

# Scheme of Charges

## 2015-2016



**Delivering excellence**

for our customers, our people and our environment



This Charges Scheme sets out the Company's charges for household customers and is made under Section 143 of the Water Industry Act 1991.

It includes water supply charges, which are effective from 1 July 2015, together with other miscellaneous charges, which are payable from 1 April 2015. Charges contained in the Scheme have, where applicable, been approved by the Water Services Regulation Authority and these are shown in the Schedule of Regulated Charges in this Scheme. Non-Regulated charges, which are not subject to approval, are shown in the Schedule of Non-Regulated Charges.

The charges apply in the area for which the Company is the water undertaker, as appointed by the Secretary of State under the provisions of the Act.

In accordance with Section 143(5) of the Act, nothing in this Scheme affects the power of the Company to enter into an agreement with any person in any particular case with regard to the charges to be made for the services provided.

The application, assessment and recovery of charges under this Scheme are subject to the provisions of the relevant Acts of Parliament and subordinate legislation made or issued thereunder. The provisions of this Scheme should be construed so as not to conflict with them. Attention is drawn to various Codes of Practice under which the Company operates. Copies of these codes are available on request.

The Charges Scheme 2014/15 is revoked with effect from the coming into operation of this Charges Scheme.

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Contents
- 3 Interpretation
- 4 Sewerage Services

## **PRINCIPLES FOR WATER CHARGES**

- 5 New Water Supplies
- 5 Existing Water Supplies
- 6 Meter Option
- 7 WaterSure Customers
- 8 Guaranteed Standards Scheme
- 8 Complaints and Disputes
- 9 Consumer Council for Water

## **WATER SUPPLIES**

- 10 Unmeasured Water Supplies
- 12 Measured Water Supplies
- 13 Other Supplies
- 14 Payment Facilities
- 14 Collection of Outstanding Charges
- 15 Recovery for Undercharging

## **SCHEDULE OF REGULATED CHARGES**

- 16 Unmeasured Water Supplies
- 16 Measured Water Supplies

## **SCHEDULE OF NON-REGULATED CHARGES**

- 16 Other Charges Specific to Households

## **CUSTOMER INFORMATION**

- 17 Publications
- 18 How to Contact Us
- 19 Map of Company Area

## **IN THIS CHARGES SCHEME:**

**'The Company'** means Portsmouth Water Limited.

**'The Act'** means the Water Industry Act 1991.

**'Premises'** means any building or part of a building which is, or is designed, altered or intended to be occupied as a separate unit.

**'Measured Water Supply'** means a supply of water by the Company on which a meter has been installed.

**'Unmeasured Water Supply'** means a supply of water which is not a measured supply of water.

**'Domestic Purposes'** are defined by Section 218 of the Act and include water for drinking, washing, cooking, central heating and sanitary purposes and uses outside a house connected with occupation, but not involving the use of a garden sprinkler, hosepipe or similar apparatus.

**'Rateable Value'** means the value of premises shown in the official valuation list provided by the District Valuer as at 31 March 1990.

**'Person Chargeable'** will be payable by the occupier of the premises receiving or having access to the supply, or any person to whom the supply is made available.

Portsmouth Water Ltd does not provide sewerage or waste water services.

Customers within our area of supply, who are connected to mains sewerage, will receive a separate bill for these services normally from Southern Water Services Ltd, whose contact details are as follows:

**Southern Water Services Ltd**  
**Southern House**  
**Yeoman Road**  
**Worthing**  
**West Sussex**  
**BN13 3NX**

**Telephone: 0845 272 0845**

## **NEW WATER SUPPLIES**

Following the provision by the Company of any new water supply to any household property, the charges will be measured charges. A meter must be installed on all new water supplies to these premises.

The Company may decide that a new supply is required when there is a change of use of water or a change in the extent of premises supplied through an existing service pipe. Following service of notice by the Company on the person chargeable, measured charges will be payable. The person chargeable must pay for the installation of a meter and ensure the completion and return of a relevant application form.

