

Our guarantees to you

Customer Guarantee Scheme summary



Our guarantees to you

We are dedicated to providing high quality services to all our customers.

This commitment is backed up by our Customer Guarantee Scheme, which is summarised in this leaflet. You can get a copy of the full scheme by downloading a copy from our website at www.thameswater.co.uk, or by telephoning our Customer Centre on 0845 9200 800. In the event of any conflict between this summary and the detailed scheme, the provisions of the detailed scheme will take precedence.

This scheme satisfies the requirement set out in the Water Supply and Sewerage Services (Customer Service Standards) Regulations, known as the Guaranteed Standards of Service, and includes some additional enhancements. It details the payment we have to make if we do not meet our normal high standards of service in any of the areas listed in this leaflet.

If we fail to meet our guaranteed standards, we will normally make the payment automatically. If we fail to credit your account or send an automatic payment, you may be entitled to a penalty payment.

Keeping appointments

When we arrange an appointment, which may not be appropriate in emergency situations, we will tell you whether we will come

before or after 1:00pm; or we will provide a 2 hour time band for the visit. In exceptional circumstances we may also agree a specific time for the visit. If we cannot keep the appointment in the correct way, we will give you 24 hours prior notice.

If we do not keep the appointment, (ie. if we do not arrive before or after the 1.00pm cut-off point as appropriate, if we do not arrive within the 2 hour time band, or if we do not arrive within 15 minutes either side of the specified time we have given), we will automatically pay you £50.

Questions about your bill and changing payment arrangements

If you write to us about the accuracy of your water and/or wastewater services bill we will reply within 10 working days of receipt of your letter.

If you write to ask us to change your payment arrangements we will reply within 10 working days of receipt of your letter if we can comply with your request. If we cannot agree to a new arrangement we will let you know within 5 working days of receipt of your letter. Where we do not keep these promises, we will automatically pay you £30.

Responding to complaints

If you write to us to complain about our water or wastewater services, we will reply within 10 working days of receiving your letter. If we do not keep to this time limit we will automatically pay you £30.

Customers requiring additional assistance

We will respond to written enquiries about our Special Needs Services within 5 working days of receipt. We will also process written applications for additional assistance within 5 working days of receipt. Otherwise we will pay you £20 automatically.

Flooding from sewers

If our sewer overflows and effluent gets into your building (or beneath a suspended floor) we will automatically make you a payment equal to your wastewater services charges for the year of the flooding, each time this happens, with a minimum payment of £150 up to a maximum payment of £1,000.

Where effluent overflows from our sewer and enters your land but does not enter your building, you can claim a payment from us if you experience actual loss, damage or serious loss of amenity. This payment will be equal to half of your wastewater services charges each time this happens, with a minimum payment of £75 and a maximum payment of £500.

This guarantee does not apply if the flooding was caused by exceptional weather conditions, industrial action by our employees or problems with your own pipework. It also won't apply where it is not practical for us to identify the customer affected and you do not claim within three months of the flooding occurring.

Interrupting and restoring the water supply

We sometimes have to interrupt your water supply to mend leaks, connect new customers and make improvements. We will give you notice of planned interruptions and we guarantee to restore your water supply within the time we tell you. We will give you 48 hours notice in writing if a planned interruption is going to last more than 4 hours.

If we fail to restore your supply by the time stated or we do not give 48 hours notice, we will automatically pay domestic customers £30 and commercial customers £50. Also, for each additional full 24 hours that the supply is unavailable, domestic customers will receive a further £10 and all other customers £25.

If there is an unplanned interruption, for example when a water main bursts, we will put your water supply back on within 12 hours of being told about the problem. Some of our larger mains can be more difficult to mend quickly, but we guarantee to restore your water within 48 hours. Where practical and reasonable, we will tell you when your supply will be back on as soon as we can set a time.

If we fail to meet the above standards, we will automatically pay our domestic customers £30 and commercial customers £50. Also, for each additional full 24 hours that the supply is unavailable, domestic customers will receive a further £10 and all other customers £25.

