

## ICOSA WATER SERVICES LIMITED

---

### CODE OF PRACTICE 2021

### INFORMATION HELP AND ADVICE FOR HOUSEHOLD CUSTOMERS



## CONTENTS

### 1 Introduction

Welcome, About Icosa Water, Icosa Water as a regulated company, Contacting Icosa Water

### 2 Our Water Services

Your water, Water quality, Keeping up the pressure, Water quantity & interruptions to supply, Water restrictions, Pipe ownership & responsibility

### 3 Wastewater Services

Sewerage services, Sewers & drains, Sewers & drains ownership & responsibility, Sewer flooding

### 4 Charges, Bills & Meters

Charges for customers without meters, Charges for customers with meters, Unexplained high bill, Responsibility for paying your bill, Paying your bill, What to do if you can't pay, If you don't pay, Queries about your bill, WaterDirect scheme, Your water meter, Meter readings, Moving your meter

### 5 WaterSure Scheme

### 6 Priority Services

### 7 Access to Private Property

Pipe laying powers on private land

### 8 Leakage

Including our Code of Practice on Leakage

### 9 Moving Property

### 10 Managing Debt

Including our Code of Practice on Debt

### 11 Making a Complaint

What you can expect, If you are unhappy with our response, Complaints about employees, Further information, Arbitration, Legal proceedings, Disputes determined by Ofwat

### 12 Our Guaranteed Standard Services

### 13 New connections

New water connection, New sewer connection, Requirement for new main and/or sewer, Self-lay connection, Building work near public sewers

### 14 Useful information

Other organisations



# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Welcome to Icosa Water

Icosa Water Services Ltd (Icosa Water) operates under a Licence which was granted by the Secretary of State under the Water Industry Act 1991 for the provision of Water Services. The Act also establishes a strengthened framework of customer protection.

We operate under the following Regulatory Framework

- i) For each five year period Ofwat determines how much revenue water companies need to fund their services. Companies set annual charges based on these revenue allowances, plus inflation\*. For more information please refer to our Charges Scheme on our website [www.icosawater.co.uk](http://www.icosawater.co.uk).
- ii) The Secretary of State has laid down specific standards of drinking water quality with which we have to comply; assisted by the Drinking Water Inspectorate which monitors the quality of the water we supply and ensures that the legal standards are met. It is a criminal offence for a water company to supply water that is found to be unfit for human consumption and, as a consequence, the Secretary of State can authorise criminal proceedings to be instigated. The Secretary of State can also lay down other standards that we must meet when carrying out our basic water supply duties.
- iii) The Environment Agency regulates us in our taking water from, and discharging effluent to, rivers and other inland waters.
- iv) Defra (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) is the Government department responsible for environmental matters. Government Ministers bring forward statutes and regulations for the water sector through this department. Non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) work closely with Defra to help deliver their strategies. Key NDPBs for the water industry are the Environment Agency, the Drinking Water Inspectorate and Ofwat.

These bodies are responsible to Government Ministers for all aspects of their organisation and performance and are accountable to Parliament through Ministers. A list of useful telephone numbers and addresses can be found in section 13. \* The measure of inflation used is the Retail Price Index (RPI) in the November prior to the beginning of the charging year (April).

- v) We also work with the Consumer Council for Water (CCWater) which is the independent voice for all water consumers in England and Wales. For more information visit [www.ccwater.org.uk](http://www.ccwater.org.uk).

Icosa Water is an independent water and sewerage company that delivers water and/or sewerage services to both household and business customers in areas across England and Wales, where it is authorised under its licence to do so.

As our customer you are connected to our new water network enjoying high-quality drinking water and an efficient wastewater service, which we aim to deliver with outstanding customer service.

This document is called our Customer Code of Practice which has been prepared under Condition G of Icosa Water's Conditions of Appointment and contains information, advice and helps explain the services we offer to our customers.

We provide a number of Codes of Practice, also covering leakage problems, access to private property and debt management. These Codes of Practice were produced after consultation with the Consumer Council for Water (CCWater) and approved by Ofwat (the Water Services Regulation Authority). You can find all of these documents on our website [icosawater.co.uk](http://icosawater.co.uk) or contact our Customer Service Team on **0330 111 0780** for copies to be sent to you.

All our literature is available in other formats such as Braille or large print on request.

Please be aware that although the majority of our policies included are also applicable to our nondomestic customer base, the WaterSure tariff, is only available to domestic customers who apply successfully.



All the guarantees that we make in our Guaranteed Service Standards apply to our household and business customers.

This document provides details of the water and sewerage services that we provide. If you are unsure which services you receive from us, you can find this information by:

- Contacting our Customer Services Team
- Visiting our website [icosawater.co.uk](http://icosawater.co.uk)
- You can also find details of the services you receive from us on your bill

## 1.2 About Icosa Water

Icosa Water Services Ltd is an independent private company established in 2015 with a view to providing water and sewerage services to household and business consumers. We are proud to have a team with a long-standing track record of providing excellent water and wastewater services to both household and business customers.

Our licence to provide water and sewerage services has been awarded by the Secretary of State for the Environment. There are many laws and regulations that govern what we do and the rights, which you have as a customer. A number of industry regulators ensure that we keep to the rules and meet our obligations as a licensed company. More details about these regulators and their responsibilities can be found in section 1.3 below.

As an independent company without a regional boundary, Icosa Water is licensed to operate under a process known as a “New Appointment and Variation” (NAV). Icosa will submit an application to Ofwat to serve a particular area and to provide water and/or sewerage services to that area.

If Ofwat is assured that certain legislative criteria have been satisfied, Ofwat will grant Icosa Water a “NAV” to serve that area. You can find details of the areas we serve on our website [icosawater.co.uk](http://icosawater.co.uk). It is this appointment that makes us responsible for providing you with the necessary services and which allows us to charge you for those services.

We have prepared a detailed charges scheme that sets out the charges payable for the services that we provide. Our charges schemes can be found on our website.

## 1.3 Icosa Water as a regulated company

There are a number of regulators that regulate different areas of the water and sewerage industry.

### DEFRA

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has overall responsibility for all aspects of water law and policy in England, including water supply, water resources management and the regulatory systems for the water environment, drinking water and water industry.

The Secretary of State and Ministers are supported and advised by the Water Directorate within Defra.

### The Water Services Regulation Authority (Ofwat)

Ofwat is the economic regulator of water services in England and Wales. Essentially Ofwat must ensure that water companies provide household and business customers with a good quality service and value for money. Ofwat regulates the charges that we charge our customers.

### The Consumer Council for Water (CCWater)

CCWater represents domestic and business customers in England and Wales, with regard to costs, value for money and quality of service. CCWater also investigates customer complaints which have not been resolved



by the water company and in this way acts as the equivalent of the Ombudsman Services for energy and telecommunications.

### **Environment Agency**

The abstraction, treatment and discharge of water and wastewater has a significant impact on the environment. Monitoring environmental effects, conserving water resources and controlling and preventing pollution is dealt with by the Environment Agency (EA).

### **Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI)**

Water is constantly being tested for its quality and in England and Wales, the DWI has responsibility for water quality and to ensure that all water delivered to consumers is fit for consumption. Water companies have a duty under the industry legislation to supply water that is wholesome at the point of supply.

Contact details for the above organisations can be found in Section 14.

## **1.4 Contacting Icosa Water**

There are a number of ways in which you can contact us.

You can write to us at:

For Billing Enquiries  
Icosa Water  
Rocfort Road  
Snodland  
Kent  
ME6 5AH

### **For General Enquiries:**

Icosa Water Services  
Sophia House  
28 Cathedral Road  
Cardiff  
CF11 9LJ

If you have any queries, please feel free us on the following numbers:

**Billing** – 0333 000 0113

**General Enquiries** - 0330 111 0780

You can also email us at the following email address:

### **Billing**

**billing@icosawater.co.uk**

### **General Enquiries**

**customerservices@icosawater.co.uk**

You can visit our website at:

**www.icosawater.co.uk**

Our office hours are:



General queries and billing:  
Monday – Friday 8.30am – 5.30pm; excluding bank holidays

Water or drainage emergencies:  
Please call our 24 hour emergency number on **0330 111 2014**



## 2 OUR WATER SERVICES

### 2.1 Your Water

As a regulated company, we are required by the Water Industry Act 1991 generally within our area of responsibility, to:

- Develop and maintain an efficient and economical system of water supply
- Provide supplies of water to premises and
- Maintain, improve and extend our water mains and other pipes such as to manage our network and resources effectively.

These duties are enforceable by the Secretary of State for the environment food and rural affairs.

If you are not sure whether you fall within our area of responsibility and whether we provide your water services, you can give our Customer Services Team a call on **0330 111 0780** or you can examine your bill. Your bill should clearly identify the company that provides your water services.

### 2.2 Water Quality

#### Water quality regulations and sampling

The quality of our water supply is checked and monitored by the Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI) against the Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations 2000 (as amended). These regulations cover how the water should taste, what it should look like and what it should smell like. Icosa Water is also required to take continuous quality samples to check its chemical content and to monitor the water's quality.

Leaflets on drinking water quality are regularly updated and you can find copies on our website [icosawater.co.uk](http://icosawater.co.uk).

In some cases, your water could appear to be brown in colour or have a similar cloudy discolouration. This is not necessarily harmful to your health. Discolouration can be caused by maintenance work that we have carried out on nearby pipework which has disturbed sediments in the pipes. In some cases, where air is trapped in water mains, your water can appear to be a milky white colour. To resolve any such discolouration, run your tap for a few minutes until it clears.

At any time, you are concerned about your drinking water you can call our Customer Services Team on **0330 111 0780**. Our team is qualified to get to the bottom of your concerns by asking you a few simple questions. In some instances, we may need to come and take water samples from your taps and inspect your plumbing system. If this is necessary, we will be sure to make an appointment with you to attend your home at a convenient time.

We might need to take a sample away for laboratory analysis. If we are concerned about anything unusual, we will be sure to advise you on what you can do until the analysis is complete.

Under certain circumstances we may need to issue customers with a restriction of use notice. You may be required to boil your water before using it or you may be required not to use it at all. We will be sure to let you know if this is the case. Depending on the circumstances, we may be required to pay you a sum of money under our guaranteed standards scheme.

#### Water pipework and appliances

The quality of the water supplied to your taps can also be affected by internal plumbing works carried out at your home. As a customer responsible for the internal plumbing in your home you should ensure that any such plumbing works complies with the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999. These regulations are national requirements for the design, installation, composition and maintenance of water fixtures and fittings.



All water fittings must comply with these regulations and can be subject to inspection. You can find a copy of these regulations by going to: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/1999/1148/contents/made>

Icosa Water is still responsible for water quality and so can under certain circumstances enter properties and land to investigate compliance with these regulations or take samples to check water quality. We will call at a reasonable time and will give you appropriate notice.

We will contact you 24 hours prior to investigation of regulatory compliance or in the case of monitoring water quality. In all other cases, we will give 7 days' notice. If we have not given you appropriate notice you may refuse entry, unless there is an emergency.

