

# Our Customer Promise

Code of Practice



**South West**  
Water

# Our promise to customers

We're proud of what we do and we're very aware of the high standards of service our customers expect from us. That's why when it comes to our promises to you, we go above and beyond our legal obligations.

We're committed to keeping these promises and providing excellent service and we're always sorry when we let you down.

This leaflet will explain what our promises are, and what we'll do if we fail to keep them.



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# Payments made as part of our promise

## Automatic payments

When we know you've been affected, we will make an automatic payment as detailed below. You'll receive this by cheque, unless your account is in arrears, in which case, it will be credited directly to your water account.

## Making a claim

If you've been affected and haven't received an automatic payment, please let us know and we will look into it.

There are some situations detailed below where a claim has to be made in order to receive a payment.

To claim a payment, please contact us on any of our contact channels: phone, website, Whatsapp or social media.

# Our promises about your account

## Account queries

### Our promise

If you send us a query about the accuracy of your bill in writing, we'll reply within 10 working days of receiving it.

What we'll do if we don't keep our promise	Automatic	Claim
If we don't, we'll automatically pay you £20.	£20	
If you don't receive a payment you're entitled to	Automatic	Claim
If we don't make this payment within 10 working days, we'll automatically pay you a further £20.	£20	





# Bills and payments

## Our promise

We keep your bills as accurate as we can based on the information we have about your property.

What we'll do if we don't keep our promise	Automatic	Claim
<p>If you've paid for a service we haven't provided, we'll refund the money you've paid up to 10 years before the mistake is discovered. If you've been overpaying for more than 12 months, we'll also include interest.</p> <p>Important: This does not apply to surface water drainage rebates.</p>		<p>To claim your refund</p>

## Our promise

We issue metered bills within three months from the end of the billing period.

What we'll do if we don't keep our promise	Automatic	Claim
<p>If we don't, and send you a number of bills all at once, we'll reduce the amount you have to pay by up to 50%.</p>		<p>To claim a reduction</p>

## Bills and payments continued

### Our promise

If you ask to change your payment method in writing, we'll let you know if this isn't possible within 5 working days.

What we'll do if we don't keep our promise	Automatic	Claim
If we don't, we'll automatically pay you £20.	£20	
If you don't receive a payment you're entitled to	Automatic	Claim
If we don't make this payment within 10 working days, we'll automatically pay you a further £20.	£20	

### Our promise

We handle Direct Debits and Standing Orders accurately and securely.

What we'll do if we don't keep our promise	Automatic	Claim
If we make an error, you can claim a refund for any bank charges or financial loss incurred.		Refund



## Our promise

If you ask for a receipt for payments you've made towards your bill, we'll send you one within 5 working days.

What we'll do if we don't keep our promise	Automatic	Claim
If we don't, you can claim £10.		£10

## Court claims

### Our promise

We only issue Court Claims after multiple attempts have been made to contact you, and you have still refused our help to pay back your debt.

What we'll do if we don't keep our promise	Automatic	Claim
If we make an error which causes us to wrongly issue a court claim against you, we'll pay you £100 and withdraw associated fees and costs.	£100	

# Our promises about your water supply

## Water quality (discoloured water)

### Our promise

We'll treat water and look after our pipes to provide clear, safe drinking water 24 hours a day.

What we'll do if we don't keep our promise	Automatic	Claim
<p>We'll generally compensate you for any damage caused by discoloured water, for example, stained washing, permanent staining of baths and sinks, or the cleaning of water tanks and heating systems. This compensation must be agreed before you commit to any expenditure.</p> <p>When we pay compensation, the damaged goods will become the property of South West Water.</p>		Compensation
<p>Where the water supply is regularly heavily discoloured, we'll consider reducing your annual water bill by 10-50% for each month affected. This will be agreed on a case-by-case basis.</p>		Reduction
<p>Metered customers only: If you get discoloured water, and need to run it off, we'll credit your account if you contact us at the time.</p>		Run off allowance

## Pressure

### Our promise

We'll make sure that there's a minimum pressure of 7 metres static head (0.7 bar) in our section of the service pipe which connects your property to our main (except when we're carrying out necessary works or during a drought).