When there is a change of use of premises supplied by a common service pipe to two or more premises in separate occupation, the charges for the supply to the premises where the change of use has taken place will be measured charges. The person chargeable must pay for the separation of the common supply and the installation of a meter on the separate supply to the premises.

## **EXISTING WATER SUPPLIES**

The Company may determine that the charges for unmeasured water supplies to any premises or for any premises for which the water supply is made available, and used wholly or substantially for any business, trade or manufacturing or for any other non-domestic purposes, to any void property should be changed to measured charges.

The charges payable will be and will remain measured charges. Meter optants have the right of reversion as detailed on page 7:

- where a meter is installed on a water supply to any premises, or
- where the Company has so determined in respect of any premises or purpose for which water supplied is used.

## **Compulsory Metering**

Existing domestic unmeasured customers may be required to have a water meter in the following circumstances:

- where garden watering is undertaken other than by hand;
- where the property has an automatically replenished swimming pool or pond with a capacity of over 10,000 litres;
- for a double bath - that is any bath with a capacity of over 230 litres;
- where a Reverse Osmosis Type Water Softener system is fitted;
- where the premises are in an area of serious water stress, as determined by the Secretary of State.

Customers moving into the Company's area of supply should contact the Customer Services Department for information on the basis on which charges will be payable.

## **METER OPTION**

Customers receiving an unmeasured water supply may wish to be charged for water supplied to their premises by meter. If their premises are served by a separate service pipe and the plumbing installations comply with Water Regulations, they may elect to have a meter installed, subject to the completion of certain formalities.

The meter will be positioned in the Company's preferred location at the property boundary, although consideration may be given to alternative locations provided that provision is made for unrestricted access to read the meter. Any additional cost in positioning the meter in an alternative location will be borne by the customer.

A meter, where installed, remains the property of the Company.

There will be no charge for the installation of a meter on an existing domestic supply, provided that the meter can be installed at reasonable expense. Household customers can apply for a meter using our website, in writing or via the telephone.

The Company can refuse requests for meter installation on the grounds that it would be unreasonably expensive. Any disputes will be determined by the Water Services Regulation Authority, who will adopt the following approach:

Reasonable expenses will include:

- the provision of a meter
- the cost of installation in the Company's preferred location
- the cost of reinstatement, subject to reasonable limits Unreasonable expenses might include:
- the cost of separating the customer's supply pipe where it is shared with other customers
- the cost of installing an additional meter if the customer is served by more than one supply
- the cost of substantial alterations to existing plumbing to enable meter installation

Where a meter cannot be installed at reasonable expense and the Company has ruled out the option of a shared meter, the customer will be able to opt to remain on the existing rateable value charge for to move on to an assessed charge. For one bedroom properties with a single occupier this charge is set at a level that assumes an annual usage of 55 cubic metres of water plus the domestic measured standing charge. In all other cases it is set at the average measured household charge. This charge will be applicable from the date on which the meter would have been installed.

Installation will be carried out within three months from receipt of a request for a measured supply. Where the Company is unable to install a meter within three months, it will ensure that the customer is no worse off as a result of this delay by making a retrospective adjustment to the unmeasured charges based on the first meter reading.



Domestic customers who have opted for a meter will have a one-off right to revert to unmeasured charging up to one month after the issue of their second half-yearly bill following installation, or a period of 12 months following installation, whichever is greater.

Where a customer opts for reversion, a closing meter reading will be taken and unmeasured charging will recommence from the date of the final reading.

## **WATERSURE CUSTOMERS**

Some customers receiving a measured supply of water may be entitled to assistance with their water charges, although certain customers with swimming pools or using sprinkler systems do not qualify. If any individual, whether the customer or not, meets the required criteria, and is part of the same water bill paying household as the customer, then that customer can claim the assistance. Assistance will be available where customers are in receipt of one of the following benefits or tax credits:

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

The Company will also accept requests for assistance from customers in receipt of the special benefits detailed above who provide a Doctor's certificate confirming they have a medical condition which requires them to use large volumes of water for essential household purposes. The certificate should state the name of the patient, the diagnosis, the Doctor's name and address and include the date on which it was issued. Where a Doctor charges for a certificate, the fee is borne by the customer.

