

- **Telephone/online banking** – please advise your bank to pay head office collection sort code 574955 and ask them to quote your customer reference number. If your bank requires a bank account number, please ask them to quote 11111111.
- **At a bank** – sign and date the correct payment slip and hand in the whole bill with your payment. Please make cheques payable to Yorkshire Water and write your customer reference number on the back. You don't pay a counter fee if you pay at any branch of NatWest. Other banks may charge for this service.
- **By post** – please make cheques (or postal orders) payable to Yorkshire Water and write your customer reference number on the back. Tear off the correct payment slip and send it with your payment to: Yorkshire Water, PO Box 52, Bradford, BD3 7YD. Please don't send cash or postdated cheques.
- **At Local Authority offices** – you may pay free of charge at any of the following Local Authority cash offices: Barnsley, Bradford, Calderdale, Doncaster (excluding meter bills), East Riding, Kirklees, Rotherham and York. Please make cheques payable to the Local Authority and write your customer reference number on the back.
- **At a post office** – fill in the correct payment slip and hand in the whole bill or payment booklet with your payment. If you have a payment card, simply hand in your card with your payment. Please make cheques payable to Post Office Limited and write your customer reference number on the back. Unless you have a payment card, you may have to pay a fee.

What should I do if I'm moving home?

Please remember to let us know if you're moving home. Call us, write to us or visit our website to let us know your change of address details. We'll need to know your current address, the date you're moving out, your new address and the date you're moving in.

If either address has a meter, please read the meter on the day you move out or in, before contacting us. We'll then use the readings that you've provided. If you've not been able to read the meter, we'll normally estimate your final or start reading.

If you won't be responsible for water charges at your new address, for example if you're moving in with a relative, please tell us.

You'll also need to contact the water company which provides services in the region to where you're moving, if you're moving out of the Yorkshire region.

What can I do if I'm not happy?

We aim to provide a high standard of service and to treat you with courtesy and fairness at all times. We welcome any comments you may have, and we try to answer queries and resolve complaints quickly and in full.

Please contact us as soon as possible, if you're not satisfied with our service. We'll then investigate your complaint and try to resolve it to your satisfaction. Where your complaint is justified, we'll apologise and do everything we can to put things right as soon as possible.

If we've failed to meet any of our standards, we'll pay compensation in accordance with our Customer Charter. If our actions or inaction cause you particular hardship or inconvenience, we'll consider making a goodwill payment. We'll consider each case individually. We send a copy of our Customer Charter to every customer each year. If you'd like another free copy, please contact us.

If you're not satisfied with the way we've handled your complaint or with the outcome, you may request a review of your complaint. This review will be independent of the original investigations and may overturn the original decision if appropriate.

If you're still unhappy with the outcome of your complaint, you may request an independent review, by telephoning or writing to:

Consumer Council for Water
Northgate House
St. Augustine's Way
Darlington
DL1 1XA

Lo-call number: 0845 7 08 93 68
 (or call 01325 469 777)

E-mail: yorkshire@ccwater.org.uk

Text telephone: 0121 345 1044 (minicom)

The Consumer Council for Water (CCWater) is an independent national body set up to protect your interests and to champion customer issues. CCWater ensures that customers' collective voice is heard in the national water debate and has undertaken research to understand customers' views and use this to influence decision makers within the industry.

CCWater will investigate customer complaints relating to our business activities. The regional office and committee may then act on your behalf to try to resolve your complaint with us.

Under the Water Industry Act 1991, the industry

regulator, Ofwat, or an independent arbitrator may settle certain disputes. Where this is appropriate, we'll explain the action you can take – or you may prefer to seek advice from CCWater or another independent advice agency.

Services for customers with additional needs

We provide information in large-print, Braille and audio formats. If you'd like information about our free Helping Hands services, please contact us on 0800 1 38 78 78.

How can I contact you?