### 2.3 Keeping Up the Pressure

Water pressure is the force of water as it comes out of your tap when it is turned on fully. Ofwat has published water pressure guidance which suggests a minimum guaranteed pressure of 7 metres head – which means the pressure necessary to raise water to a height of 7 metres, typically the height of a storage tank in a roof cavity. We aim to supply water at the stop tap on the boundary of your property at a minimum pressure of 9 metres head. This gives a minimum flow from a ground-floor tap of 9 litres per minute.

However, the pressure of your water is affected by many factors, including:

- The height of your property in relation to our water main and relevant service reservoir.
- The condition of your private supply pipe.
- If the stop tap is not turned on sufficiently.
- Whether your property shares a supply pipe with any other property.
- Peak demand conditions.

As a result, you may sometimes experience lower pressure.

If your water pressure falls substantially below normal, please let us know. We will first check whether this is due to an operational fault, for example a burst main. If not, then we will carry out further checks with pressure loggers. If we have identified a pressure level in the communication pipe below seven metres static head for at least 1 hour on 2 separate occasions within a 28-day period, you are automatically entitled to a payment equivalent to that offered by the upstream regional water company for the area.

It is sometimes difficult to know who has been affected by low pressure. If you were affected and we have not credited your account, please call us within 3 months of the last of the 2 occasions of low pressure.

If significantly high-water pressure causes any damage to your water fittings as a result of our negligence, we will pay for the cost of any repairs to these fittings.

Please note that if low pressure is due to system maintenance or drought, the above will not be applicable.

For more information, contact us on **0330 111 0780** or by email at [customerservices@icosawater.co.uk](mailto:customerservices@icosawater.co.uk).

### 2.4 Water quantity and interruptions to supply.

Occasionally we need to turn off the water supply to carry out essential, planned work. We will let you know in advance and tell you when the supply will be restored.

For interruptions of more than four hours, we will give you at least 48 hours' notice in writing. We will restore the supply by the time stated in the notice.





If we fail to correctly notify you of the interruption or if the supply is not restored within the stated time, we'll credit your water services account with a payment equivalent to that offered by the upstream regional water company for the area.

After an emergency or unplanned interruption, we will restore supplies within 12 hours for most bursts. If we fail to restore your supply within the stated time, we will credit your water services account with a payment that is equivalent to that offered by the upstream regional water company for the area with an additional payment for every 12 hours that you remain without water. Payments will be made within 20 working days.

If we fail to make a payment within this time, we will be entitled to an additional penalty payment credited to your account.

It is sometimes difficult to know who has been affected by these interruptions. If you were affected and we have not credited your account, please contact us on **0330 111 0780**.

If you experience three or more unplanned interruptions lasting more than 15 hours in total within a 12-month period, you can claim £25.

## **2.5 Water restrictions**

We have a duty to provide you with a constant supply of water which is sufficient for domestic purposes, meaning water for drinking, washing, cooking, central heating and sanitation. Under normal circumstances there will be enough water for everyone so that we can provide a continuous supply of water to all our customers. However, exceptional weather conditions might restrict our ability to provide a continuous supply of water.

During a drought period we may have to restrict use of hosepipes (temporary use restrictions) to conserve water supplies so that everyone can continue to receive enough for essential purposes. You may still water your garden using watering cans and buckets. If we do have to restrict the use of hosepipes, this will apply to all household customers within the affected area.

## **2.6 Pipe ownership and responsibility**

Icosa Water owns and maintains the network of water mains which carry water to the homes and businesses in your area. Your property is connected to our water main by a pipe known as a 'service pipe'. The service pipe is made up of two sections, the 'communications pipe' and the 'supply pipe'.

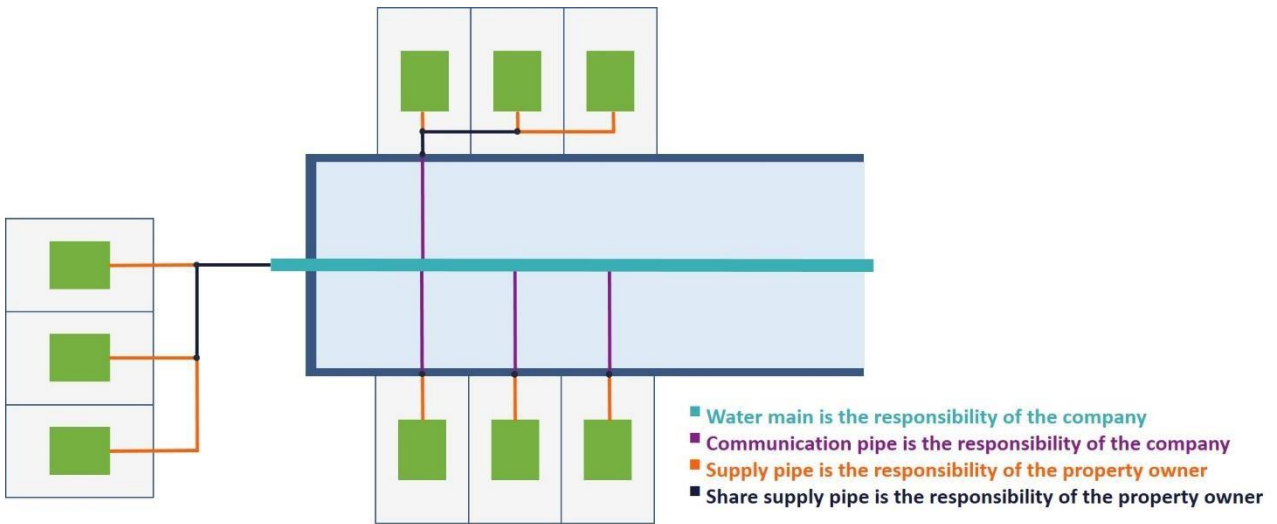
The communications pipe is the section of pipe between the water main (in the street) and the boundary of your property. This pipe work usually ends in the footpath outside your property and is where we would install a stop-tap and water meter. The communications pipe is our responsibility.

The supply pipe is the section of pipe which runs from the boundary of your property (the company stop-tap) to the first fitting or stop-tap in your home. You are responsible for the supply pipe and all other internal fittings.

In some instances, you may share a supply pipe with your neighbour(s), in which case you are all responsible for it.

You must maintain your supply pipe in good order. Most properties have a separate stop-tap where the supply pipe enters the building. You are advised to know the location of this stop-tap so that it can be shut off in an emergency. This is particularly important in advance of any planned works you are undertaking inside your property.





## 3 WASTEWATER SERVICES

As a regulated sewerage company, we are required by the Water Industry Act 1991 generally within our area of responsibility:

- To provide, improve and extend a system of public sewers, and to cleanse and maintain them to ensure that our area is effectively drained; and
- To make provision for emptying our sewers and the treatment of sewage.

As with our responsibilities relating to water services, these duties are enforceable by the Secretary of State or, with her consent, the Director General of Water Services.

If you are not sure whether you fall within our area and whether we provide your sewerage services, you can give us a call on **0333 000 0113** or you can examine your bill. Your bill should clearly identify the company that provides your sewerage services.

### 3.1 Sewerage services

The sewerage system serving your home and your area which we own and operate is designed to effectively take away wastewater from your drains to wastewater treatment works for treatment and disposal.

We remove both foul water (wastewater from your toilets, showers, baths and sinks) and surface water (rainwater). There are two possible options for treating the wastewater in your area, depending on the circumstances. On the one hand, we may connect our sewers to those of the regional incumbent's sewerage network for treatment and disposal by that company. On the other hand, we may install and operate an 'on-site' treatment plant which will treat the areas' wastewater locally and discharge it in accordance with the requirements laid down by the Environment Agency. The Environment Agency monitors our compliance with environmental legislation.

If you notice or experience a problem relating to our sewerage system, please telephone us on **0330 111 2014**.

In the case of private drains and sewers, the owners of the drain or sewer, or the occupiers of any property served by the drain or sewer are responsible.

If you experience a problem with a private drain or sewer and require help, you should contact a plumber or drainage contractor.

### 3.2 Sewers and drains

A sewer carries sewage, wastewater and rainfall from more than one property whereas a drain carries foul sewage, wastewater or rainfall from a single property.

There are various types of sewers:

- Surface water sewers which carry rainwater from roofs and hard standings directly into rivers and the sea.
- Foul sewers which carry lavatory waste and used water from cooking, cleaning and washing to wastewater treatment works.
- Combined sewers which carry both of the above to wastewater treatment works.

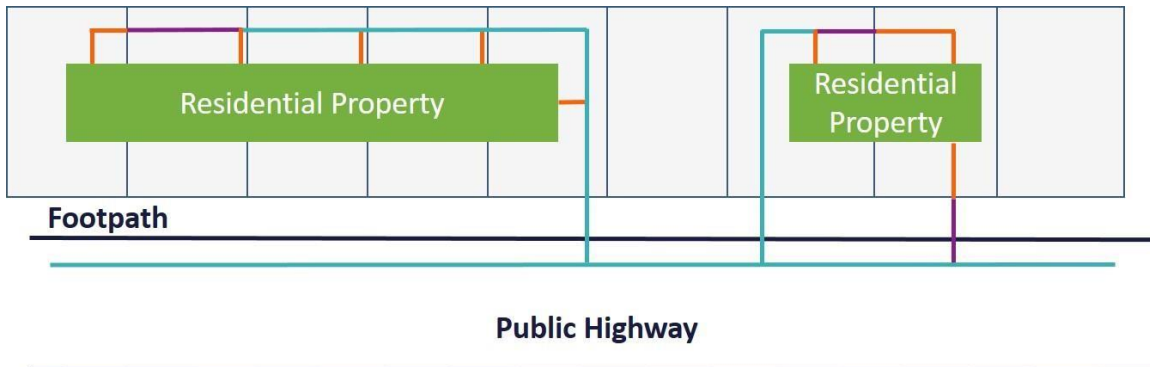


### 3.3 Sewers and drains ownership and responsibility.

Most of our sewers are situated under roads or public open spaces. However, we also own pipework which runs through private land and in such cases, we have a right to access to maintain the sewers.

We are responsible for maintaining these public sewers and lateral drains (the section of a drain that serves only a single property but is outside the curtilage of the property).

Where we need to lay or maintain pipework in your land, we have a legal right to do so. We will observe the Code of Practice for Pipe laying, which has been produced to set out the landowner's rights and protect your interests. You can obtain a full copy from our website [icosawater.co.uk](http://icosawater.co.uk).



- **Public sewer is the responsibility of the sewerage company**
- **Drain is the responsibility of the property owner**
- **Lateral is the responsibility of the sewerage company**

Most customers are only responsible for the pipes (drains) within their property boundary and which serve their property alone. We are not responsible for clearing blockages in private drains (pipes serving only your property, and within the curtilage of your property) and you must pay any contractors you call to unblock them.

However, if we find that a blockage is not our responsibility (i.e. because it is in a private drain) then we will offer to clear the blockage for a charge. We will always obtain your agreement to any charges you will have to pay before we carry out the work.

