contact you in advance, but we will still do our best to let you know. If we haven't been able to contact you beforehand, we will let you know what we have done and why, as quickly as we can. If we caused any damage, we'll tell you how this will be rectified and how you can claim compensation (see page 26 for more information about compensation and goodwill payments).

We promise to speak to Local Councils and community groups to explain the benefits of any new work we plan to do for the area and discuss how best to minimise disruption.

Scottish Water do have powers of entry to premises under the Water (Scotland) Act 1980 as your water services provider. This means we have the right to gain access to your premises when essential duties need to be carried out. Examples of an essential duty could be to examine a meter, to check for Water Byelaw contraventions or carry out essential work. We have the right to do this at all reasonable hours if we give you 24 hours notice.

You can find out exactly where our water mains and sewers are located by looking at the records we keep in our main offices. You can also see the results of any water samples we have taken from our customers' taps. If you want to do this, please call our **Customer Helpline on 0800 0778778**.

How will you keep me informed about investment projects in my area?

We promise to inform and listen to all communities most likely to be affected by our work and agree with our customers and community representatives how we can minimise any disruption our work may cause.

Our 'keeping you in the picture' booklet outlines our commitments to keeping you informed during investment work and can be found on our website. Alternatively, you can call our Customer Helpline on **0800 0778778** to request a copy.



What we charge you

Our charges

How do I find out about Scottish Water's charges?

If your property is connected to the public water supply then you will pay water charges. If your property is connected to the public sewer for either waste water or property drainage then you will pay waste water charges. If you need more information about what type of connection you have please call our **Customer Helpline** on **0800 0778778**.

If you are a household customer without a water meter, you will pay for your water and waste water services through your Council Tax bill. What you pay will be based on the Council Tax banding of your house. Your Local Council collects these charges on our behalf. Details of how to pay can be found on your Council Tax bill.

If you have a water meter, you will receive a combined water and waste water invoice every quarter from Scottish Water. You can pay your invoice in one of the following ways (there will be information about this on the back of your invoice):

- by Direct Debit
- at a bank
- by Girobank Account
- at a Post Office
- by post
- by credit or debit card
- by BACS transfer
- via the 'pay a bill' section on our website

You can also arrange to set up an instalment plan. If you are having difficulty paying your bill, we will do our best to help you. The sooner you let us know the better – please call the number on the back of the invoice or contact our **Customer Helpline** on **0800 0778778**.

As a public organisation, our charges are our main source of income and are set at a rate that ensures we can provide you with the vital water and waste water services you require. Our charges are effective from the beginning of each financial year – 1st April and apply until 31st March the following year.

What we charge you has to be approved first by the Water Industry Commission for Scotland (WICS) and you can get full details of all our charges by contacting our **Customer Helpline** on **0800 0778778** or by visiting www.scottishwater.co.uk.



Our service standards

Can I claim compensation if you don't keep your promises?

Our continuing high investment levels and our focus on customer service means we are confident we can keep our promises and consistently put customer service at the heart of everything we do. We are so confident that we give you a guarantee through our service standards. We promise to pay you compensation if we don't meet these standards. The following pages detail how much and how you can claim if we let you down.

For some standards, we will make an automatic offer of a payment and for other standards, like planned or unplanned interruptions we ask customers to make a claim directly.

We believe that you should only pay for services you receive so for some standards where we don't meet our promise to provide a minimum level of service under normal operating conditions, you can apply to receive an appropriate payment of up to 100% of your water or waste water charges.

Where we ask you to make a claim, you must do this within 3 months of the incident. You can find details of how to make a claim on page 26 of this booklet.

Are there times when you don't offer compensation?

Sometimes there are circumstances that we cannot control, such as severe weather. This may include unusually low temperatures which are not seasonally typical. It may also include high winds, severe snow or heavy rain, each of which may have the potential to cause danger to life or widespread disruption. Additionally, we cannot control industrial action or the actions of others. In these circumstances we cannot guarantee the above promises. However, we will clearly explain to you our reasons why.

What follows is a guide to the service standards you can expect.

Our promises to you

our service standards

If your water goes off

We understand how distressing it is if your water supply is suddenly interrupted and we promise to make every effort to restore your service as soon as possible. You can expect us to work within certain service standards. If this happens please call our **Customer Helpline** on **0800 0778778** for assistance.