Our contact centre is open 8am-8pm Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm Saturday

We're open 24 hours a day for emergency calls

Call us	
All enquiries	0845 1 24 24 24
Request other information or leaflets	0845 1 24 24 24
Bogus caller checks on Identity cards	0800 1 38 78 78
Leakage	0800 57 35 53

Additional services:	
Asian language	0845 1 24 24 21
Text telephone/minicom	0845 1 24 24 23
24 hour automated services	0845 1 24 72 47

Fax 01274 372800

Visit our website yorkshirewater.com

Or write to us Yorkshire Water
 PO Box 52
 Bradford BD3 7YD

Codes of practice:

Additional needs
 Charges, bills and payments
 Complaints & compliments procedure
 Customer Charter
 Debt recovery
 Leakage from customers' supplies
 Responsibility for pipework
 Sewerage and waste water
 Water meters
 Water supply services

code of practice

What we charge and why

Charges, bills and payments



yorkshirewater.com

Yorkshire Water Services Limited
 Western House Halifax Road Bradford BD6 2SZ
 Registered in England and Wales No.2366682

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YorkshireWater

Charges, bills and how to pay

This code of practice is approved by the industry regulator, Ofwat. Please refer to the back cover for a list of other codes of practice for domestic customers. These are free and available on request.

We know how important it is for you to have a range of payment options and to be aware of what's available to you. We want to help you choose the payment method that's best for you. Here we explain how we calculate charges for water and sewerage services, and tell you about the different ways to pay.

How do you decide how much to charge?

The government sets a price formula which limits increases in our charges each year. This takes into account inflation (the Retail Price Index) and a factor, known as 'K', which relates to the capital investment we must make to meet UK and EU standards. Ofwat, the water industry regulator, sets the 'K' factor as a percentage increase or decrease for each year in a 5 year period. As a result, we're allowed an overall increase or decrease in our charges for each year.

This is an **average** increase or decrease in our charges. The actual percentage increase or decrease in your bill may be higher or lower than this average.

Where can I obtain a list of your charges?

We review our charges annually and therefore publish them each year, once Ofwat approval for them has been obtained.

We put our charges for the new financial year on our website each year from March 1st. We also produce a free publication listing all our charges. This is our Charges Scheme and is available from April 1st. Please contact us if you'd like a copy.

Our Charges Scheme includes all of our charges for water and sewerage services, as well as standard charges relating to water supply connections, communication pipes, meters, standpipes, bowsers and certain kinds of information requests.

How do you charge me?

We send you a bill which itemises charges for water and sewerage services separately. If you only receive one of these services, we only charge for that service.

If we provide your water supply but another company provides your sewerage, we issue a bill on behalf of both companies. If we provide your sewerage but another company provides your water supply, the other company issues the bill.

Your bill will include variable charges, which depend upon either the rateable value of your home or – if you've a water meter – the amount of water you use. It will also include fixed charges known as standing charges. These are for a set amount each year and therefore they don't vary according to the rateable value of your home or the amount of water you use. Because a significant proportion of the costs we incur in providing our services are fixed, it makes sense that each customer contributes the same amount toward these costs. For customers with a water meter the standing charge also reflects the size and type of meter, as well as the costs of reading and maintaining it.

If your property isn't connected for surface water drainage, you may be entitled to a rebate. Surface water is the rainwater that falls onto your property. In most cases it drains to the public sewer and we include the cost of removing it in your sewerage charges.

If your property has a septic tank which overflows or has some other connection to the public sewer, you may be entitled to a rebate against your sewerage charges and to a free emptying of the tank. Please contact us for further advice and information on 08451 24 24 24.

How do you calculate rateable value charges?

If you don't have a water meter, we base your charges on the rateable value of your home.

The Inland Revenue's Valuation Office assessed rateable values until 31 March 1990. Under current legislation, those rateable values are still valid for water and sewerage charges; we'll only re-assess if you significantly alter the structure of your home, or if you change from non-domestic to domestic use. If you change from domestic to non-domestic or to mixed use (partly domestic, partly non-domestic), we'll need to carry out a survey of your property to see whether you require a water meter. Please contact us without delay to arrange a survey.

Is it the same as the old 'water rates'?

Yes. The term 'water rates' comes from when water and sewerage charges were part of local councils' General Rates. In the mid 1970s, the government set up water authorities, which issued bills for water and sewerage services separately from the General Rates, but still based on the same rateable value assessments. This continued when the government established private water and sewerage companies in 1989, even though the Community Charge, and later the Council Tax, replaced the General Rates.

Are my water charges today related to my Council Tax band?

No, we still base charges for water and sewerage services on the rateable value of your home.

When do I have to pay rateable value charges?