If you require a copy of maps of our sewers, or you are unsure about the pipes that you are responsible for, please call us on **0333 000 0113** or write to us.

### 3.4 Sewer flooding

We aim to provide adequate capacity in our sewers to protect homes from flooding. However, there can be a number of reasons why a sewer floods, including as a result of blockages, collapses or even vandalism. Sewer blockages can be caused by customers disposing of unsuitable items down their drains.

Avoid flushing the following items down your drains:

- FAT (food, oil and grease solidify as they cool and thus block pipes and sewers).
- sanitary towels, tampons and applicators, nappies, cotton buds, bandages, plasters, condoms, chemicals, medicines and wet wipes.

In the event of an internal or external flooding incident, you can contact us on **0330 111 2014** at any time.

Under the Water Industry Act 1991, sewerage companies are generally not liable for flooding from public sewers. Ofwat accepts this exemption as flooding can be beyond the control of the water companies.



For example, household discharges such as grease, fat and domestic waste can lead to blockages beyond the control of the companies. Ofwat also noted that “sewers will overflow from time to time during periods of exceptional weather”.

Similarly, without the exemption, sewerage companies would face large liabilities for sewer flooding which would lead to substantial increases in customers’ bills. For a sewerage company to be held liable, it has to be proven that it has been negligent i.e. we have done something, or failed to do something, which resulted in the flooding.

You are strongly advised to take out insurance cover for any damage caused by sewer flooding to your property.

Unfortunately, on rare occasions where there is a blockage or collapse in one of our sewers, or where exceptionally heavy rainfall has overloaded our sewer, some properties may experience sewage flooding. If this happens, please call us straight away. We investigate the cause of sewage flooding following all reported incidents. If sewage enters your home from our sewer network, we aim to inspect the problem within 4 hours of you letting us know.

We will also provide a full clean up service where possible within 12 hours (internal flooding) or within 24 hours (external flooding).

Where the sewage flooding enters your home, we automatically refund your sewerage charge for the year (minimum payment £150 up to a maximum of £1,000 per incident). In addition to this sum, we will automatically pay you up to £100 for the disturbance the sewage flooding causes. We will determine the amount payable on a case-by-case basis. Where the sewage flooding has caused damage to your home or contents, we will consider making a contribution to your uninsured losses.

If you have critical health related circumstances, at the time of the sewage flooding, and you arrange to move into temporary accommodation we will consider making a discretionary payment of up to £50 per day, up to a maximum of £500 towards your costs.

If sewage enters your garden from our sewer network, we aim to inspect the problem the same day you let us know. Where the sewage flooding enters only your land or garden, you can claim back a sum equal to half of your sewerage charges for the year (minimum payment £75 up to a maximum of £500 per incident).

Your claim will only be valid if you were materially affected by the sewage flooding incident to your land or garden. You will therefore need to show or explain the effect of the sewage flooding, on your land or garden, when you make a claim.

Normally, we will make this assessment when we visit to view the sewage flooding and we will leave a claim form with you if we consider you have been materially affected. We only accept written claims for external sewage flooding and will assess your claim based upon the information you provide.

If you are affected by both internal and external sewage flooding in the same incident, we will only pay you for the internal sewage flooding incident. You will not receive an additional payment for the external sewage flooding. We will also assist with the clean-up of the public highway if this has been affected by the sewage flooding incident.

Please note payments will not apply if:

- The flooding happened because of exceptional weather conditions or industrial action.
- The flooding was caused by a customer’s actions or any defect, blockage or inadequacy in the customer’s drain or sewers.
- You notified us more than three months after your property was flooded.



## 4 CHARGES, BILLS & METERS

We review our prices every year and produce a leaflet, which we issue with our bills, detailing our services to you and our charges. You can find details of all our current charges on our website [icosawater.co.uk](http://icosawater.co.uk) alternatively you can contact our Billing Team on **0333 000 0113**.

The tariffs that you pay will depend on the area in which you live. Our charges are capped by our regulator, Ofwat, so that you will not pay any more for our services than you would have paid if your services had been provided by the regional monopoly company in whose area you live.

Please visit our website [icosawater.co.uk](http://icosawater.co.uk) for the Scheme of Charges and more details of the tariffs available in your supply area.

### 4.1 Charges for customers without meters

If you don't have a water meter at your property your bill is based on an unmetered charge basis. This will usually be the chargeable (rateable) value of your property.

Some household charges are based on the Rateable Value (RV) of the property as at 31 March 1990, so part of the bill is based on a charge for each pound of the RV.

Unmetered customers pay:

- A charge for water based on RV.
- A water standing charge.
- A charge for water recycling (including sewerage) based on RV.
- A water recycling (including sewerage) standing charge.

Although rateable values are no longer set by councils following abolition of the domestic rating system, we are still entitled to use the values previously fixed. Customers interested in switching to a meter should call our Billing Team on **0333 000 0113**.

If you asked to have a meter fitted and for some reason couldn't, you may be on our assessed household charge, based on the number of bedrooms at your property.

### 4.2 Charges for customers with meters

The majority of properties we serve are supplied by a water meter. If you have a water meter, we charge you on the amount of water recorded by your meter plus a fixed charge. The wastewater services part of the bill is also based on your meter readings.

We will send your bill every 6 months based on an actual meter reading, taken whenever we can. If we send you an estimated bill, we will adjust your bill when the meter is next read. Or, if safe to do so, you can read your own meter and let us know your meter reading at [icosawater.co.uk](http://icosawater.co.uk). We'll then send you an updated bill. You can also call us on **0333 000 0113** to submit your meter reading.

We aim to read your meter at least once a year, to ensure you receive at least 1 bill per year based on an actual meter reading rather than an estimate.

Most metered customers pay:

- A charge for the quantity of water used, based on the amount of water used as measured by the water meter.
- A standing (fixed) charge which covers the cost of reading and maintaining the meter
- A charge for water recycling (including sewerage), normally based on 90% of the water supplied as measured by the meter.



- The 10% 'reduction' allows for activities like garden watering and car washing. However, if you can demonstrate that less than 90% of your water is returned to our sewer, please contact us to discuss whether a greater 'allowance' is appropriate.
- A standing charge for water recycling/sewerage services, which cover the costs of maintaining the sewerage system and of disposing of any surface water drainage.

These charges should all be reflected on your bill.

Although no usage charges will apply to properties that are unoccupied, standing charges will still apply. These charges will continue to accrue unless a specific request has been submitted to us to turn off your supply.

If your property is not connected to a surface water drain, we will not charge you for this service. If you believe you are being incorrectly charged, then please contact the Billing Team on **0333 000 0113**.

Please note that if we are not the water or wastewater provider for your area, you will need to contact your other provider. If you are unsure, please contact our Billing Team on **0333 000 0113**.

### 4.3 Unexplained high bill - Leakage

If your meter reading is higher than usual it is possible that you have a leak. You are responsible for repairing any leakage on your supply pipe, although we can offer you useful advice on repairing such leaks.

If the leak is on our system, you may be entitled to a leakage allowance. Details of how leaks are dealt with and how the leakage allowance works are contained in our Code of Practice on Leakage, which can be obtained free of charge by calling **0333 000 0113** or by downloading it from our website at [icosawater.co.uk](http://icosawater.co.uk).

### 4.4 Responsibility for paying your bill

Whoever is occupying the property is normally responsible for paying the bill. If more than one person shares the property, everyone is responsible, even if the bill is only in one name.

#### Private tenants

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

#### Local authority tenants

If you rent a property from the local authority, they may collect the bills on our behalf. This means your rent will include your water charges. If you don't pay the water charge part of the rent for any reason, the landlord may take legal action against you. You will remain responsible for any bill that is not included in your rent. Charges are applicable when a supply of water is made available for your property, regardless of whether you use the supply.

### 4.5 Paying your bill

We will send your bill out on a bi-annual basis with the full balance due within 10 working days of receipt. You can arrange to pay your bills in monthly, fortnightly or weekly instalments. Please note, it is your responsibility to check your bills. To arrange billing and payment dates and methods, please call us on **0333 000 0113** and we can discuss your circumstances to agree a suitable schedule. Alternatively, you can put your request in writing. Conditions may differ according to the option you choose. If a payment arrangement is set up, you must keep to the agreement. If you break the agreement, the whole debt becomes due.

You have a choice of how to pay your bill. All these services are free unless otherwise stated.



### Direct debit

Contact us on **0333 000 0113** to set up a Direct Debit.

### Home or telephone banking

You will need:

- Our bank account number 81029932
- Sort code 40-11-60

You can also pay by bank transfer. Please use your Icosa Water account number as the payment reference so we can tell that you have paid.

### Debit card

Call our **Billing Team on 0333 000 0113**. Have your Icosa Water account number handy

### Post

Cheque made payable to Icosa Water Services Ltd, write your account number on the back and send to Icosa Water Services Ltd, Sophia House, 28 Cathedral Road, Cardiff, CF11 9LJ

REMEMBER post can be slower and costs you a stamp. Please allow 5 days for a payment to reach us. All our other ways to pay are fast and free.

If you are a business customer, payment is due within 28 working days of receipt. All payment options are available except WaterDirect.

## 4.6 What to do if you can't pay

We understand that sometimes it is difficult to manage your financial outgoings, so if you're having problems paying your bills please contact us on **0333 000 0113** as soon as possible to discuss alternative payment options. We are here to help.

## 4.7 What if you don't pay?

Water services have to be paid for. We will send reminders where debts are outstanding or where payments are missed, and we also reserve the right to use debt collection agencies or legal action where appropriate to recover outstanding debts in accordance with our Code of Practice for Debt Recovery. All costs incurred in pursuing unpaid bills will be charged to the customer.

If you do not pay your bill or keep to a payment arrangement, we have agreed with you, we will take the following actions:

- We will send you a Final Notice giving you a minimum of 10 days to pay the outstanding amount. Alternatively, if you do not make payments in accordance with an agreed instalment arrangement, a withdrawal of instalments warning letter will be sent to you requesting that any unpaid instalments are paid within seven days. If we do not receive the outstanding payments, we will cancel the instalment plan and the total outstanding balance will then be due in full.
- If you then do not pay or contact us to agree a payment arrangement, we will send you a notification of intention to file a default, which is a record of non-payment, on your consumer credit file. The notice will explain that if you fail to pay the amount owing to us within 28 days of receipt, we will be entitled to register a default against your consumer credit file with credit reference agencies. This will make it more difficult for you to obtain credit in the future and the default of the payment could stay on your credit file for 6 years.
- If you still do not pay or contact us, we may ask an independent debt collection agency to recover the amount owing. This may result in additional charges being added to your account. You will be advised if we choose to take this action. Alternatively, we will send you a Letter before legal action





which explains the action we will take if payment or contact is not received within 14 days. If you fail to pay or contact us, we will issue a county court claim to recover our charges. You will have to pay the fee for the issue of the claim and our solicitor's costs.

If you are a business customer, we may disconnect your supply if your bill remains unpaid.