## **Proof of Eligibility**

Customers who believe that they qualify for assistance should contact the Company to obtain an application form. Applicants will also be required to provide reasonable documentary evidence of their eligibility which will include:

- a) a copy of the latest notice of entitlement to the benefit or tax credit, and, either
- b) a copy of the latest notice of entitlement to child benefit at the property for three or more children under the age of 19, or
- c) details of the medical condition, together with the name of the Medical Practitioner to whom enquiries can be made.

In the case of either a) or b), a copy of the order book used by the benefit recipient in connection with their benefit would be acceptable. Customers should be aware that the validity of claims may be verified with third parties and that the submission of misleading or fraudulent applications may ultimately amount to committing a criminal offence.

## **Nature of Assistance**

Customers will be placed on our WaterSure tariff and assistance will take the form of a charge capped at the average household charge. Successful claimants will be charged the lower of the actual measured household bill and the average household charge and will be eligible for the assisted bill covering the whole billing period, during which the application was received by the Company.

Customers have a duty to inform the Company of any change of circumstance which would render them no longer eligible for the assisted bill.

Customers who have qualified for assistance will need to re-apply after twelve months to maintain their eligibility. A written reminder is sent towards the end of the qualifying period along with an application form. Failure to do so will lead to cessation of the assistance.

## **GUARANTEED STANDARDS SCHEME**

We guarantee to provide specific standards of service in our dealings with customers and pay compensation if we fall short. Standards exist in the following areas:

- keeping appointments
- responses to enquiries about bills and/or alternative methods of payment
- responses to written complaints
- meter reading
- supply interruptions
- restoration of water supplies
- minimum pressure standard

Details of these standards and how to claim are contained within our Code of Practice for Domestic Customers, which is available from our Head Office.

## **COMPLAINTS AND DISPUTES**

Full details of the Company's complaints procedure are available in a leaflet, which is available on request.

Certain disputes can be referred to the Water Services Regulation Authority at the address below for determination. They include the right to have a meter installed free of charge. In the event that any such dispute remains unresolved, the applicant may refer it to the Water Services Regulation Authority for determination.

**Water Services Regulation Authority**  
**Centre City Tower**  
**7 Hill Street**  
**Birmingham**  
**B5 4UA**

## **CONSUMER COUNCIL FOR WATER**

The interests of the Company's customers are represented by an independent body, Consumer Council for Water, which investigates complaints that the Company has been unable to resolve and provides advice and information to all water and sewerage customers in the region. The Committee meets in public twice a year. The address, telephone numbers, fax number and e-mail address are as follows:

**Consumer Council for Water  
London and South East Region  
Victoria Square House  
Victoria Square  
Birmingham  
B2 4AJ**

**Telephone: 0207 931 8502**

**Fax: 0121 345 1010**

**E-mail: [londonandsoutheast@ccwater.org.uk](mailto:londonandsoutheast@ccwater.org.uk)**

**Minicom: 0121 345 1044**

## UNMEASURED WATER SUPPLIES

### Charges

The charge for an unmeasured water supply to any premises comprises:

- i) a standing charge, and
- ii) a rateable value charge calculated on the rateable value as at 31 March 1990 of the premises receiving the water supply or for which the supply is made available or

Where the combined standing and rateable value charges amount to less than the Company's specified minimum charge, the minimum charge, or where a premises does not have a rateable value, that is those whose billing commenced after the rateable value system was abandoned in 1990, and prior to the compulsory metering of new properties in April 2005, the Licence charge applies. The Licence charge is based on the average rateable value of domestic properties in the Company's area of supply.

Where an unmeasured water supply is used for any purpose specified by the Company, a charge fixed by the Company for such purposes will apply.

### Time for Payment

Charges made for unmeasured water supplies will be payable annually in advance on receipt of the annual account, or by two half yearly instalments, or by prior agreement with the Company, by eight direct debit instalments, which will be due on either 1st, 8th, 15th or 28th day of each month, or

by prior agreement with the Company, by instalments which will be due in such amounts and on such dates as specified by the Company.