The problem may turn out to be with pipes in or around your property that may be your responsibility, but please call us anyway if you are unsure and we can advise you on who is responsible.

What if my water supply is interrupted unexpectedly?

We will restore your supply within 12 hours from the time we find out about it. If a large water main serving a large area (called a strategic main) causes the problem, we will restore the water supply within 48 hours of us finding out about it. If we don't meet these timescales, you can claim £30 and a further £15 for each additional 12 hour period without water.

If you report 2 interruptions in the same financial year, caused by a failure in the network that isn't related to work we are carrying out, you can apply to claim a payment of 25% of your annual water charges. If you experience and report subsequent interruptions within the same financial year, you can claim a further 25% for each of those subsequent interruptions, to a maximum of 100% of your water charges.

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 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.

Water getting into gas systems

If you notice water coming from a gas appliance

Please call our **Customer Helpline** on **0800 0778778** if you notice water coming from any of your gas appliances or you have no gas because water has got into the pipe. For your own safety, please take the following steps:

- turn the gas off at the meter if you can
- don't turn the gas back on until the problem has been resolved
- put out all naked flames including cigarettes
- turn off all gas appliances
- don't turn the appliances back on again until the gas engineer says you can
- open all nearby doors and windows
- don't turn on any electrical switches
- don't use any electrical telephones or security systems

As soon as we hear from you, we'll contact SGN (who maintain the gas pipes) and work with them to ensure your safety. We promise to phone you back within 2 hours of your initial call to explain what happens next. If we don't do this, we will automatically pay you £30.

In a major incident

What you can expect from us in a major incident

Sometimes things happen that affect many people at the same time such as contamination of the water supply, large scale flooding from water mains or sewers and interruptions to supply caused by these. In these cases – usually when more than 13,500 properties are affected – we declare the event a major incident. When this happens, you can count on us to do the following:

- We will give you regular updates. This may be done using social media, our website, radio, local TV, using loudhailers in the street or leaflets through your door.
- We will provide alternative supplies (bottled water or static tanks) if your water supply is interrupted for more than 24 hours or is unfit for consumption even after boiling. We'll aim to provide at least 10 litres per person every 24 hours until the supply is restored. Water supplied from emergency tanks must be boiled before use.
- We will deliver drinking water to people who may be particularly vulnerable during a major incident, like babies under a year old, the elderly and those with a medical condition. If you, a friend or relative have a disability or medical condition or other

reason which would need additional assistance from Scottish Water then please call our **Customer Helpline** on **0800 0778778** and we can add your name, address and requirements to our confidential Additional Support Register.

If we fail to meet any of the promises to customers directly affected by a declared major incident, we will support customers who have been affected and who would like to claim compensation up to a maximum of £90 per household and incident. The level paid will be dependent on your individual circumstances at the time of the incident.

Alternative supplies

We appreciate that lengthy planned interruptions without water can cause our customers inconvenience; for planned interruptions that exceed 8 hours we will help ensure that you have access to alternative water supplies. We will let you know how and where you could store water or collect water supplies. As a priority we will deliver drinking water to people who may be particularly vulnerable during an interruption to supply. Please ensure that your details are registered on our Additional Support Register to secure this service. This can be done by calling our **Customer Helpline** on **0800 0778778**.

If your property is flooded or at risk of flooding

If the inside of your home is flooded with waste water please call our **Customer Helpline** on **0800 0778778**. We consider this a high priority and will help you to clean up the mess. We will attend to it as quickly as we can, usually within 4 hours of your call. On our visit we will investigate the cause of the flooding and report back our findings to you. Flooring, such as tiling, that covers hatch access to flooded areas under floors, may need to be lifted to allow access. If there is no access hatch it will be your responsibility to arrange access for us to carry out the clean-up.

We will refund your insurance excess if you suffer waste water flooding from our sewers within your home unless the flood was caused by extreme weather conditions or your own actions (such as inappropriate items flushed down the toilet or drain).

You may also automatically receive a payment equal to your total waste water charge for the year.

Where you have suffered external flooding (where you cannot access your property without stepping through sewage flooding within your property boundary OR your land is extensively flooded and effectively destroyed) you can apply for a payment of 50% of your waste water charges for each occasion up to 100% in any financial year.