#### 4.8 Queries about your bill

If you think your bill is wrong, or you are not liable to pay it, please tell us straight away. Our telephone number is **0333 000 0113** or email us at [billing@icosawater.co.uk](mailto:billing@icosawater.co.uk). We will try to resolve the matter and temporarily stop any recovery action where an account query cannot be resolved immediately.

If we can't agree with you and you are unhappy with our response, see Section 11.

#### 4.9 WaterDirect scheme

The WaterDirect Scheme is run in conjunction with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP). The scheme is designed to help customers who are in arrears on their water charges and are in receipt of the following benefits:

- Employment & Support Allowance (ESA)
- Job Seekers Allowance
- Income Support
- Pension Credit
- Universal Credit

The scheme allows customers who have a minimum of £50 arrears to pay a fixed amount towards their charges directly from their benefit. This helps many customers with budgeting and managing their water bills. If you receive any of these benefits, you will be able to arrange for payments to be made directly from these benefits.

To apply, contact the DWP on 0800 882200 or visit their website at [www.dwp.gov.uk](http://www.dwp.gov.uk).

#### 4.10 Your water meter

##### Locating your meter

We prefer to fit water meters outside, usually in the footpath, where they are easy for us to read and maintain without having to disturb you. There are generally 3 possible locations, namely, (i) in the path at the end of your garden, (ii) in a box on an outside wall or (iii) inside your home under the sink. Sometimes they can be found in the basement or in the downstairs toilet. If the meter is inside your home, it will normally be fitted on the water pipe as it enters your home (usually near to the stop-tap).

Water meters are extremely reliable and accurate and are approved for accuracy by their manufacturer.

If a meter isn't working properly it tends to under record rather than over record. So, where meter readings are higher than expected, this generally means more water has been used since the last meter reading or you've got a leak on your water supply pipe, or inside your home. If you don't think your meter is working properly please contact our Billing Team on **0333 000 0113**.

The meter will be tested where it is and if necessary, be removed and replaced within 40 days. There will not be a charge for the test if the meter is found to be faulty. If you disagree with the results of the initial test, then you can request for the meter to be removed and sent off for independent testing. If the test confirms that the meter complies with the limits of error set in the Measuring Equipment (Cold-water Meters) Regulations 1988, you will be liable for the cost of the test, including replacement of the meter, postage and packaging and other admin costs, up to a maximum of £70.



If the meter is found to be over recording, charges will be adjusted to reflect the correct level of consumption either from the date that the meter became faulty, or if this is not known, then from six months prior to the date of the last reading taken by ourselves.

If the meter is found to be under recording, then the charges will not be backdated. We will provide you with a copy of the meter test report as soon as it becomes available.

## Meter Readings

Icosa Water will read the meter to your property at least once a year. If we fail to do this, we'll credit your account with £20 compensation, provided that we were not restricted from accessing your meter when we attempted to carry out the read. If we have not been able to take a meter reading, we will bill you based on estimated consumption. If you would prefer to be billed on the volume registered by your meter, you can take a reading and contact us with the actual meter read.

Reading the meter is very easy. A typical water meter will have the following dials on it:



The black and white numbers show how many cubic metres of water you've used, and we'll calculate your bill using this reading.

You do not need to provide us with the red and white numbers. These numbers show fractions of one cubic metre.

For our Priority Service registered customers (see section 6), we offer a free meter reading service. We promise to read your meter within 5 working days of your request.

Please note the meter is the property of Icosa Water Services Ltd regardless of its location and it is a criminal offence to tamper with or remove it.

## Moving your meter

For elderly customers and those with additional needs who are having difficulty reading their meter and would like it relocated, we will carry out a free survey. If it is possible to move the meter, we will move it free of charge. If we are unable to move it, we will let you know why. For customers who are unable to read their meter themselves or want to monitor their consumption we can provide a service whereby we read their meter four times a year.

### 4.11 Meter accuracy

If you suspect that the meter is faulty, you can contact us on **0333 000 0113** and request that we test it. Please see section 4.10 above.



## 5 WATERSURE SCHEME

We operate a scheme known as the WaterSure Scheme, which provides alternative tariff options to household metered customers who meet certain criteria. The scheme ensures that your metered bill will be capped at a fixed annual charge. It has a higher annual standing charge than our standard tariff for water and wastewater services but has no charge per cubic metre. The reduction in your charges will take effect from the beginning of the charge period in which the application is made, and it must be renewed annually.

To qualify, for the WaterSure Scheme, your household must:

1. Have a water meter
2. Receive a means tested benefit
3. Have a large family (three or more children under the age of 19, living at the same property and for whom child benefit is being received)
4. have someone who has a verifiable medical condition requiring the use of extra water.

The means tested benefits include any of:

- Housing benefit
- Income related employment and support allowance or income support
- Income based job seekers allowance
- Working tax credit
- Pension credit
- Universal credit
- Child tax credit (except for families in receipt of their family element only)

And, either:

Verifiable medical conditions include any of the following:

- Crohn's disease
- Abdominal stomas
- Incontinence
- Weeping skin disease (eczema or psoriasis)
- Desquamation (flaky skin disease)
- Renal failure requiring dialysis at home (except where a contribution is made by the health authority towards the cost of water used)
- Ulcerative colitis
- Varicose ulceration
- Any other medical conditions which have been diagnosed by a medical practitioner and requires the use of substantial amounts of water.

If you think you qualify for the WaterSure scheme, please contact us on **0330 111 0780** to request an application form or you can download a copy from our website [icosawater.co.uk](http://icosawater.co.uk).

Please note that when you return your application form it is essential that you include all the documents requested, as we are unable to accept you on the scheme without them.

Please look at our area specific Charges Schemes to see if any further payment options are available or contact our Billing Team on **0333 000 0113**. Our Charges Schemes can be found on our website [icosawater.co.uk](http://icosawater.co.uk).



## 6 PRIORITY SERVICES

We all need a helping hand from time to time and we'll always do our very best to help you. We want to make sure you can easily access all our services and read the information we send you. So please let us know what you're experiencing and how we can help you.

We have developed the following range of free services for people whom:

- Have sight problems.
- Are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Use a dialysis machine at home .
- Experience mobility concerns and can't carry anything heavy .
- Have a friend or relative you want to contact us on your behalf .
- Want to set up a password for when we call at your door.

We can also provide special terms for making payments for customers who have specific needs (e.g. house bound).

### 6.1 Getting in touch with our Priority Services Team

You can visit our website to learn more about our Priority Services or call us on **0333 000 0113**. To apply, please complete our Priority Service form on our web site at [icosawater.co.uk](https://www.icosawater.co.uk). You can also make an application by telephone; we promise to register you immediately.

In the event of supply interruption or water quality incident, we will make special arrangements.

Please note that if we only provide either water or wastewater services then you will need to contact your other water/wastewater supplier to register for their scheme. Our Customer Service Team can provide you with this information if required.



## 7 ACCESS TO PRIVATE PROPERTY

There may be instances where we need to have access to your property. The reasons for needing access could include the need to investigate a leak, read your meter or fit a new meter, analyse your water quality, ensure that you are complying with necessary legislation or to inspect sewer/drainage blockages and flooding.

For the purposes of gaining access, we will as far as reasonably practically make an appointment with you, except in the case of an emergency where we are responding to a problem that you have identified.

If we visit your property without an agreed appointment, we will not mind if you refuse us entry while checking the identity.

### 7.1 Bogus Callers

If you have an unexpected visitor call at your door, claiming to be an Icosa Water employee, it is easy to check if they are genuine.

A bogus caller is normally reluctant to show an identity card, they may say they do not have one, or have left it at home. Never let anyone into your home without a valid identity card. Bogus callers will often work in pairs – one will lure you away from your front door, while the other steals from your home. Do not feel under any kind of pressure to let anyone in – if you are unsure don't open the door.

Any genuine caller will be happy to wait outside whilst you telephone us to confirm who they are.

All Icosa Water personnel who attend your property are supplied with ID cards identifying them and the company that they work for. Be sure to ask to see these ID cards before letting them into your home. If you are unsure then don't hesitate to call us and we can then confirm their identity. Please **DO NOT** phone any other number that the visitor may give you.

If you are unsure, don't open the door.

If they do not have an identity card, send them away. If you are still unsure, call the company to check who the caller is, but remember to:

- Keep the door shut and leave the caller outside – even if it is raining!
- Contact the company on their customer services telephone number. Do not use any number on an identity card. If the caller is bogus, their phone number may be bogus too! If the caller says, "I am from your local water company or water board", telephone us on **0330 111 0780**.
- If the company hasn't heard of the caller, you may have a bogus caller at your door.
- Dial 999 and ask for the Police and wait inside until the Police arrive.

We also offer a password service, which will help us to identify ourselves. This service is free and available to all our customers.

If you would like to register for the password scheme, or simply learn more, then call us on **0333 000 0113**. You can also register for the password scheme by filling out the Priority Service form on our website [icosawater.co.uk](http://icosawater.co.uk).



## 7.2 Pipe laying powers on private land

Icosa Water has statutory powers under the Water Industry Act 1991 to lay, inspect, maintain and repair or alter any pipes falling on private land. We are required to provide the landowner with reasonable notice – usually a minimum period of 3 months before carrying out the work. Icosa Water is required under s182 of the Water Industry Act 1991 to prepare a Code of Practice in relation to its exercising its rights to access private land for laying, inspecting, maintaining and repairing or altering such pipes.

This Code of Practice must be approved of the Secretary of State. It sets out good practice with regard to our powers and duties when we lay or carry out work on pipes in private land. The code also explains what you (the landowner, and/or occupier) are entitled to expect. A copy of this Code of Practice can be downloaded from our website [icosawater.co.uk](http://icosawater.co.uk).



## 8 LEAKAGE

Icosa Water is committed to ensuring the efficient use of available water, reducing water loss, and repairing leaks on our water networks.

If water is leaking from the water main or the communication pipe or the joints around the meter, we are responsible for putting this right.

If you have a water leak on your property you are responsible for making repairs. However, we will detect and repair, or replace free of charge, a leaking service pipe to an individual property. They must however be accessible and not under any structure, up to the wall of your property. We will do all we can to help you find and repair leaks on your service pipe.

Water that is leaking is a waste of a precious resource and can cause damage to your property if not repaired promptly. If you find a leak on your property it is important to get in touch with us on **0330 111 2014** as soon as possible and let us know. If the leak is anywhere within your property boundary, you are responsible for repairing it.

If you have a water meter and received a large water bill due to a leak, you may be entitled to a leakage allowance. Please see section 4.3 for more information.

The Icosa Water networks are mostly new and are designed to prevent bursts or service leaks occurring. Unfortunately, leaks do occasionally occur. If you see one, please call us on **0330 111 2014** and we will instigate repairs immediately.

Icosa Water is required under its Conditions of Appointment to prepare a Code of Practice on Leakage which sets out in detail how leakage related issues can be approached and resolved. This Code of Practice appears below and can also be found on our website [icosawater.co.uk](http://icosawater.co.uk).

It can also be made available to customers in Braille or large print on request by calling our Billing Team on **0333 000 0113**.

