

Our Customer Promise

Code of Practice

Updated 2 July 2025



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

The information applies to household customers – if you're a business or other non-household customer, see southwestwater.co.uk/businesses-tariffs



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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 get in touch with us using the contact details towards the back of this document.

Our promises about your account

Account queries

Our promise

If you contact us querying your bill, we'll reply to you within 10 working days (starting the day we receive your message).

What we'll do if we don't keep our promise	Automatic	Claim
If we don't, we'll automatically pay you £40.	£40	
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 £40.	£40	



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 you, 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>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 per cent.</p>		<p>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 five 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 £40.	£40	
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 £40.	£40	

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 five 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 per cent 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 water 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 £50* if the pressure has dropped below this standard for one or more hours, on two separate occasions, within a 28-day period. We will only make this payment five times in any charging year.	£50	
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 three months of the second occasion.		Amount as above

* Payment will also not be made if the fall in pressure is because of a burst, planned work we are doing on our water mains, or because of problems on your own pipework.

Interruptions to your water supply

Our promise - Planned interruptions

- When we're planning work that will interrupt your water supply for more than two hours, we'll give you at least 48 hours' written notice.
- We'll also let you know, 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 £50.	£50	
If we don't restore your supply by the time we said we would, we'll automatically pay you £50, plus an additional £50 for each further full 12-hour period you remain without a water supply.*	£50	
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 £40.	£40	
If we haven't identified you as being affected, you can claim a payment within 3 months of the supply interruption.		Amount as above

* We must be able to identify you as being affected by the interruption to your water supply and you have not made a claim within 3 months of the date on which the supply was cut off.

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 £50, plus an additional £50 for each further full 12-hour period you remain without water supply	£50	
If we fail to provide an alternative source of water, you can claim £20.		£20
If your supply is interrupted three or more times in a 12-month period due to a burst main, you can claim £10 for the third and each subsequent interruption. Important: 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 £40.	£40	
If we haven't identified you as being affected, you can claim a payment within three months of the supply interruption.		Amount as above

Restricted notices

Our promise

If there’s a problem with the quality of the tap water we supply to you, we’ll do everything we can to fix it as quickly as possible. We may also issue a ‘restriction of use’ notice, if you need to stop using your water temporarily.

What we’ll do if we have to issue a restriction of use 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

As long as you give us four 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 £40.		£40



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.

Section A: Internal sewer flooding

The table below shows what you'll get automatically and what you might be able to claim if you have internal sewer flooding.

What we'll do if we don't keep our promise	Automatic	Claim
<p>If a public sewer floods your property inside, we'll automatically make a payment that is equal to your annual sewerage charges – a minimum of £300 to a maximum of £2000.</p> <p>We'll also pay an additional amount for any repeated flooding incidents within a 12- month period. This will be a minimum of £100, up to a maximum of £500 per incident*.</p> <p>The payments will be made within 20 working days of the incident.</p> <p>If you're a metered customer, we'll calculate the payment based on your previous usage.</p>	Minimum £300	
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.		
If you don't receive a payment you're entitled to	Automatic	Claim
If we don't pay you within 20 working days, we'll automatically pay you a further £40.	£40	
If we haven't identified you as being affected, you can claim a payment.		Amount as above

* Applies from 2 July 2025.

Section B: External sewer flooding

The table below shows what you'll get automatically and what you might be able to claim if you have external sewer flooding.

What we'll do if we don't keep our promise	Automatic	Claim
<p>If a public sewer floods your property outside, we'll investigate and advise you if you can make a claim. You can make a claim up to 3 months after the incident.</p> <p>If you can claim, we'll make a payment that is equal to 50% of your annual sewerage charges – a minimum of £150 to a maximum of £1000.</p> <p>We'll also pay an additional amount for any repeated flooding incident within a 12- month period. This will be a minimum of £50, up to a maximum of £250 per incident*.</p> <p>The payments will be made within 20 working days of receiving your claim.</p>		Minimum £150
If you don't receive a payment you're entitled to	Automatic	Claim
If we don't pay you within 20 working days, we'll automatically pay you a further £40.	£40	

* Applies from 2 July 2025.

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.

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 £40.	£40	
If we cancel the appointment with less than 24 hours notice, or if we don't attend the appointment within the agreed time slot, we'll automatically pay you £50*.	£50	
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 £40.	£40	

* Payment will not be given in the case of an emergency, where the customer has cancelled the appointment, where we have given at least 24 hours' notice, or where it's impossible to keep the appointment due to severe weather.

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 to us, we'll reply within 10 working days from the date we receive it.

What we'll do if we don't keep our promise	Automatic	Claim
If we don't, we'll automatically pay you £40.	£40	
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 £40.	£40	

Some extra important bits

The intention of this document is to serve as a general guide to the guaranteed standards of service we offer and does not attempt in any way to set out in full our legal obligations to you.

Our payments do not constitute an admission of liability on our part, and if you accept a payment, it does not affect our liability to you. If you require more information, please contact us.

Our guarantees do not apply if we are prevented from meeting our standards as a result of the actions of a third party acting on our behalf, or exceptional circumstances outside of our control (such as extreme weather conditions, or industrial action by our employees). There are also some other restrictions related to specific standards which are available upon request.

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 Customer Services helplines, writing to us, or contacting us online.

Some extra important bits cont.

Further information about how your complaint will be addressed can be found in Our Complaints Process on the website southwestwater.co.uk/complaints

If you're unhappy with anything in this document, please contact us or you can contact Ofwat – the regulator for water services – directly using the address below:

Water Services Regulation Authority (Ofwat), Centre City Tower, 7 Hill Street, Birmingham, B5 4UA

Contact us

Phone

0344 346 1010

to talk about your billing or account

0344 346 2020

about your water supply or wastewater services

SignLive

Register at: signlive.co.uk/login

Relay

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

Social Media

WhatsApp
Facebook
X/Twitter
Webchat

Post

South West Water
PO Box 4762
Worthing
BN11 9NT

Website

For more information,
please visit:
[southwestwater.co.uk/
your-account](https://southwestwater.co.uk/your-account)

This document is one of a series setting out key information for customers about our services.

To see other documents with key information, use the QR code or the link below.

southwestwater.co.uk/important-information



This document is available in other languages, large print, and braille.