Weekly and two weekly instalments are available on request and may be helpful particularly to customers experiencing difficulty paying their bills. These can be paid in cash, by cheque, debit or credit card, or by postal orders. In addition, the Company will accept payment through Water Direct.

If payment of any instalment is not made on the due date, the whole of the charges for the year or for any part thereof will become due and payable.

Where there is a change in circumstances, including a change from an unmeasured to a measured water supply and the apportionment of charges payable, the instalment facility may be withdrawn and the whole of the charges for the year or for any part thereof will become due and payable.

### Persons Chargeable

Charges will be payable by the occupier of the premises receiving or having access to the supply, or any person to whom the supply is made available.

In the case of premises subject to a short term tenancy, the Company may determine that

the supply is made available to the landlord for business purposes and that the landlord should be liable to pay the water charges.

A person, who is not the occupier of premises or is not the person to whom the supply is made available, may be liable to pay water charges in relation to those premises instead of the occupier by or under any statutory enactment or by agreement with the Company.

## **Order for Bankruptcy or Debt Relief Order**

Where an Order for Bankruptcy or a Debt Relief Order has been made in respect of a person liable to pay water charges and that person remains resident in the property for which a debt for water charges was subject to the Order for Bankruptcy, or Debt Relief Order, that debt will be limited to the charges outstanding up to the date of the Order for Bankruptcy, or Debt Relief Order. Any charges outstanding in respect of the current billing year will be apportioned on a daily basis up to, and including, the date of the Order for Bankruptcy or Debt Relief Order. Any charges for services provided after the Order for Bankruptcy, or Debt Relief Order, shall become due on the next day of occupation after the Order for Bankruptcy or Debt Relief Order and will be payable by the person responsible for the payment of water charges in respect of the property in question on the same terms as to payment as would apply had the property been newly occupied on that day.

## **Discontinuation of Supplies**

If a customer wishes the supply of water to be discontinued on vacation of a premises, notice must be given to the Company. No charge will be made provided that the notice has been given.

Where a property is unoccupied, charges remain payable unless the property is unfurnished and/or the water supply turned off. No allowances will be made in retrospect.

## **Change of Occupier**

If a customer is vacating a property and a new occupier moving in, the vacating customer should notify the Company of the date of the move. Similarly, the new customer should notify the Company of the date of moving in.

Except in the case of short term occupations of less than six months, no charge will be made for the reconnection during normal working hours of a domestic supply for a customer who is the new occupier of a premises.

## **Empty Properties**

Charges are payable if premises are furnished unless the Company is asked to turn off the supply. No retrospective allowances will be given. If the premises do not have a separate supply pipe it may not be possible for the Company to turn off the supply.

Where a turn off is required pending the sale of a property or a planned period of more than six months, no charge will be made to turn the supply off and back on, provided it is undertaken within normal working hours and notice has been given.

A customer may wish to consider opting to have a free water meter installed if there is a need to maintain a supply to empty furnished premises.

No charges are payable in respect of unoccupied unfurnished premises, where no water is being used. No retrospective allowances will be given.

Where a property is unoccupied following the death of the owner/occupier the Executors/Administrators can decide whether a supply is maintained to furnished premises, with charges accruing, or the supply is turned off. Either way, the bill outstanding will only become payable upon Probate or Letters of Administration having been obtained.

## **MEASURED WATER SUPPLIES**

### **Charges**

The charge for a measured water supply comprises:

- a standing charge determined by the size of the meter, and
- a volume charge calculated on the volume of water recorded by the meter as having been supplied

These charges will take effect from 1 July each year. Bills will normally be issued at six month intervals. For the determination of charges spanning that date, the standing charge will be apportioned on a daily basis and the volume of water supplied will be deemed to have been supplied at an average daily rate during the period concerned.

The register of the meter will be evidence of the volume of water supplied. However, in respect of any period during which the meter was not in proper order, was not read or was removed, the consumption of water will be estimated on the basis of the average actual consumption during the corresponding period of the previous year or as otherwise agreed.

