

# 1 Having a water meter fitted



**A water meter is a simple device fitted to the water service pipe that records how much water is used. Our policy is to install a water meter when the billpayer requests this, as long as this is practical. We do not charge for the installation.**

This factsheet will help if you are thinking of having one fitted, or if you have already applied. It answers the questions we are most frequently asked by customers and also includes the terms and conditions which apply when having a meter installed.

## Will I save money?

This depends on how much you currently pay, how many people live in your property and how water efficient you are. The table below is a guide to how much water is used by different household sizes during a year:

People	1	2	3	4	5	6
High use	75	136	180	225	270	300
Typical use	63	110	148	185	220	245
Efficient use	44	68	92	120	142	165

Figures in cubic metres (equal to 1000 litres)

With a meter you can control the size of your bill and help protect the environment as you are more aware of the water you use.

To work out what your bill would be if you were metered, multiply your expected water use in the table by the cost per cubic metre in your area. As well as your metered charges, you will be billed a 'standing charge', a fixed amount that each household pays to cover

costs such as maintenance. Our charges are on our website.

The best way to find out how much water you use and how much this will cost is to complete our Water Usage Calculator at [www.seswater.co.uk/calculator](http://www.seswater.co.uk/calculator). You can also order free water saving devices to help keep your water and energy bills under control.

## How is water typically used in the home?

Type of Use	Cubic Metres	Litres
Bath	0.1	100
Shower	0.06	60
Toilet	0.007	7
Washing machine	0.055	55
Dishwasher	0.018	18
Hose (per hour)	1	1000

Each cubic metre is equivalent to:

- 10 baths
- 17 showers
- 142 toilet flushes
- 18 washloads
- 56 dishwasher loads

For more information on using less water go to [www.seswater.co.uk/saving](http://www.seswater.co.uk/saving) or ask our Customer Services team.

## Where are meters fitted?

We normally fit them in the road just outside your property boundary.

If this is not possible we try to fit the meter inside your home which may require some alterations to your plumbing (we do not charge for this). If you are a tenant you should discuss

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Tel 01737 772000 or Fax 01737 766807 [www.seswater.co.uk](http://www.seswater.co.uk)

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this with your landlord. All meters remain the property of the Company.

### When will the meter be installed?

Once you have applied we will contact you to arrange a survey. We aim to install every meter within three months. If it takes longer, and this is our fault, metered charges will be calculated and applied retrospectively. If you would like to be kept informed of the progress of your application, we offer a free text and email notification service.

### What happens if a meter cannot be installed?

If it is not possible we offer you a fixed charge known as the Assessed Household Charge, if this is cheaper than your current bill. We cannot offer this tariff if you use water for garden watering or a swimming pool.

If you are not happy with any decision we make, you can contact our industry regulator Ofwat.

### Can I read the meter myself?

Most are fitted in an underground box that includes the principal stopcock. You can read it by opening the lid. The red figures are not used for billing as they represent less than one cubic metre. For example, a reading of 000432189 is 43.2189 cubic metres and we record 43 cubic metres.

### How accurate is the meter?

Meters are very accurate and are designed not to over-record consumption. If you ask for an accuracy test we can arrange this, but if it is

found to be operating within the normal tolerance range you will be charged the cost of the test.

### What happens if I have a leak?

It's a good idea to check for any leaks in your property before having a meter fitted. This could include dripping taps, faulty tank overflows, leaking toilets or a leak on your underground pipework.

We check for leaks when the meter is installed. If the meter is moving when it is first fitted we will contact you. If it is due to a leak on your underground supply pipe you may be able to have it repaired free of charge under our Free Leak Detection and Repair Scheme.

The best way to check for leaks is to check your plumbing regularly and check your bills for any unexplained increase. Remember, you are responsible for all pipes and fittings within your property boundary. We are responsible for the pipes laid in the public highway.

In some cases, the water supply pipe can be shared between neighbours, in which case parts of the pipework are jointly owned. Also, some customers are responsible for pipes under land that they do not own. The route of your water supply pipe is on your property deeds.

### How will I be billed?

We will read your meter every six months and send you a bill twice a year. The standing charge is payable in advance and consumption in arrears. We offer a number of

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payment options, including regular monthly payments.

## What about sewerage charges?

If your property is connected to mains drainage your meter reading is also used to calculate sewerage charges. When setting the sewerage charge, the company concerned (either Southern Water or Thames Water, depending on your location) takes into account that not all the water supplied will be returned to the public sewer. If you believe that in your case considerably more than the average amount of water is not returned to the public sewer a further allowance may be made.

## Electrical earthing in older buildings

If your property was built prior to 1966, it is possible it still uses the metal water service pipe for electrical earthing which is no longer considered safe. If this applies to your property we strongly recommend contacting your electricity company or an electrician who may recommend checking your earthing. We will not reimburse this cost as it is an essential safety requirement of the property's owner. We do not accept any liability as a result of using a water pipe as an electrical earth.

## How to apply

If you have not yet applied, the quickest way is to go online at [www.seswater.co.uk/meter](http://www.seswater.co.uk/meter). Alternatively, call our Customer Services team and we can take your application by phone or we can send you a form to return by post.

## Contact Us

Our Customer Services Team is available on 01737 772000 or you can tweet @SESWater.

You can also email [meterenquiries@seswater.co.uk](mailto:meterenquiries@seswater.co.uk) and visit [www.seswater.co.uk](http://www.seswater.co.uk)

Office Opening Hours:  
Monday – Friday : 8am to 6pm

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