If the water supply is interrupted for 6 hours or more, as a result of our works, we will let you know where an alternative water supply may be obtained.

Low water pressure

We aim to maintain your water pressure so that it does not fall below our normal standard. If the water pressure at the end of our pipes (which usually end at the boundary stop tap or edge of the street) falls below a level which will deliver seven metres head of pressure, you can claim £30. As a guide, if you have a suitable single service pipe, the first tap in your home should be able to fill a 4.5 litre/one gallon bucket in 30 seconds with all the other taps and appliances turned off.

To qualify for a payment you must have experienced such loss of pressure twice in a 28-day period, on each occasion lasting more than 1 hour. If, as a Company, we are aware of the problem, we will make a payment. If not, you must make a claim within 3 months. You are entitled to only one payment in any financial year.

This guarantee does not apply if we did not cause the low pressure, or if it was caused by work we have to do to our supply network, industrial action by our employees or because of drought.

‘Restriction of use’ notice

If we have to issue you with a ‘Restriction of use’ notice as a result of problems with our supply, we will make a payment of £30 to you automatically, each time this happens.

This guarantee does not apply if we did not cause the problems with our supply, or if it was caused by severe weather conditions or industrial action by our employees.

Payments and credits

For broken appointments, written complaints, billing enquiries and written enquiries about additional assistance, we will make the appropriate payment within 10 working days of it becoming due. If we do not do this we will automatically pay a further £10 penalty payment.

In all other cases (except water pressure), payments will be made within 20 working days of the incident. If we fail to make one of these payments automatically a penalty payment of £20 for domestic premises, and £50 in all other cases, can be claimed.

How to make a claim

Naturally, we are doing our best to make sure that we meet these standards of service. If we do fail to meet a guaranteed standard of service we will send your payment automatically whenever necessary, or you can make a claim by contacting our Customer Centre.

How we will pay you

If we fail to meet a guaranteed standard of service, we will normally add a credit to your account. We will let you know we have done this, either in writing or by telephone.

If you do not have an account with us, we will send you a cheque.

Liability

If you have a dispute with us regarding these guaranteed standards, or feel we have acted unfairly by denying a payment under the Customer Guarantee Scheme, you can ask Ofwat – who is the independent Regulator for the water industry – to look into the matter on your behalf. If you want to do this write to:

Ofwat
Centre City Tower
7 Hill Street
Birmingham
B5 4UA

Any payments we make to you under this scheme do not affect your legal rights and you can still take other action for any loss or damage you suffer. But if we do make a payment under this scheme, it does not mean that we have any extra liability.

This leaflet is intended to be a Clear English guide to our guaranteed service levels. Some of the guarantees in this leaflet are made over and above the minimum standards given in the relevant statutory regulations.

Our Customer Guarantee Scheme supports our dedication to provide high quality services to all our customers.

Getting in touch with us

Online www.thameswater.co.uk

We offer a range of online services:

Make a payment, tell us you're moving, find water-saving tips, request a meter, and more.

By telephone

Billing

0845 9200 888

Minicom service if you are deaf or hard of hearing:

0845 7200 899

We have a wide range of self-service options available 24 hours a day, including:

- Pay your bill with a debit or credit card and hear your balance
- Set up a Direct Debit or payment plan
- Provide a meter reading or request a meter

For queries relating to the payment of your bill, change of address, meter readings and other billing queries, you can speak with our Customer Service Team.

Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm

Saturday 8am to 1pm

Water and Wastewater Services

0845 9200 800

Minicom service if you are deaf or hard of hearing:

0845 7200 898

- For water and wastewater enquiries
- For emergencies
- Other non-billing enquiries

To contact us from abroad +44 1793 366011

By post

Thames Water, PO Box 286, Swindon, SN38 2RA

This leaflet can be supplied in Braille, large print or audio tape upon request.