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

When water from no obvious source is entering your property, we will investigate the possible causes. We will generally start by looking at the weather conditions to determine links to ground water levels. We may also close some valves at nearby water mains to see if there is any impact on the flow of water in to your property. If, after these investigations have been completed, we have not identified the source of the water we will take samples. This will help us to confirm if the water is coming from a water main or a sewer. Throughout this process we will aim to continually keep you updated on our findings.

In extreme weather if you are worried about the possibility of flooding please contact **SEPA's Floodline** on **0345 988 1188**.

Keeping our appointments

You can make an appointment with Scottish Water by calling our **Customer Helpline** on **0800 0778778**. We will offer you a morning or afternoon appointment or you can ask for someone to visit you within a 2 hour time slot. We will give you at least 24 hours notice of any change in the appointment time.

We'll automatically pay you £30 if we don't turn up when we say we are going to, or if we fail to give you 24 hours notice of a change to the appointment.

When we plan to do essential work to your water supply

If we need to carry out essential maintenance work that involves shutting off your water supply, we'll tell you in advance. If the work is planned to last for more than 4 hours we'll give you at least 48 hours notice before we turn the water off. We'll do this by notifying you in person or by letter. If large areas are affected, we may also use our website, social media, local TV or radio. The only exception to this is when we are looking for leaks, in which case we do the work between midnight and 6am and you are unlikely to notice.

You can claim £30 from us if we fail to warn you before the interruption or we fail to restore your water by the time we say we will. You can also claim £30 for each additional 12 hour period you are without water.

Sometimes we need to dig up footpaths and roads to maintain our pipes, carry out repairs and improve your service. We promise to keep disruption to a minimum and let you know in advance if we have to work across the access (driveway, footpath etc) to your property. We will try our best to avoid inconvenient times but in an emergency, like a burst pipe, there may be no alternative but to block or restrict your access. We will display signs in the street around any works giving our Customer Helpline number. Once the work is completed, we aim to permanently reinstate the footpath or road straight away. The majority of works are completed within 7 days. There are some locations and types of roads where we will have to do a temporary reinstatement making the road safe and then come back and do a final good quality reinstatement at a later date. We always aim to have the final reinstatement completed within 6 months.

Please let us know if you spot a faulty manhole or access cover and we'll carry out the repairs as quickly as we can – within 24 hours if it is dangerous. Just call our **Customer Helpline** on **0800 0778778**.

If your water pressure is low

Please let us know if you have any problems with your water pressure by calling us on our **Customer Helpline** on **0800 0778778**.

We'll investigate by checking the pressure in the water main and at your home and we'll let you know the results within 5 working days, or we'll pay you £30. Your property will be added to the low pressure register if, following investigation, we confirm your property receives less than 1 bar of pressure at the point of connection (1 bar is approximately the pressure needed to fill a bucket with 10 litres of water in around a minute).

If your property is featured on our low pressure register, you will receive an annual letter with an automatic offer of a payment of your water charges as long as your property remains on the register.

Your property will not be added to the low pressure register if your home is above the level of water leaving our storage tank or less than 10.5 metres below the tank because we can't guarantee that the required pressure can be reached without additional pumping or a water storage facility.

If you live close to the level of our water storage tanks we recommend that you seek our advice before installing any appliances that require a particular water pressure, like electric showers and pressurised hot water systems.

Other things that could affect your water pressure are the condition of your pipework and whether you share your supply with other properties. Sudden and unusual drops in pressure could be caused by a burst water main or repair work being carried out in your area. Please refer to the section on planned and unplanned interruptions for our Service Standards (on pages 20 and 23) in these circumstances.

Water quality

You can be confident that your water is safe to drink because we regularly check the quality to ensure it meets the required standards. Drinking water in the UK is subject to some of the tightest regulations in the world. In the unlikely event that a restriction has to be placed on the use of your water (such as a 'boil water' or 'do not use' notice) for more than 3 months, and is caused by Scottish Water's pipework, you can apply for a payment of 100% of your water charges for the year.

Connections to the existing water network

If you require a water or waste water connection, you must submit a formal application and any supporting designs and details of consultations with relevant bodies. If all information is provided and approved, we will provide you with approval and a quotation to connect within 28 days. If there is evidence that we have caused a delay in connecting your property, you may be able to claim a rebate of your connection charge. Payment will be £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.