The purpose of the Leakage Code is to explain how we can help or other actions that you can take in the event that you discover that you may have a leak. It also gives you some ideas on how to look for the source of a leak. This Leakage Code applies to domestic customers, although we are able to provide assistance to our business customers in the event of a leak.

### 8.1 What are the main causes of leaks?

Although Icosa water networks are relatively new and thus less likely to have significant leaks, such leaks are still possible. The most common causes of water leaks include the following:

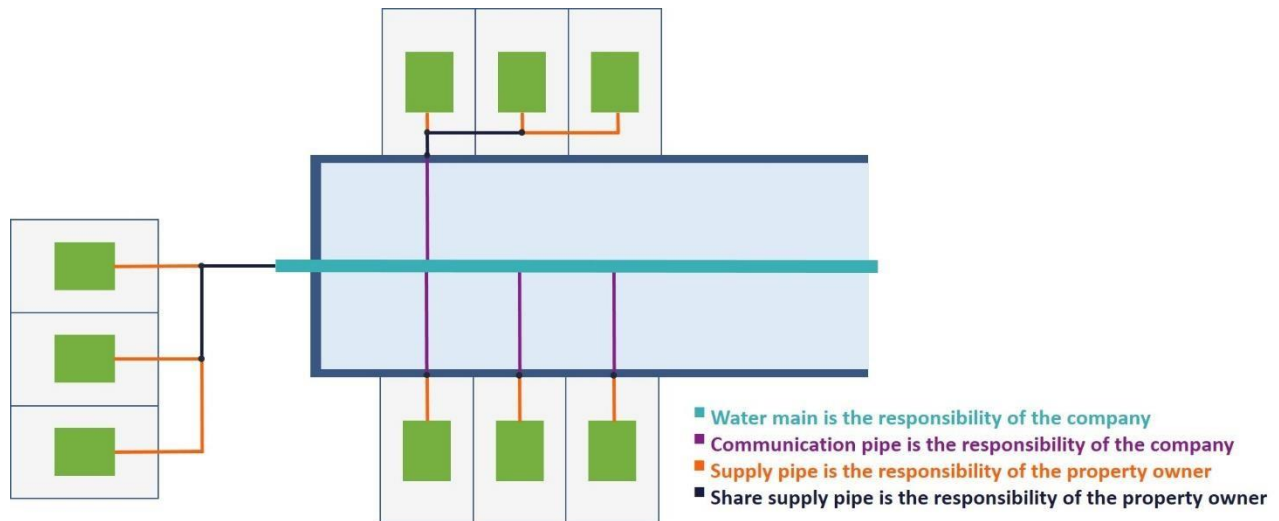
- Corrosion: This can take many forms and may be the result of a chemical reaction, water quality, or age
- Rust: Rust is the most common form of corrosion which is routinely found in older galvanized steel pipes. Newer PVC (such as your supply pipe) are not susceptible to rust, but many different parts of the plumbing fixtures in your home are
- Cracks: Cracks are relatively rare in modern plumbing fixtures, but still possible. A crack can occur in most aspects of any plumbing fixture
- Leaky Pipe Joints: The joints in your pipe work can degrade and develop leaks with time. The most notable effect of leaky pipe joints is a lack of water pressure
- Temperature changes: Large temperature changes also can cause your pipes to crack and leak. This is common in extremely cold climates, but it can also happen in warmer areas if there's a sudden cold spell and pipes aren't properly insulated
- Accidental damage: This can include damage caused by contract workers digging up the roads



- Tree roots: Tree roots cause problems when water and sewage pipes connected to your home crack, releasing small amounts of water vapor into the surrounding soil. This attracts tree roots, which burrow their way into pipes and eventually cause blockages

## 8.2 Who is responsible for repairing leaks?

We share responsibility with you for maintaining the network and repairing leaks, although we are each responsible for separate sections of the network. The diagram below provides a useful visual guide to the different sections of the network outside your home and shows that part of the network for which we are responsible and that part of the network for which you are responsible.



## 8.3 Our responsibilities

We are responsible for the water main under the highway and the communications pipe that runs from the water main to the boundary of your property. We have a legal duty to operate an efficient network and to reduce water leakages. You can work with us in reducing leaks on our system by notifying us as soon as you become aware of any such leaks so that these can be repaired quickly so as not to waste water. You can call us at any time on **0330 111 2014** to notify us if you become aware of any leaks on our network. This line is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

## 8.4 Your responsibilities

You are responsible for maintaining the supply pipe (even though it is installed underground) and all the internal plumbing in your home. The water supply pipe is the pipe which brings water into your home from our main in the street and is the pipe that runs from the boundary of your property into your home up until the first water fitting or stop-tap inside your property. The supply pipe will typically be beneath your garden, driveway or path.

You should be vigilant in monitoring your water usage and identifying leaks as these can be costly to repair if not dealt with immediately, particularly as they can cause damage to your property. Also remember that leaks on your supply pipe and internal plumbing cause you to use additional water for which we are entitled to charge you.





## 8.5 Leakage inspections on installing new meters

As previously indicated, we have a duty to reduce leakage and at the same time promote the efficient use of water. We know that a substantial amount of water escapes from unidentified leaks on customers' underground supply pipes. When we are fitting an external meter, we will check to see whether your private supply pipe is leaking by confirming that the meter flow indicator is not moving when you are not using any water in your home.

If the leak can be repaired without any further digging, we will repair it free of charge. If the leak cannot be repaired without further digging, we will advise you of all the possible options available to you.

If the leak is more likely to be internal, we will let you know so that you can call a plumber to help you fix this.

You pay for the volume (quantity) of water you use by reference to the meter that records the volume of water passing through it. The meter will be installed on the supply pipe. As you have access to this meter you should use it to control your water usage and bill. Reading your meter can also assist in determining whether you have a leak on your supply pipe or internal plumbing. See the section headed 'How to test for leaks' below.

## 8.6 How to test for leaks

### Wet areas and lush vegetation

Water escaping from a leak on your underground supply pipe may not be obvious above ground, but wet areas or patches of lush vegetation in your garden during dry spells could indicate a leak. It is important to keep a regular check on your meter readings to help you identify an underground leak at an early stage. We would recommend that you check your meter reading at least once a month. Your meter will typically be installed in a meter chamber situated in the pavement outside your house.

This is an image of what a standard meter chamber cover will look like:



Follow these simple steps to read your meter:

- Once you have located your meter chamber, use a flat-bladed screwdriver to open the lid on the chamber.
- Remove the foam or polystyrene disc which acts as frost protection.
- Check the serial number on the top of your meter – this should match the number on your bill.
- Read the five figures in the black boxes.
- These indicate the amount of water used in cubic metres (one cubic metre = 1,000 litres).
- Ignore the red boxes – these are 10 litre units and are not used for billing.
- Replace the polystyrene disc and close the lid.



## 8.7 Higher than normal bills

If your bill is showing higher than normal consumption this may also be an indication that you have a leak on your supply pipe. If you suspect that you might have a leak, you can check the situation by noting the reading on all the dials on the meter; turning off all water using apparatus in your house for a couple of hours and checking the meter reading again. If the dials have moved, then you probably do have a leak. If you have internal water storage, there may continue to be some inflow to the storage tank during this period. To counter this, take several readings during the period of the test, this may indicate an initial flow stopping when the storage tank is full.

To check if a leak is on your underground pipe and not inside your property, you should then turn off your internal stopcock and check the meter again. If the dials have moved again, or are moving while the stopcock is turned off, the leak is probably on your underground pipe.

## 8.9 Repairing a leak

If you have a leak on your private supply pipe, it is yours, or your landlord's responsibility to arrange for it to be repaired. Once the leak has been confirmed, the leak will need to be repaired within 30 days.

If you require any assistance, you can call our Customer Services Team who can give you a list of Icosa approved plumbers or contractors in your area who may be able to carry out the repair work for you.

Alternatively, you can find a plumber in your local area on the internet, local paper or Yellow Pages.

## 8.9 Once Leaks are repaired

Please let us know once you have had the leaks repaired. You may be able to apply for a one-off leakage allowance as a result of the leak. See the section headed 'Allowance for leaks' for further details.

## 8.10 If you don't repair your leaks

Water escaping from a leak is a loss of a costly and valuable resource, so if a leak is reported or detected on your pipework, you will be required to repair it. If you fail to comply with this request, we can serve a legal notice requiring a repair to be carried out. We have a legal duty to prevent wasted water and will therefore commence enforcement proceedings against you under sections 75 and 170 of the Water Industry Act 1991. If you don't then carry out the repairs within the time specified in the notice, we will either:

- Carry out the repair ourselves and recover our costs from you; or
- Prosecute you under Section 73 of this Act for allowing your water fittings to be or remain in a defective condition. The maximum fine is £1,000

## 8.11 If you are on benefits

Icosa may be able to carry out repair on your supply pipe if you receive any of the following benefits:

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



You can call our Billing Team for further information. If the leak is an emergency and likely to cause any damage to your property you are strongly advised to call a plumber to assist with the repair. We are under no circumstances liable for any damage to your property.

### **8.12 Allowances for Leaks**

If you are on a metered supply, the meter will record all the water we supply to your property, which will include any leak on your supply pipe or from appliances in your home. However, if the cause of the leak is fully repaired, you will qualify for a one-off leak allowance, where we will adjust your charges back to their normal levels. Where we have no record of previous usage, e.g. you have recently moved into the property, we will estimate your normal usage. If subsequent meter readings show your actual usage to be lower than our estimate, we will make a further adjustment to reflect this.

If you are worried that you may have a leak on your supply pipe, please contact us and we will arrange for a Technician to visit and check your supply. If our visit confirms that there is a leak, we will advise you to contact your plumber for this to be repaired.

If the repair is completed within 30 days of the date of our Technician's visit, we will make an allowance for the leak as a credit to your water bill. If the repair takes longer than 30 days, the value of the allowance may be reduced. Time to repair 30-60 days allowance reduced by 33%; 60-90 days allowance reduced by 66%. More than 90 days no allowance.

You should apply for the leak allowance once the leak has been satisfactorily repaired and within one month of the repair being carried out. Please contact our Billing Team on **0333 000 0113** or email us at [billing@icosawater.co.uk](mailto:billing@icosawater.co.uk).

A copy of the invoice for the repair work will be required. If you are unable to provide this, we may need to visit your property to inspect the repair. Leak allowances are not made where the leak is due to customer negligence. Customers may receive one leak allowance per property.

### **8.13 Adjustment of water supply charges**

Where we agree to make a leak allowance, we will adjust your water charges, on the basis of past normal consumption. Where there is no record of previous consumption, we will take a meter reading after the leak has been repaired and base an allowance on the consumption recorded. We will not ask you to pay until we have calculated your allowance. If you need to apply for a leakage allowance, please call our Customer Services Team.

### **8.14 Complaints**

If you believe that we have not complied with this code of practice or are not satisfied with any assistance that we have provided, you can let us know using the contact details set out in our Customer Code of Practice. Our Customer Code of Practice explains how we will deal with your concern.