### **Time for Payment**

Charges made for measured water supplies are due and payable on demand, or

by prior agreement with the Company, by twelve direct debit instalments, which will be due on either 1st, 8th, 15th or 28th day of each month, or

by prior agreement with the Company, by instalments which will be due in such amounts and on such dates as specified by the Company.

Weekly and two weekly instalments are available on request and may be helpful particularly to customers experiencing difficulty paying their bills. These can be paid in cash, by cheque, debit or credit card, or by postal orders. In addition, the Company will continue to accept payment through Water Direct.

### **Persons Chargeable**

Charges will be payable by the occupier of the premises receiving or having access to

the supply, or any person to whom the supply is made available. In the case of premises subject to a short term tenancy, the Company may determine that the supply is made available to the landlord for business purposes and that the landlord should be liable to pay the water charges.

A person, who is not the occupier of premises or is not the person to whom the supply is made available, may be liable to pay water charges in relation to those premises instead of the occupier by or under any statutory enactment or by agreement with the Company.

Where two or more premises in separate occupation are supplied through one meter, bills will be issued to one person only and that any bill apportionment is not the responsibility of the Company.

## **Leakage**

The customer is liable for the cost of all water registered on the meter. No allowance is made in respect of leakage from customers' pipework, except in the case of the first external leak at premises used wholly or partly as a dwelling. A copy of the Company's Code of Practice and Procedures for Leakage on Domestic Supplies is available on request. See page 17.

Where a customer requests that a meter is tested and the meter is proven to meet the required standard of accuracy, the cost of that test will be payable by the customer. See page 16.

## **Notice of Vacation of Property**

Where charges are fixed in relation to any premises by reference to volume, the person chargeable in relation to those premises will be liable to pay such charges after ceasing to be the occupier of the premises, if they fail to notify the Company of the ending of the occupation of the premises at least two working days before ceasing to occupy them.

The customer will be liable for charges for the period ending with whichever of the following first occurs after they cease to occupy the premises:

- where the customer informs the Company of vacating the premises less than two working days before, or at any time after vacating them, the twenty eighth day after the Company has been informed;
- any day on which any meter would normally have been read in order for the amount of the charges to be determined;
- any day on which any other person informs the Company that he has become the new occupier or the new person chargeable in relation to the premises.

## **OTHER SUPPLIES**

Charges for supplies required for any other purposes not set out in this Scheme will be measured or fixed by agreement with the Company. A quotation will be provided on written application to the Company.

## **PAYMENT FACILITIES**

The facilities for payment of accounts, which are detailed on your bill, are as follows:

### **By Direct Debit**

Customers can pay by direct debit instalments. Unmeasured customers can pay by a maximum of 8 monthly instalments and measured customers by 12 monthly instalments. Instalments are collected on 1st, 8th, 15th or 28th day of each month.

### **At a Bank**

There will be no charge for customers who pay at any branch of National Westminster Bank, or who pay at their own bank.

### **At any Post Office**

Customers can pay by cash, but a charge will be payable. Customers who are Girobank account holders can pay by cheque or cash free of charge.

### **At Head Office**

Customers can pay by cheque, cash or postal orders.

### **By Post**

Customers can pay by cheque or postal orders.

### **By Debit Card**

Customers can pay either in person at Head Office, by telephone (see page 18) or via our website.

### **By Credit Card**

Customers can pay either in person at Head Office, by telephone (see page 18) or via our website. A 1.5% commission charge will be made.

### **By Telephone or PC Banking**

When using your telephone or PC banking arrangements, please quote your customer reference number. Our Sort Code is 57–10–36 and our Bank Account number is 0000 0000.

### **By Water Direct**

If customers cannot pay their bill and are claiming Income Support, Income-based Job seekers Allowance or Pension Credit, Jobcentre Plus may pay their bill direct to us by deduction from their benefit. If the customer agrees to this method of payment, Jobcentre Plus will take a fixed amount from the benefit to pay any amount owed in arrears and cover current charges. If customers wish to use this facility, they should telephone Customer Services or write to us, or contact their Jobcentre Plus office direct.