Payment enquiries

Any questions about your bill

Your Local Council collects your household water and waste water charges on our behalf, and details of how to pay can be found on your Council Tax bill. Please contact your Local Council for further information.

If you've got a water meter or are invoiced directly by us for any other reason (septic tank de-sludging for example), please call our **Income Team Helpline** on **0845 741 3752** and we'll do our best to answer your questions while you're still on the phone.

If we need to do some work on your account, we promise to respond to you within 5 working days. If you ask to change the way you pay, we'll sort this out within 5 working days. If we don't meet these deadlines, we promise to pay you £30.

Written or telephone complaints

How we deal with complaints

We promise to try to resolve complaints whenever you call our Customer Helpline while you are on the phone. If this isn't possible, we will look into the problem and call you back promptly. If you want a written response to your telephone call, we'll reply within 5 working days.

If you write to us, fax or email to complain about something we'll respond within 5 working days and we'll give you regular updates of the progress we're making to resolve your problem. If we fail to get back to you in this timescale, we'll pay you £30.

Meter applications

Getting a water meter

You can arrange for a water meter to be fitted, at your own cost, in your property by calling our **Customer Helpline** on **0800 0778778**.

We aim to install a water meter within 15 working days of agreeing the arrangements with you and receiving your payment for initial costs. We first of all need to carry out a survey to see if a meter can be fitted with your existing plumbing or if alterations need to be made. We'll let you know what is needed to install the meter and what that will cost within 10 working days from the date of your application. If we fail to do this, we'll pay you £30.

Your account will be changed to the metered water rate from the target date. If we fail to install the water meter by the agreed date, you will only have to pay the annual fixed charge element once the meter is installed and working.

Making a claim for compensation

How you can claim if we don't keep our promises

If you feel that we have not met our Service Standards, you can make a claim by contacting us via:

- our **Customer Helpline** on **0800 0778778**
- our website at **www.scottishwater.co.uk**
- our email address at **customer.concerns@scottishwater.co.uk**
- our address - **Service Review Team**, Scottish Water, PO Box 8855, Edinburgh, EH10 6YQ

If you want to make a claim for any of the payments explained in this leaflet, you must do this within 3 months of the incident.

For the automatic payments that we describe in this leaflet, you will receive a payment within 10 working days. If you do not, we will pay you a further £30.

Sometimes there are circumstances that we cannot control, such as severe weather. This may include unusually low temperatures which are not seasonally typical. It may also include high winds, severe snow or heavy rain, each of which may have the potential to cause danger to life or widespread disruption. Additionally, we cannot control industrial action or the actions of others. In these circumstances we cannot guarantee the above promises. However, we will clearly explain to you our reasons why.

We'll normally make payment to the person who pays your water and waste water bills. However, if you owe us money we may put the compensation amount towards your outstanding balance. Compensation may be withheld or reduced if it's clear you've been fully or partly at fault for the failure.

You can find a summary table of our service standards on page 32.

How we look after customers who need additional support

Looking after you

Please let us know if you have a disability, medical condition or any other reason to receive our services in a way that makes your life easier. We can add your details to our Additional Support Register along with a note of the services you need.

We can deliver alternative water supplies if you would find it difficult to get to a tank in the street, or if your health could be jeopardised by interruptions to your water supply, or on the rare occasion when the water is contaminated or has to be boiled. We would let you know in person about any incident affecting your water supply.

We also have special services to help you communicate with us if you have a hearing or speech impairment, a learning difficulty or are blind or partially sighted. Here is a list of these services:

- We use **Next Generation Text (NGT) Relay** (formerly known as Text Relay) when appropriate. The number is **18001 0800 0778778**.
- we can provide information in large print (14 point or larger).
- we can provide information in Braille or in audio format.
- we offer a personal visit or telephone call to discuss your needs — with a password to protect you against bogus callers. To register a password, please call our **Customer Helpline** on **0800 0778778**.

We offer these services in liaison with local and national organisations who represent customers with additional service needs to ensure we publicise this service and give you the best assistance.

Registering for additional support

If you, a family member or friend want to join our Additional Support Register, please:

- call our **Customer Helpline** on **0800 0778778** or use the **Typetalk** service; or
- write to us at **Additional Support Register**, Scottish Water, PO Box 8855, Edinburgh, EH10 6YQ.