If we are not able to resolve a complaint to your full satisfaction, you can refer your concerns to the Consumer Council for Water Western Region (CCWater) who will investigate independently. CCWater is an independent statutory body which protects customer interests and investigates customer complaints.

If your complaint remains unresolved after it has gone through all the stages of our complaints procedure and has been reviewed by CCWater, you may be eligible to take your concerns to WATRS, the Water Industry Redress Scheme, which can provide an independent binding decision.

Contact details for CCWater and WATRS can be found in section 14 of this document.



## 9 MOVING PROPERTY

Please contact us as soon as possible if you are moving home. We require at least 5 working days' notice by telephone or 10 working days' notice by letter to produce a final bill.

When you inform us that you are moving out, you can either agree to provide us with a meter reading or allow us to use an estimated meter reading to calculate your final bill. If you would like us to take a final meter reading on the day that move out you must give us at least 2 working days' notice by calling us, sending us an email or by giving us notice to that effect when you notify us about moving home.

If you fail to provide an accurate meter read and you do not notify us that we take a closing read, you will remain liable for all charges until the first to occur of:

- 28 days after we find out you are no longer at the premises.
- The new occupier informs us that they have moved in and are now responsible for paying water/sewerage charges.
- The date the meter is normally read.

Once we've got all the information we need, we'll send you your final bill within 6 working days. If there's a credit on your account we'll either transfer your credit to your new account, or process a refund within 5 to 15 days, depending on the amount we owe you and the way you made your payments.

It is important to remember that if you receive water or sewerage services from another company, you will also need to inform them. If you are unsure about the services you receive from us, you can either contact our Billing Team on **0333 000 0113** or the information can be found on your Icosa Water bill.

Should you require a water or sewerage supply to be disconnected, you must give us 14 working days' notice.



## 10 MANAGING DEBT

If you occupy the property or if you own and maintain the property ready for occupation you are liable for the payment of the water and/or drainage and sewerage charges.

These charges are payable when a supply of water is made available for your property, regardless of whether you use the supply.

Icosa Water is required by its Conditions of Appointment to prepare and publish a Code of Practice on Debt Management. This Code of Practice sets out details on customer payment responsibilities, assistance for customers struggling to pay their debts, our debt recovery procedures and other useful information relating to customer debt.

You can obtain a copy of this Code of Practice on Debt Management from our website.

### 10.1 Our Charges

We review our prices every year and produce a leaflet, which we issue with our bills, detailing our services to you and our charges. You can find details of all our current charges on our website [icosawater.co.uk](http://icosawater.co.uk) or by contacting our Billing Team on **0333 000 0113**.

The tariffs that you pay will depend on the area in which you live. Our charges are capped by our regulator, Ofwat, so that you will not pay any more for our services than you would have paid if your services had been provided by the regional monopoly company in whose area you live.

Please visit our website at [icosawater.co.uk](http://icosawater.co.uk) for the Scheme of Charges for more details of the tariffs available in your supply area.

### 10.2 Responsibility for bills

If you occupy the property, you are responsible for paying the bill. If more than one person shares the property, everyone is responsible, even if the bill is only in one name.

#### Private Tenants

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

#### Local authority tenants

If you rent a property from the local authority, they may collect the bills on our behalf. This means your rent will include your water charges. If you don't pay the water charge part of the rent for any reason, the landlord may take legal action against you. You will remain responsible for any bill that is not included in your rent.

Charges are applicable when a supply of water is made available for your property, regardless of whether you use the supply.



## 10.4 Billing Frequency

We will send your bill out on a bi-annual basis with the full balance due within 10 working days of you receiving the bill. You can arrange to pay your bills in monthly, fortnightly or weekly instalments. Please note, it is your responsibility to check your bills.

To arrange billing and payment dates and methods, please call us on **0333 000 0113** and we can discuss your circumstances to agree a suitable schedule. Alternatively, you can put your request in writing. Conditions may differ according to the option you choose. If a payment arrangement is set up, you must keep to the agreement. If you break the agreement, the whole debt becomes due.

## 10.5 Queries about your bill

If you think your bill is wrong, or you are not liable to pay it, please tell us immediately. Our telephone number is **0333 000 0113** or email us at [billing@icosawater.co.uk](mailto:billing@icosawater.co.uk). We will try to resolve the matter and temporarily stop any recovery action where an account query cannot be resolved immediately.

## 10.6 WaterDirect scheme

The WaterDirect Scheme is run in conjunction with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP). The scheme is designed to help customers who are in arrears on their water charges and are in receipt of the following benefits:

- Employment & Support Allowance (ESA)
- Job Seekers Allowance
- Income Support
- Pension Credit
- Universal Credit

The scheme allows customers who have a minimum of £50 arrears to pay a fixed amount towards their charges directly from their benefit. This helps many customers with budgeting and managing their water bills. If you receive any of these benefits, you will be able to arrange for payments to be made directly from these benefits. To apply, contact the DWP on 0800 882200 or visit their website [dwp.gov.uk](http://dwp.gov.uk).

## 10.7 Customer dissatisfaction

If you wish to make a complaint, please refer to our Customer Code of Practice in which we have set out a comprehensive complaint handling process. You can download a copy of the Customer Code of Practice from the Icosa Water website: [icosawater.co.uk](http://icosawater.co.uk)



## 11 MAKING A COMPLAINT

### 11.1 Did we meet your expectations?

When you raise a query or want to make a complaint about our service, we don't want it to be an unpleasant experience. We want to provide you with a first-rate customer service at all times.

We appreciate however, that sometimes we don't always get it right. When this happens, you want us to fix the problem quickly. The best way to do this is by giving us a ring. One of our team will be able to explain what has happened and what we'll do to help fix it.

This booklet explains how you can make a complaint and how we deal with it.

#### How to complain?

By telephone - This is the quickest way to get it resolved. We always aim to deal with a telephone complaint the first time you call us.

**Stage 1:** Email or letter - If you email or write to us, we will provide a response within 10 working day from the date we receive your complaint.

**Stage 2:** Review by Director - If you are still unhappy with the reply to your complaint, or the way your complaint was handled, you can write to us and ask for one of our Directors to carry out a review.

**Stage 3:** Review by Independent Customer Watchdog - If we have fully reviewed your complaint and you still remain dissatisfied, you can ask the Consumer Council for Water to review your case. This is an independent body which represents customers' interests and investigates complaints. You can contact them at:

CCWater,  
1st floor,  
Victoria Square House,  
Victoria Square,  
Birmingham  
B2 4AJ.

Email: [enquiries@ccwater.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ccwater.org.uk)  
Website: [ccwater.org.uk](http://ccwater.org.uk)  
Tel: 0300 034 2222

**We will respond to written complaints within 10 working days from the date we receive your complaint. In the unlikely event that we fail to meet this timescale, we will credit your water services account with a payment that is equivalent to that offered by the upstream regional water company for the area. If we fail to credit your account within 10 working days, you will be entitled to an additional penalty payment credited to your account.**

#### WATRS Water Scheme

If you remain dissatisfied following the Consumer Council for Water's efforts to resolve your complaint, you have the right to refer your complaint to the Water Redress Scheme, known as WATRS. WATRS is a free and independent adjudication service which reviews disputes between customers and companies that the Consumer Council for Water have not been able to resolve.

**You must have referred your complaint to the Consumer Council for Water to review or investigate before you can apply to WATRS.**



You can make an application free of charge via the WATRS website or ask the Consumer Council for Water to send an application form to you.

## **WATRS**

Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution International Dispute Resolution Centre  
70 Fleet Street  
London  
EC4Y 1EU

Email: [info@watsr.org](mailto:info@watsr.org)

Website: [watsr.org](http://watsr.org)

Tel: 020 7520 3801

Any decisions made by WATRS are binding on water companies. WATRS aims to make its decision within 20 working days of receiving an application for your complaint to be adjudicated. Once the water company is notified of the decision it has 20 days to provide any remedies set by WATRS. It can also decide that your complaint is not eligible for the scheme and will explain why.

## **The Regulator**

OFWAT do not generally handle complaints from individual customers. Customers should follow our complaints procedure outlined in this booklet. OFWAT would only normally get involved in complaints such as:

- Those about water and sewerage companies' powers to lay pipes on private land
  - Concerns that the water companies are allegedly breaking their licence conditions or their main water supply or sewerage duties
  - Complaints about anti-competitive behaviour under the Competition Act 1998, for example colluding on pricing or bidding for contracts
- Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT) Centre City Tower 7 Hill Street, Birmingham, B5 4UA Telephone: 0121 625 1300 Fax: 0121 625 1400 Minicom: 0121 625 1422 Email: [enquiries@ofwat.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofwat.gsi.gov.uk)

## **11.2 Complaints about employees**

If you have a complaint about one of our employees, please direct it to the Customer Services Manager should your complaint involve an employee working in the Customer Services Team.

We take any complaint made against our employees very seriously and we will investigate it thoroughly. However, in accordance with our company policy, we will not disclose the outcome to you of any disciplinary action we may choose to commence.

## **11.3 Further information**

In some cases, a customer has a legal right to refer a problem either to arbitration, or to the Water Services Regulation Authority (Ofwat) for determination, to the Courts, to the Drinking Water Inspectorate or to the Environment Agency.

## **11.4 Arbitration**

Under the Water Industry Act 1991 some disputes between you and us may have to be decided by an arbitrator. We'll have to agree who will be the arbitrator, but if we can't agree, the President of the Institution of Civil Engineers, the Secretary of State for the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) or Ofwat can appoint an arbitrator.

For further details or advice on arbitration you can find the following websites for Chartered Institute of Arbitration [useful.ciarb.org](http://useful.ciarb.org) or alternatively [adviceguide.org.uk](http://adviceguide.org.uk).

Those disputes, which can be referred to arbitration, are:





- Prevention of contamination – Any dispute about the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999, which is designed to prevent contamination of the water supply, can be referred to arbitration
- Water meters – Any dispute about the location of a water meter, which we require to be installed in your property
- Street works – any dispute under Schedule 12 of the Water Industry Act 1991 about compensation in respect of street works powers.

## 11.5 Legal proceedings

The Water Industry Act also gives you the right, in certain circumstances, to take legal proceedings against us for any loss or damage caused to you by our failure to comply with our duties under the Act.

## 11.6 Disputes determined by Ofwat

Under the Water Industry Act 1991, there are a number of dispute categories that can be referred by either of us to Ofwat for determination. These are as follows:

Dispute Category	Questions for Ofwat to determine
New connections to water mains	Whether any security for the expenses we expect to incur was reasonably required. Whether our expenses were incurred reasonably. Whether conditions relating to separate supplies and metering are reasonable.
A separate supply pipe for your property	Whether our requirement for your property to have a single supply service pipe is reasonable.
The terms and conditions of metering	Any dispute about any terms and conditions we apply as a condition of connecting your supply to the mains to allow us to install water meter and we cannot agree on the appointment of an arbitrator. Any dispute about whether it is practicable to fix charges by reference to volume of water supplied or where the company would incur unreasonable expense.
Requirement to maintain pressure and supply	Any dispute about our requirement as to the effectiveness of the capacity of your water tank before we will connect your water supply.
Adoption of sewers or sewage disposal works	An appeal against our proposal or refusal to adopt a sewer or works or about the conditions imposed.
Connecting private sewers and drains to public sewers	Any question as to the reasonableness of our refusal to allow the connection or our requirement to inspect your drain or sewer before allowing connection or about the costs and security we require you to pay. Whether an estimate of the cost of our works or the requirement of security is reasonable.