## **COLLECTION OF OUTSTANDING CHARGES**

Non-payment of charges may result in Court proceedings.

All legal costs incurred by the Company in the collection of charges will be passed directly



to the customer.

The Company operates a Code of Practice and Procedures on Debt for Domestic Customers, copies of which are available on request. Anyone experiencing difficulties in meeting payments should make contact with our Debt and Affordability Team as soon as possible.

### **RECOVERY FOR UNDERCHARGING**

While the Company strives to ensure that all bills for charges are correct, in the case of an error we reserve the right to make retrospective adjustments. This will always happen if the adjustment is in the customer's favour. We will not make retrospective adjustments in our favour if there is clear evidence that the undercharging has been due to a failure or error on our part.

# Schedule of Regulated Charges

## UNMEASURED WATER SUPPLIES

Standing charge	<b>£23.98</b>
Rateable value charge (£/£rv)	<b>37.1 pence per £ of rateable value</b>
Minimum charge	<b>£74.13</b>
Licence charge	<b>£105.61</b>
Assessed charge <sup>1</sup>	<b>£64.96</b>
Assessed charge <sup>2</sup>	<b>£91.27</b>

<sup>1</sup> This assessed charge is for a one-bedroom property with a single occupier.

<sup>2</sup> This assessed charge is for all properties, other than one-bedroom with a single occupier.

## MEASURED WATER SUPPLIES

### Standing charge (£/annum)

Size of meter			Size of meter		
mm	inches	£	mm	inches	£
15mm	0.5	<b>28.35</b>	40mm	1.50	<b>157.70</b>
20mm	0.75	<b>32.29</b>	50mm	2.00	<b>196.10</b>
25mm	1.00	<b>81.30</b>	80mm	3.00	<b>282.10</b>
<b>WaterSure</b>					<b>97.82</b>
<b>Volumetric charge per cubic metre</b>					
<b>67.9p</b>					

# Schedule of Non-Regulated Charges

## OTHER CHARGES SPECIFIC TO HOUSEHOLDS

Meter testing for meter - in situ	<b>£20 + VAT</b>
Meter testing for meter - off site	<b>£70 + VAT</b>
Stop tap key	<b>£19.38 + VAT</b>
Delivery of stop tap key	<b>£2.40 + VAT</b>
Dishonoured cheques	<b>£15.00</b>

## **PUBLICATIONS**

Copies of the following documents may be obtained free of charge on request from the Company's Head Office;

### **Complaints Procedure**

**Code of Practice for the Exercise of Works on Land**

**Code of Practice and Procedures for Leakage on Domestic Supplies**

**Code of Practice for Domestic Customers**

**Code of Practice and Procedures on Debt for Domestic Customers**

**Your Water Quality**

**Guide to Water Hardness and Limescale**

**Scheme of Charges – Household Customers**

**Scheme of Charges – Non-Household and developers**

**Service Plus – Our services for customers with additional needs**

**Save Water Now**

**Water Used by Domestic Appliances**

**Changing to a Water Meter**

**Living with Your New Water Meter**

## HOW TO CONTACT US

PO Box 8  
West Street  
Havant  
Hampshire  
PO9 1LG

General Enquiries  
**023 9249 9888**

Website  
**[www.portsmouthwater.co.uk](http://www.portsmouthwater.co.uk)**

E-mail  
**[head.office@portsmouthwater.co.uk](mailto:head.office@portsmouthwater.co.uk)**

Water Account Enquiries  
**023 9249 9666**

Freephone Debt Line  
**0800 432 0534**

Water Quality Enquiries  
**023 9249 9888**

New Supplies  
**023 9249 9888**

Mains and Service Repairs  
**023 9249 9888**

Plumbing and Water Regulations Enquiries  
**023 9249 9888**

Freephone Leak Line  
**0800 434 6104**

**All enquiries to the above numbers may be made between 8.30am - 4.30pm,  
Monday to Friday**

Operations Centre (24 Hour Emergency Service and Reporting of Leaks)  
**023 9247 7999**

24 Hour Freephone Automated Payment Line  
**0800 0480021**

MAP OF COMPANY AREA