For speakers of languages other than English

Please call our **Customer Helpline** on **0800 0778778** if you would like to speak to us in a language other than English. Our customer adviser will set up a three-way conversation with an interpreter, either at the time of the call or at a more convenient time.

We can also send you copies of our literature translated into another language. All our leaflets dealing with major emergency situations include easily recognisable symbols and have key phrases described in Plain English.

Who keeps us right on your behalf

Who do we answer to?

We answer to our customers — that is you.

Charges

Who decides what we charge?

We decide each year what our charges have to be to cover the cost of providing you with the best possible service. They run from the beginning of the financial year, 1st April, and we have to set them within limits given to us by the Water Industry Commission for Scotland. These limits apply to a six year period called the 'regulatory period' — the current period runs from April 2015 to March 2021. The Commission must set the charge limits at the lowest reasonable rate to cover all the objectives Scotland's Government Ministers want us to meet. Only the Ministers have the legal power to set objectives for Scottish Water.

Service standards

Who sets our service standards?

The Water Industry Commission for Scotland sets the targets for the service standards we provide to the people of Scotland. This version of our Code of Practice has been formally approved by the Commission to make sure it covers everything we do and meets all legal requirements. The summarised version of this Code of Practice, called our Customer Charter, has been developed in conjunction with Citizens Advice Scotland (CAS).

You can access our Customer Charter on our website at: www.scottishwater.co.uk/yourrights or you can contact us to request a copy.

Environmental quality

Who monitors the impact on the environment?

The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) has duties to protect and improve Scotland's environment and monitors the outputs of all our treatment works. SEPA ensures that we keep to what the law says we can discharge into the environment.

Water quality

Who makes sure the water we supply is safe?

The Drinking Water Quality Regulator for Scotland (DWQR) is the independent regulator making sure water quality standards are met. The DWQR advises Government Ministers where improvements are needed and any higher standards that new laws demand.

Who does what in the water industry in Scotland

The Scottish Government

Scottish Government Ministers

Phone: **0845 278 1999**

www.scotland.gov.uk

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.org.uk

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**

www.watercommission.co.uk

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

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.

Who does what in the water industry in Scotland continued



Citizens Advice Scotland (CAS)

Phone: **03454 04 05 06**

www.cas.org.uk

Citizens Advice Scotland;

- Represents the interests of consumers within Scotland's water industry.
- Supports citizens advice bureaux to provide free information, advice and advocacy.



The Scottish Environment

Protection Agency (SEPA)

Phone: **0800 80 70 60 (pollution hotline)**

Phone: **0845 988 1188 (floodline)**

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.

Health Boards

(see phone book for local numbers)

- administer community health services.
- can ask to have fluoride added to the water.
- investigate outbreaks of disease and informs us if water quality is at fault.

Local Councils

(see phone book for local numbers)

- responsible for environmental health issues, including private water supplies.
- oversee the safety of all large reservoirs.
- have planning and building control responsibilities for our property.
- maintain road gullies and drains (but not the sewers).

- responsible for flood prevention in towns and villages.
- responsible for coastal protection and pollution incidents.
- collect household water and waste water charges via council tax.

Property Owners

- maintain the pipework on their property in accordance with our Byelaws.
- maintain the waste water network on their property.
- maintain the septic tank on their property.
- maintain watercourses such as streams, burns and culverts in and around their property.



Summary table of our service standard payments

Service Standard	Automatic payment?	Do you need to claim?	Payment amount
Appointments – keeping appointments made more than 24 hours in advance.	Yes		£30
Written response to a formal complaint – respond within 5 working days.	Yes		£30
Water quality – affecting the water quality where a ‘boil water’ or ‘do not use notice’ is in place for more than 3 months.		Yes	100% of your annual water charges.
Connection services – where evidence confirms that we have caused a delay.		Yes	£30 a day if it is up to and including a 32mm outside diameter pipe. £150 a day if it is greater than 32mm outside diameter pipe (up to 100% of the connection charge).
Respond to questions about your bill and changing your payment methods – respond within 5 working days.	Yes		£30
Planned interruptions – warn you 48 hours in advance, supply restored within time given – payment if we fail to warn or your supply is not restored at the time we have given.		Yes	£30 + £30 for each further 12 hours without water.
Unplanned interruptions – (burst main and so on) restore within 12 hours (48 hours for a large main supplying a large area).		Yes	£30 + £15 for each further 12 hours without water. If you report 2 interruptions in the same financial year, caused by a failure in the network that isn't related to work we are carrying out, you can apply to claim a payment of 25% of your annual water charges. If you experience and report subsequent interruptions within the same financial year, you can claim a further 25% for each of those subsequent interruptions, to a maximum of 100% of your water charges.
Internal waste water flooding – Caused by waste water from our sewers.	Yes		Equal to your yearly waste water charge per incident (minimum payment of Band D rate and up to £1000).