What we'll do if we don't keep our promise	Automatic	Claim
We'll automatically pay you £25 if the pressure has dropped below this standard for 1 or more hours, on two separate occasions, within a 28-day period. We'll only make this payment once in any charging year.	£25	
If you don't receive a payment you're entitled to	Automatic	Claim
If we haven't identified you as being affected, you can claim a payment within 3 months of the second occasion.		Amount as above

# Interruptions to your water supply

## Our promise - Planned interruptions

- When we're planning work that will interrupt your water supply for more than 2 hours, we'll give you at least 48 hours' written notice.
- We'll also let you know, in writing, when you can expect your supply to be restored.
- If the interruption lasts more than 12 hours, we'll provide an alternative source of water.

What we'll do if we don't keep our promise	Automatic	Claim
If we fail to give you notice, we'll automatically pay you £20.	£20	
If we don't restore your supply by the time we said we would, we'll automatically pay you £30, plus an additional £30 for each further 12-hour period your supply remains unrestored.	£30	
If we fail to provide an alternative source of water when an interruption lasts more than 12 hours, you can claim £20.		£20
If you don't receive a payment you're entitled to	Automatic	Claim
If we don't make an automatic payment within 20 working days, we'll pay you a further £20.	£20	
If we haven't identified you as being affected, you can claim a payment within 3 months of the supply interruption.		Amount as above

## Our promise - Unplanned interruptions

- When your water supply is unexpectedly interrupted (e.g. due to a burst main, or when we have to carry out emergency repairs), we'll restore the supply within 12 hours of becoming aware of the interruption.
- If the interruption lasts more than 12 hours, we'll provide an alternative source of water.

What we'll do if we don't keep our promise	Automatic	Claim
If we don't restore your supply within 12 hours, we'll automatically pay you £30, plus an additional £30 for each further 12-hour period your supply remains unrestored.	£30	
If we fail to provide an alternative source of water, you can claim £20.		£20
If your supply is interrupted 3 or more times in a 12-month period due to a burst main, you can claim £10 for the third and each subsequent interruption. <b>Important:</b> This payment is not due if the burst main is caused by third party damage		£10
If you don't receive a payment you're entitled to	Automatic	Claim
If we don't make an automatic payment within 20 working days, we'll automatically pay you a further £20.	£20	
If we haven't identified you as being affected, you can claim a payment within 3 months of the supply interruption.		Amount as above

## Restricted notices

### Our promise

If we have problems with our supply, we'll issue "Do not drink", "Do not use" and "Boil water" notices when needed to protect your health.

What we'll do if we have to issue such a notice:	Automatic	Claim
For a "Do not drink" notice, we'll pay you £30.	£30	
For a "Do not use" notice, we'll pay you £50.	£50	
For a "Boil water" notice, we'll pay you £15.	£15	
If any of these notices is in place for more than 7 days, we'll make an additional payment of £15.	£15	



# Replacement of lead pipework

## Our promise

Provided you give us 4 weeks' notice of your intended work, we promise the following:

- If you replace a lead supply pipe (for which you're responsible), we'll replace any lead service pipe (for which we're responsible) free of charge.
- We'll replace our section at the time of your replacement, or within 10 working days of your work being completed – whichever you prefer.

What we'll do if we don't keep our promise	Automatic	Claim
If there is an avoidable delay which means our replacement happens after the 10 working days, you can claim £20.		£20





# Our promises about flooding events

## Flooding from water mains

### Our promise

If the inside of your property is flooded because of a burst water main which is not your fault, we will:

- Provide a specialist clean-up and drying service, free of charge.
- If you contact us at the time of the flooding, we'll consider your claim for uninsured losses and other out-of-pocket expenses.

## Flooding from sewers

### Our promise

- If we know that either a blockage or equipment failure might lead to sewer flooding, we'll do our best to have a representative onsite as quickly as possible.
- We will always give you a timescale of when we will attend the incident when you report it to us.
- Please contact your insurance company as soon as possible, because loss or damage from sewage flooding is covered by most building insurance policies.
- **Important:** If flooding occurs as a result of exceptional weather conditions, we're not required to make any payment.