Power to alter a private drainage system	Where we intend to close your private drainage system, an appeal about the position or sufficiency of the replacement drain or sewer.
Power to close or restrict the use of a public sewer	Any dispute about the effectiveness of an alternative sewer provided to replace an existing one which is due to be closed.
Terms and conditions for the adoption of water mains – self lay	Before work commences: Any dispute about the terms and conditions for agreement for the adoption of mains laid by a contractor. On completion of works: Any dispute on financial arrangements e.g. build rate / income assessment etc.
Terms and conditions for requisitioned water mains/sewers/lateral drains	Any dispute about the financial terms for the provision of mains/sewers or lateral drains; the timescale for provision or route proposed.
Request to move company pipework	Dispute about the reasonableness of any refusal to move company pipework in response to a request to do so by you as the affected landowner.
New water mains	If you requisition a new water main, any dispute in respect of the amount we require you to pay, the undertakings or securities we require you to give, where we will lay the main for your connection or the period within which we will lay the main.
New public sewers	If you requisition a new public sewer, any dispute in respect of the amount we require you to pay, the undertakings or securities we require you to give, where we will lay the sewer for your connection or the period within which we will lay the sewer.
Exercise of works on private land	Any dispute about the manner in which we have undertaken work on private land
Guaranteed standards of service scheme	Any dispute about a failure to meet one of our Guaranteed Standards of Service and any dispute whether you are entitled to a compensation payment under the Guaranteed Standards of Service scheme.



## 12 Our Guaranteed Standard Services

We want to give you the very best service possible at all times and we work hard to ensure that all our customers receive a consistently high level of service, monitoring our performance very carefully.

We try to keep our promises and make sure you're satisfied with what we do for you.

Our commitment is backed up by our Customer Guarantee Standard Services, outlined below, which includes all the standards set out in government regulations.

### Our promises to you

**If we fail to achieve any of standards 12.1 – 12.4 detailed below, we will credit your water services account with a payment that is equivalent to that offered by the upstream regional water company for the area. If we fail to credit your account within 10 working days, you will be entitled to an additional penalty payment credited to your account.**

### 12.1 Appointments

When we make an appointment to visit you, we will offer you either a morning (before 1pm) or afternoon appointment or you can request an appointment within a 2-hour period. We aim to meet all our appointment times. If we have to change the appointment, we will give you at least 24 hours' notice. Payments will not apply if the appointment is cancelled with less than 24 hours' notice due to circumstances beyond our control, for example extreme weather conditions, strikes or the actions of a third party.

### 12.2 Account queries

If you write to us with a query regarding your bill, we will send you a reply within 10 working days. If we fail to respond to you within the agreed timescales

### 12.3 Payment arrangements

If you write to us asking to change your payment method and if for any reason it is not possible to action your request, we will notify you within five working days of receiving your contact.

### 12.4 Written complaints

If you complain in writing, we'll respond within 10 working days of receiving your complaint.

### 12.5 Interruptions to supply

Planned interruptions.

Occasionally we need to turn off the water supply to carry our essential, planned work. We will let you know in advance and tell you when the supply will be restored. For interruptions of more than 4 hours, we will give you at least 48 hours' notice in writing. We will restore the supply by the time stated in the notice.

If we fail to correctly notify you of the interruption or if the supply is not restored within the stated time, we will credit your water services account with a payment that is equivalent to that offered by the upstream regional water company for the area. If we fail to credit your account within 20 working days, you will be entitled to an additional penalty payment credited to your account.



Unplanned interruptions.

After an emergency or unplanned interruption, we will restore supplies within 12 hours of becoming aware of the interruption. If we fail to restore your supply within the stated time, we will credit your water services account with a payment that is equivalent to that offered by the upstream regional water company for the area with an additional payment for every 12 hours that you remain without water.

If we fail to credit your account within 20 working days, you will be entitled to an additional penalty payment credited to your account. It is sometimes difficult to know who has been affected by these interruptions. If you were affected and we have not credited your account, please contact our Customer Service Team.

If you experience three or more unplanned interruptions lasting more than 15 hours in total within a 12-month period, you can claim £25.

## 12.6 Water pressure

If your water pressure falls substantially below normal, please let us know. We will first check whether this is due to an operational fault for example a burst main. If not, then we will carry out further checks with pressure loggers. If we have identified a pressure level in the communication pipe below seven meters static head for at least 1 hour on two separate occasions within a 28-day period, you are automatically entitled to a payment equivalent to that offered by the upstream regional water company for the area.

If we fail to credit your account within 10 working days, you will be entitled to an additional penalty payment credited to your account.

It is sometimes difficult to know who has been affected by low pressure. If you were affected and we have not credited your account, please call us within 3 months of the last of the two occasions of low pressure.

If significantly high-water pressure causes any damage to your water fittings as a result of our negligence, we will pay for the cost of any repairs to these fittings.

## 12.7 Sewer flooding

On rare occasions where there is a blockage or collapse in one of our sewers, or where exceptionally heavy rainfall has overloaded our sewer, some properties may experience sewage flooding. If this happens, please call us straight away. We will investigate the cause of sewage flooding following all reported incidents. If sewage enters your home from our sewer network, we aim to inspect the problem within 4 hours of you letting us know.

We will also provide a full clean up service where possible within 12 hours (internal flooding) or within 24 hours (external flooding).

Where the sewage flooding enters your home, we will automatically refund your sewage charge for the year (minimum payment £150 up to a maximum of £1,000 per incident). In addition to this sum, we will automatically pay you up to £100 for the disturbance the sewage flooding causes. We will determine the amount payable on a case-by-case basis. Where the sewage flooding has caused damage to your home or contents, we will consider contributing to your uninsured losses.

If you have a critical health related circumstances at the time of the sewage flooding and you arrange to move into temporary accommodation, we will consider making a discretionary payment of up to £50 per day, up to a maximum of £500 towards your costs.

If we fail to credit your account within 20 working days, you may be entitled to an additional penalty payment credited to your account.



If sewage enters your garden from our sewer network, we aim to inspect the problem the same day you let us know. Where the sewage flooding enters only your land or garden, you can claim back a sum equal to half of your sewage charges for the year (minimum payment £75 up to a maximum of £500 per incident).

If we fail to credit your account within 20 working days, you may be entitled to an additional penalty payment credited to your account.

Your claim will only be valid if you were materially affected by the sewage flooding incident to your land or garden. You will therefore need to show or explain the effect of the sewage flooding, on your land or garden when you make a claim.

Normally, we will make this assessment when we visit to view the sewage flooding and we will leave a claim form with you if we consider you have been materially affected. We only accept written claims for external sewage flooding and will assess your claim based upon the information you provide.

If you are affected by both internal and external sewage flooding in the same incident, we will only pay you for the internal sewage flooding incident. You will not receive an additional payment for the external sewage flooding. We will also assist with the clean-up of the public highway if this has been affected by the sewage flooding incident.

Payments will not apply if:

- The flooding happened because of exceptional weather conditions or industrial action,
- The flooding was caused by a customer's actions or any defect, blockage or inadequacy in the customer's drain or sewers,
- You notified us more than three months after your property was flooded.

## 12.8 Debt Recovery Action

If we incorrectly issue a County Court judgement against you in respect of a debt for which you are not liable, and for which you have previously informed us that you are not liable, we will correct the situation, withdraw the fees and costs. We will credit your water services account with the same payment that is offered by the upstream regional water company for the area. If we fail to credit your account within 10 working days of our reply, you will be entitled to an additional penalty payment credited to your account.

### Debt collection

There are circumstances when we will refer customers' debts to a debt collection agency. The agencies we use are registered with the Financial Conducts Authority and are members of the Credit Services Association and subject to its code of practice.

In the unlikely event that a debt is pursued this way in error, or the debt collection agent acts improperly, we will credit your water services account with a payment that is equivalent to that offered by the upstream regional water company for the area.

In some circumstances, we register a default against customers' credit files held by Credit Reference Agencies. In the unlikely event that a debt is pursued this way in error, we will correct the situation and credit your water service account with a payment that is equivalent to that offered by the upstream regional water company for the area.

If we fail to credit your account within 10 working days, you will be entitled to an additional penalty payment credited to your account.



## 12.9 Drinking water quality

If we believe there is a problem with the quality of your tap water due to our water supply system, we will provide you with appropriate advice on what to do. If you complain about our water making you ill, we will contact you within 2 hours of receiving the complaint to arrange for the water at your tap to be tested.

If the problem lasts for longer than 48 hours and is specific to your property or to a group of local properties, we will credit your water services account with a payment that is equivalent to that offered by the upstream regional water company for the area.

However, if the problem is more widespread, we will consider compensation where it is proved to be the result of our negligence.

If you tell us that you are unhappy with the taste or smell of your water, we will investigate. Please note that all our tap water contains chlorine, which helps to keep the water safe to drink – it is there for normal for your tap water to have a slight chlorine taste or smell.

If you report a water quality problem which we consider could have an impact on the safety of your water supply, we will visit you within 4 hours (if it is convenient with you). In this circumstance, if we take a sample of water for analysis at our laboratory, we will give you an explanation of the key results by phone within 48 hours if you request it and confirm key results in writing within 10 working days.

If we don't meet any part of this timetable, you can claim a payment that is equivalent to that offered by the upstream regional water company for the area.

Please note that this doesn't apply if we tell you the analysis will take more than 48 hours.

### Discolouration

Very occasionally you may find that your water supply is a brownish colour. This discolouration is often caused by work being carried out on ageing iron mains and, although unsightly, poses no health risk. If laundry is stained because of water discolouration due to our mains, we'll compensate you for the cost of the affected items. If other damage is caused, e.g. damage to your boiler, we will arrange for a plumber to visit your property and pay the appropriate compensation.

## 12.10 Water shortages

If we have to interrupt or cut off your supply as a result of a Drought Order, we will, except in exceptional circumstances automatically pay you a payment that is equivalent to that offered by the upstream regional water company for the area. This is up to a maximum of the average household water bill from the previous year.

## 12.11 Water meters

We will undertake a survey and fit a meter within 50 working days from receipt of your request. If we do not meet this timescale, we will only bill you the metered standing charge element of your bill until the meter has been fitted.

Since 1 April 2000 customers have been entitled to a Switchback Guarantee when applying for a water meter. The guarantee gives you the right to revert back to rateable value-based charges anytime within the first 24 months. However, you will still need to pay for any metered charges incurred before you opt back. Please note: the meter will remain in position and future occupants will be charged on metered usage.