They're payable in advance, because we know the full year's charge right from the start. Your Council Tax works in the same way. If it's easier, however, you can pay your bill by instalments during the year – see the section below, 'When can I pay my bill?'.

Who has a water meter?

Houses built since 1990 have water meters, and many other customers have them fitted, because they pay less, if they don't use much water.

If you move into a property with a water meter, you won't have the option of water charges based on rateable value. We'll read the meter and bill you according to how much water you use.

How can I find out more about water meters?

If you're interested in having a water meter installed, please call us on 0845 1 24 24 24 or visit our website at yorkshirewater.com for more information about our free meter option for domestic customers.

We produce a separate Code of Practice leaflet about meters. For a copy of this leaflet, please call us.

How do you calculate water meter charges?

If you've a water meter, we base our charges on the amount of water you use.

We'll read your meter at least once a year, provided we can gain access to do so. If we haven't read your meter, we'll send you an estimated bill based on how much water you usually use at that time of year. You may wish to provide your own reading. If so, please contact us at yorkshirewater.com or call our automated telephone service on 0845 1 24 72 47.

You pay for the water you use in arrears. We then add a standing charge for the quarter – for example from 1st April to 30th June – so you'll usually pay some of it in advance.

How often will I get a bill?

We send out meter bills quarterly, or you can pay by instalments throughout the year with our monthly Payment Plan. If you choose this, you'll receive only one statement of account each year. Please see the section called "When can I pay my bill?".

What if I've a meter and use a lot of water?

We understand that some customers with a water meter find it difficult to pay their bills, because they need to use large amounts of water.

We may however be able to provide some assistance. If you receive certain benefits or tax credits and use large quantities of water, you may be eligible for a special tariff called WaterSure.

We determine who is eligible for this tariff using criteria set by the Government. If you meet these requirements, then the charge that you'll pay is a fixed amount per year, equivalent to the average household bill.

You must be in receipt of one of these qualifying benefits or tax credits: council tax benefit, housing benefit, income support, income-based jobseeker's allowance, state pension credit, child tax credit (unless you only receive the family element) or working tax credit.

If you receive a qualifying benefit or tax credit and have a large family, you may apply for this tariff. At least three children under the age of 19 must live at the property and be in full-time education. You'll need to complete an application and return it with proof of your benefit or tax credit and a copy of your latest Child Benefit award.

If you receive a qualifying benefit or tax credit and someone in your household suffers from a medical condition which results in increased water usage, you may also apply for this tariff. You'll need to complete an application and return it with proof of your benefit or tax

credit. We'll also need medical proof or a medically qualified person to countersign your application. For more information about WaterSure or to request an application form, please visit yorkshirewater.com/meter or call 0845 1 24 24 24.

Please note that you'll need to re-apply each year for WaterSure to prove that you're still eligible.

Who's responsible for paying the water bill?

In law, the user of the supply has to pay water and sewerage charges, unless a third party, such as a landlord, writes to us to say he or she will pay.

When can I pay my bill?

If you receive a rateable value bill, you can pay:

- In full on April 1st.
- Half-yearly on April 1st and October 1st.
- By up to 12 instalments.
- By fortnightly or weekly instalments, if you're on a low or fixed income.

If you receive a meter bill, you can pay:

- Quarterly when you get your bill.
- By up to 12 monthly instalments on a Payment Plan.
- By fortnightly or weekly instalments, if you're on a low or fixed income.

If you choose to pay by cash instalments, we'll send you a payment booklet.

How can I pay my bill?

• **Direct Debit** – the easiest way to pay your bill is by Direct Debit, whether you've a rateable value or meter bill and whether you wish to pay your bill in full or by instalments. Where possible we offer a choice of payment dates. There are no queues, no counter fees and no postage costs, if you pay this way. Visit yorkshirewater.com or call us on 08451 24 24 24 to arrange Direct Debit payments.

• **PayPoint** – you don't pay a counter fee if you pay your bill in cash at retail outlets, where you see the PayPoint sign.

• **Maestro/Visa Delta/Visa Debit card or Credit Card** – a secure and easy way to pay, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call us on 08451 24 24 24, visit yorkshirewater.com or use our automated telephone services on 08451 24 72 47. Please note there is a bank handling fee, if you use your credit card.