Our Service Standards cover our most important services (see pages 19 to 26 for full details). Here's a quick reference guide to the standards we promise to meet and what you can claim if we don't.

Service Standard	Automatic payment?	Do you need to claim?	Payment amount
Internal waste water flooding – Caused by waste water from our sewers (cont)	Yes		If your property is at a high risk of internal flooding due to overloaded sewers, and is added to our internal flooding register, you will receive your annual waste water charge (minimum payment of Band D rate).
External waste water flooding – Caused by waste water from our sewers.		Yes	If your property is significantly affected from flooding outside you can apply for a payment of 50% to 100% of your annual waste water charges (where you cannot access your property without stepping through sewage flooding within your property boundary OR your land is extensively flooded and effectively destroyed (minimum payment of Band D rate).
Water in gas pipes – give you a call within 2 hours of reporting the fault to give details of what happens next.	Yes		£30
Water pressure – we will tell you the outcome of our investigations within 5 working days.	Yes		£30 If your property is placed on our low-pressure register due to ongoing pressure issues you will receive the water charges you have paid for the year.
Water meters – applications. We will let you know the outcome within 10 working days of your application.	Yes		£30

- 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 and up to a maximum of £1000.

For more information on what the standards cover and the level of payment available, call our **Customer Helpline** on **0800 0778778** or visit our website at www.scottishwater.co.uk/yourrights.

How to contact us

We have made it easy for you to contact us - here's how

Current Service Updates

If you are experiencing an unexpected loss of supply or emergency, you can check if it is on our current service updates page or Twitter page: [@scottish_water](#)

Report a problem

You can contact us to report a problem by Using the feedback form on our website. You can also email us at:

customer.services@scottishwater.co.uk or send a tweet to our Twitter account at: [@scottish_water](#)

Calling us on one of the below numbers.

Customer Helpline 0800 0778778

Scottish Water operates a freephone Customer Helpline (but there may be a charge if you use a mobile) to handle any of your enquiries; this line is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You can also send us an email at customer.services@scottishwater.co.uk

Next Generation Text (NGT)

Relay – 18001 0800 0778778

If you have a speech or hearing difficulty you can use Next Generation Text (NGT) Relay (formerly known as Text Relay).

Our main administration centres have an induction loop for customers with hearing aids.

We record all calls for quality and training purposes.

customer.concerns@scottishwater.co.uk

to make a complaint or alternatively write to:

Customer Service:

PO Box 8855
Edinburgh
EH10 6YQ

Head Office:

6 Castle Drive
Dunfermline
Fife
KY11 8GG

Main Offices:

The Bridge
Buchanan Gate Business Park
Cumbernauld Road
Stepps
Glasgow
G33 6FB

Bullion House
Invergowrie
Dundee
Angus
DD2 5BB

Fairmilehead Office
55 Buckstone Terrace
Edinburgh
EH10 6XH

Kingshill House
Arnhall Business Park
Westhill
Aberdeen
AB32 6UF

Inverness Office
31 Henderson Drive
Longman North
Inverness
IV1 1TR

Additional Support Register

If you have a disability or medical condition or other reason where you need additional support from us, please contact our

Customer Helpline on **0800 0778778**

and we can add your name, address and your requirements to our confidential register. Further information can be found at www.scottishwater.co.uk/support.

We can offer a range of other formats of documents free of charge. For information and to ask for another format, such as a translation, large-print version, copy in Braille or on audio disc, please contact our

Customer Helpline on **0800 0778778**

or visit www.scottishwater.co.uk.