## Section A: Internal flooding

What we'll do if we don't keep our promise	Automatic	Claim
<p>If a sewer floods into your property, we'll automatically make a payment equal to your annual sewerage bill (£150-£1000) within 20 working days of the event.</p> <p>Note: If you're a metered customer, we'll calculate the payment based on your previous usage.</p>	Minimum £150	
<p>We will also recommend local companies who are experts in cleaning flooded properties and can provide the services you may require. You're still free to make your own arrangements if you prefer.</p>		
If you don't receive a payment you're entitled to	Automatic	Claim
<p>If we don't pay you within 20 working days, we'll automatically pay you a further £20.</p>	£20	
<p>If we haven't identified you as being affected, you can claim a payment.</p>		Amount as above

## Section B: External flooding

What we'll do if we don't keep our promise	Automatic	Claim
<p>If a sewer floods your property outside, we'll investigate and advise you whether you can claim. Where applicable, we will make a payment equal to 50% of your annual sewerage bill . You can make a claim up to 3 months after the event.</p> <p>(£75-£500) within 20 working days of receiving your claim.</p> <p><b>Important:</b> If your property is flooded internally and externally, we'll make a payment under 'Internal Flooding' only.</p>		<p>Minimum £75</p>
If you don't receive a payment you're entitled to	Automatic	Claim
<p>If we don't pay you within 20 working days, we'll automatically pay you a further £20.</p>	<p>£20</p>	



# Our promises when we're out and about

## Appointments

### Our promise

We'll do our best to set a specific time for an appointment, but where this isn't possible, we'll let you know whether the visit will be in the morning (8am-1pm) or afternoon (12pm-5pm). If you need a more specific time, you can ask for a two-hour appointment slot.

- If we need to change your appointment, we'll give you at least 24 hours' notice.

What we'll do if we don't keep our promise	Automatic	Claim
If we fail on any of the above, we'll automatically pay you £20.	£20	
If you don't receive a payment you're entitled to	Automatic	Claim
If we don't make a payment within 10 working days, we'll automatically pay you a further £20.	£20	

# Working in the street

## Our promise

We'll do our best to carry out work so that the access to your property isn't blocked (except in emergencies). If this isn't possible, we'll let you know our plans in advance.

What we'll do if we don't keep our promise	Automatic	Claim
If we don't let you know, you can claim £10.		£10



# Our promises about complaints

## When you make a complaint

### Our promise

If you complain in writing, we'll reply within 10 working days of receiving it.

What we'll do if we don't keep our promise	Automatic	Claim
If we don't, we'll automatically pay you £20.	£20	
If you don't receive a payment you're entitled to	Automatic	Claim
If we don't make a payment within 10 working days, we'll automatically pay you a further £20.	£20	

# Some extra important bits

Your legal rights to take action for any loss or damage suffered are not affected by payments under Our Customer Promise.

Payments do not constitute an admission of liability on our part.

Your information will be treated in strict confidence in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation, 2018 (GDPR). Access to information by employees, third parties and service providers will be on a 'need to know' basis only. Our Privacy Policy explains what information we hold and process, who we share your information with and our lawful basis for doing so. This policy is available on our website.

## **If you're not satisfied:**

If you have a complaint about your water or wastewater service, or want to dispute your right to payment, please let us know by calling our Services Helpline, writing to us, or contacting us online.

Further information about how your complaint will be addressed can be found in Our Complaints Process.



# Other ways to get in touch

## Call us

**0344 346 1010**

to talk about your  
billing or account.

**0344 346 2020**

about your water  
supply or wastewater  
services.

### Minicom

0800 169 9965  
for textphone

### SignLive

Register at:  
[signlive.co.uk/login](https://signlive.co.uk/login)

### Relay

Contact us via Relay UK through the  
app or by dialling 18001 before the  
helpline number.

## Online

WhatsApp  
Facebook  
Twitter  
Webchat

## Send a letter

South West Water  
PO Box 4762  
Worthing  
BN11 9NT

## Website

For more information,  
please visit:

[www.southwestwater.  
co.uk/your-account](https://www.southwestwater.co.uk/your-account)

# Our other Codes of Practice:

- Looking after your water supply
- Our support when you need it - Priority Services
- Support with your bills and dealing with debt
- Taking care of your wastewater
- What to do if you spot a leak (Household Customers)
- What happens when you make a complaint
- Your bills explained