For elderly customers and those with additional needs who are having difficulty reading their meter and would like it relocated, we will carry out a free survey. If it is possible to move the meter, we will move it free of



charge. If we are unable to move it, we will let you know why. For customers who are unable to read their meter themselves or want to monitor their consumption we can provide a service whereby we read their meter four times a year.

## 12.12 Leakage

If you are on a metered supply, the meter will record the water we supply to your property, which will include any leak on your supply pipe or from appliances in your home. However, if the cause of the leak is fully repaired, you will qualify for a one-off leak allowance, where we will adjust your charges back to their normal levels. Where we have no record of previous usage, e.g. you have recently moved into the property, we will estimate your normal usage. If subsequent meter readings show your actual usage to be lower than our estimate, we will make a further adjustment to reflect this.

If you are worried that you may have a leak on your supply pipe, please contact us and we will arrange for a technician to visit and check your supply. If our visit confirms that there is a leak, we will advise you to contact your plumber for this to be repaired. Details of the assistance we can give to the cost of repair are outlined in our Leakage Code of Practice

If the repair is completed within 30 days of the date of our technician's visit, we will make an allowance for the leak as a credit to your water bill. If the repair takes longer than 30 days, the value of the allowance may be reduced. Time to repair 30-60 days allowance reduced by 33%; 60-90 days allowance reduced by 66%. More than 90 days No allowance.

You should apply for the leak allowance once the leak has been satisfactorily repaired and within one month of the repair being carried out.

A copy of the invoice for the repair work will be required. If you are unable to provide this, we may need to visit your property to inspect the repair. Leak allowances are not made where the leak is due to customer negligence. Customers may receive one leak allowance per property.

## 12.13 Exceptional circumstances

In certain circumstances it will be impractical for us to meet our service standards. In such cases you will not be entitled to a payment.

Examples of where exclusions may apply are:

- Exceptional or severe weather conditions
- Industrial action
- Third party action including action by customers.

Where a payment is made, it does not act as an admission of liability for any other purpose. Similarly, its acceptance by the customer, will not affect any other liability owed to them.

Any disputes arising in relation to the Guaranteed Standards Scheme may be referred to Ofwat for determination. Its decision is binding.

## 12.14 Dealing with Compensation.

Payments will be made within 10 working days. If we fail to make a payment within this time, you are entitled to claim a penalty payment of £30 unless otherwise stated. You must claim the penalty payment within 3 months.

## 12.15 Access

Where we are undertaking works and require access to your property, we will agree the timing and any specific access requirements in advance. Failure to consult will result in a £25 payment in respect of



each affected property. If we fail to credit your account within 10 working days of our failure to consult with you, you will be entitled to an additional £10 penalty payment credited to your account.

## 13 NEW CONNECTIONS

Please contact us if you are unsure if we provide water or wastewater services in your area on **0330 111 0780**.

### 13.1 New water connection

We must connect all new premises to our water mains if you ask us to do so and the supply is required for domestic purposes. All new connections will be metered and charged according to our metered tariffs.

Although you must pay for it, we will provide the connection into the main and the communication pipe from the main to the external stop tap. You are not allowed to make the connection into our main yourself and we must lay any part of your supply pipe which involves digging up the public highway. If you want a new or altered connection, you should call the Developer Service Team for information on **0330 320 0762**.

We require all new properties to have a separate communication pipe and a water meter.

Once we have agreed to provide a new connection and payment has been received, we will where reasonably practicable:

- Make the connection as soon as possible once the supply pipe is laid and within 21 days or
- If the whole pipe from the property to our water main is already laid, we will make the connection within 14 days of you giving us notice.

If we fail to connect your house within the 14 or 21 days allowed without a valid reason, we may be liable to you for loss or damage caused. The costs and charges payable for new connections comprise:

- The cost of making the connection to the main
- The cost of providing and laying our communication pipe together with a charge for installing a meter
- An infrastructure charge, which contributes to the cost of local reinforcement to the distribution system. The maximum amount we can charge is fixed by Ofwat and is varied annually in line with the Retail Price Index. It is payable for premises newly connected. A separate infrastructure charge will also be payable for connection to the sewerage system
- Where the site was previously developed and there has been a supply to the site within the previous 5 years, there may be a credit applied to the infrastructure charges. These credits will be calculated based on the information provided on your application form.

For more information, you can visit our website [icosawater.co.uk](http://icosawater.co.uk) and complete a contact us form or call us on **0330 320 0762**.

Once you have completed an application form, we will inspect the site as soon as possible and send you a quotation. The quotation will also include useful information telling you what you need to do before we will make the connection.

This will normally include:

- Ensuring that the necessary permissions are in place from landowners
- Making sure your supply and plumbing comply with the Water Supply and Fittings Regulations 1999
- Ensuring that laying your part of the service pipe meets our specification
- Providing a separate service pipe to each part of a building that is separately occupied.

Once we have agreed that all of the above is in place, we will then look to make the connection to our main within 14 days. Please be aware that a supply to a new property requires a water meter to be fitted, so we can charge on the usage made of the services we provide. This meter will be fitted by Icosa Water.





If you do not agree with all our requirements, Ofwat has powers to provide support on dispute resolution.

### 13.2 New sewer connection

The owner or occupier of a house is entitled to have a drain or private sewer connected to an appropriate public sewer. You must give us notice if you propose to do this and you should contact us on **0330 320 0762** or visit our website for a sewer connection application form, which details the procedure to be followed.

The construction details must be in accordance with the specification accompanying the application form. Once we have received your notice, we will tell you within 21 days if your proposals are acceptable.

We may choose to carry out the connection works ourselves. Should we wish to pursue this option we will tell you within 14 days of receipt of the completed application form.

If we are not making the connection ourselves, upon receipt of our approval you should give us at least 48 hours' notice of your intention to commence works.

Any person making an illegal connection into a public sewer is committing an offence and may be liable to a fine. Also, we can disconnect the drain or sewer and recover our costs of doing so. If we find a sewer has been wrongly connected, e.g. a foul water drain connected to a surface water sewer, we will require it to be remedied immediately or disconnected.

The costs and charges payable for new sewer connections comprise:

- If we make the connection ourselves, the estimated cost payable in advance
- If we agree to you making the connection, our costs for administration and approval of your proposal, payable in advance
- An infrastructure charge, which contributes to the cost of providing sewerage systems. The maximum amount we can charge is fixed by our licence and is varied annually in line with the Retail Price Index. It is payable for each of the premises newly connected
- Where the site was previously developed and there has been a sewer connection to the site within the previous 5 years, there may be a credit applied to the infrastructure charges. These credits will be calculated based on the information provided on the application form.

### 13.3 Requirement for new main and/or sewer

If you ask for a new main, we'll provide it, but you and any other applicants must pay the difference between the income we receive for charges for water supplied for domestic purposes from the main and our reasonable costs in providing the main. You can choose to pay these costs over a 12 year period or in one lump sum. Both these payment options are based upon a statutory formula. We may also require some security from you before starting the work.

For our part, we must provide the main within three months of you signing the agreement containing the terms on which we do so.

We may not have a suitable existing sewer for you to connect your property to, or there may be a requirement for access across private land. In these circumstances you can ask us to provide a suitable sewer for you to connect to and, where practicable we'll do so.

If a new sewer is needed, we aim to install it within six months (or a longer period may be agreed) after an agreement is reached to pay any difference between the income we receive from sewerage charges in respect of those properties and our reasonable costs in providing the sewer. You can choose to pay these costs over a 12-year period or in one lump sum. We may also require some security from you before starting the work.



If we fail to meet the deadlines set out above and you sustain loss or damage as a result, you may have a legal claim against us.

If we can't agree the amount you must pay or the amount of security you should give, either party can refer the matter to Ofwat for a decision.

### **13.4 Self Lay Connection**

We will also consider proposals from developers or their agents for the provision of new water mains and services for subsequent adoption by ourselves. This applies to design, installation and commissioning of new water mains and services to supply new or existing developments with water.

When considering the proposals, we will seek to agree the most appropriate arrangements, taking into account statutory responsibilities, those elements of work the developer wishes to undertake directly and any other practical considerations.

Upon adoption of the main you will receive an asset payment from us. This payment is calculated as the present value of the income we expect to derive from the properties connected to the main over the next 12 years. This figure is agreed before work begins.

Further information can be provided by calling our Developer Services Team on **0330 320 0762** or by emailing [developerservices@icosawater.co.uk](mailto:developerservices@icosawater.co.uk).

### **13.4 Building work near public sewers**

If you are building over or close to our sewer pipes, we will need to know so that we can help to protect them.

Building close to or over a public sewer without getting our formal approval is illegal and it may also jeopardise the future sale of your property.

We're responsible for public sewers within our area and many public sewers which cross private land. We have to make sure that development is not carried out that could damage a public sewer, cause risk of flooding or restrict our access for maintenance.

Wherever possible we prefer to avoid the need to build over or close to a sewer by repositioning the proposed development or diverting the sewer. "Close to" is normally defined as being within 3 metres of the sewer.

However, there are some cases where the risk to the public sewer is small and where diversion is not possible, that we can allow building over or close to a sewer. Please contact us on **0330 320 0762** if you are considering any building work in order that we can check whether the proposed work affects the public sewer.



## 14 USEFUL INFORMATION

### 14.1 Contacting Icosa Water

Our postal address:

Icosa Water Services Ltd  
Sophia House  
28 Cathedral Road  
Cardiff  
CF11 9LJ

#### General Enquires

**0330 111 0780**

**customerservices@icosawater.co.uk**

#### Billing

**0333 000 0113**

**Billing@icosawater.co.uk**

You can visit our website at:

**www.icosawater.co.uk**

Our office hours are:

General queries and billing:

Monday – Friday 8.30am – 5.30pm, excluding  
bank holidays

Water or drainage emergencies:

Please call our 24 hour emergency number 0330  
111 2014

### 14.2 Other organisations

#### Consumer Council for Water

If you remain unhappy with our response to your complaint you can contact the Consumer Council for Water. They're an independent body set up to look after the interests of water customers and one of its key roles is to investigate complaints.

Contact details:

By phone: 01223 323889

Website: [ccwater.org.uk](http://ccwater.org.uk)

In writing: Consumer Council for Water, Henry  
Giles House, 73 Chesterton Road, Cambridge,  
CB4 3BQ

#### Ofwat

You can also refer certain disputes to Ofwat for a decision or for arbitration.

Contact details:

By phone: 0121 644 7500

Website: [ofwat.gov.uk](http://ofwat.gov.uk)

In writing: Ofwat, Centre City  
Tower, 7 Hill Street, Birmingham,  
B5 4UA

#### Water Industry Redress Scheme (WATRS)

If after completion of any mediation and investigation process by the Consumer Council for

Water, you believe a dispute remains unresolved an application can be made to the Water Industry Redress Scheme (WATRS). Details of which will be provided to you by The Consumer Council for Water following an unsuccessful resolution.

For more information on this process see their website: [watrs.org](http://watrs.org)

Contact details:

By email: [info@watrs.org](mailto:info@watrs.org)

In writing: WATRS, International Dispute  
Resolution Centre, 70 Fleet Street, London, EC4Y  
1EU