

# Enhanced Optant Meter Programme: Frequently asked questions



## What is an Enhanced Optant Meter?

An Enhanced Optant Meter allows the customer to receive a measured comparison bill every 6 months, without actually committing to being on a metered supply. This enables the customer to compare their unmeasured bill with a measured bill.

## Why have you fitted a meter when I haven't asked for one?

People with a meter tend to use less water which is good news for the planet, especially in this water-stressed area. By reducing demand on our network, we are less likely to need to place restrictions on our customer's water supplies during dry weather and we can reduce the impact on local rivers and wetlands. Around 55% of our customers already pay by meter, and they typically use about 15% less water than those on an unmetered tariff.

## Can I choose to switch once the meter has been fitted?

Yes, it's your choice. You don't have to switch to measured charges but we hope that you do as metered bills are generally accepted as the fairest way to pay for the water you use.

Will I be charged for having a meter fitted?

No. Your meter will be installed free of charge. Once a new owner or occupier moves into the property, they will automatically be switched to measured water charges.

## Are you fitting meters to all homes in my neighbourhood?

Yes, where it is possible to do so.

## Can I refuse to have a meter fitted?

Our preference is to install water meters at all properties included in the programme if it is practical to do so.

## Do I have to switch?

No, it's up to you, but this year the average annual bill for those with a meter is £44 lower than those without!

## Does the fitting of a meter infringe my privacy?

The fitting of a meter does not infringe on privacy rights as we will only be taking meter readings once every six months. Monitoring household

consumption is necessary for us to manage our water resources.

## Will my water supply have been affected?

We have to turn off your water supply for a few minutes to fit the meter. Before using your kitchen tap we recommend running it for about a minute to remove any harmless particles (but please save the water for your plants!) If your water pressure is lower, try turning your internal stopcock (usually under the sink) on and off a few times.

## What happens to my bill when I switch?

Once you've made the switch, we will send you a final unmetered bill. You will receive your first metered bill within six months. If you pay by direct debit we will adjust your payments automatically.

## How will I know if I am better off on a meter?

Once we have read your meter we will send you a comparative bill showing the cost of both charges. Alternatively, to find out if you are an efficient user visit [seswater.co.uk/meter](http://seswater.co.uk/meter) to try our GetWaterFit Savings Engine to get bespoke water and energy savings advice. You may also qualify for a FREE home water efficiency check which includes fitting free water-saving devices and minor leak repairs.

## Will the way I pay my bill be affected?

No. You can continue to pay in the same way.

water fact sheet

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### Will you put up my bill once I've switched?

No. The prices that water companies can charge are set every five years by the regulator, Ofwat. We offer a range of tariffs to meet our customers' needs and as you control your usage you may find that you are paying less.

### What happens when I sell my house or a new tenant moves in?

Once a new owner or occupier moves into the property, they will automatically be switched to measured water charges.

### What happens if there's a leak on the pipe that supplies water to my property?

It's really important that you get the leak repaired as soon as possible. Your insurance policy may cover the cost to repair it or you might prefer to call a local plumber. Alternatively, you can ask us to arrange to fix it. We'll do this for FREE. Just as long as the leak is discovered and repaired within 12 months of the meter being fitted.

### Do I pay for the water if there's a leak?

You may be entitled to a one-off leakage allowance claim which compensates you for the water lost during a leak.

### Who would carry out this work?

Only people employed by SES Water or a contracting partner as part of our metering programme will be carrying out this work. Our employees, or anyone working on our behalf, carry an identity card and will always produce the card for you to check. The card also has a braille strip on the back. If you are still worried then take the ID card, close the door and call us on 01737 772000 (this line is available 24 hours a day). They will be happy to wait outside while you do this.

### How often will the meter be read?

Every six months. You will receive a bill twice a year and we will still read the meter even if you don't switch but you will not be billed based on your reading.

### Can I read the meter?

The meter is in an underground box with your external stopcock and you can read it at any time by lifting the lid. The white numbers on a black background are cubic metres and used to calculate your bill – one cubic metre equals 1000 litres – or about 28 showers! Ignore the red numbers.

### Who owns the pipe from the boundary to my property if I have an internal meter?

You still own the pipe from the boundary and are responsible for it.

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

We'll explore all of the possible options to fit a meter, if it is not possible we'll tell you and explain why.

### What happens next?

Find out more at [seswater.co.uk/meter](http://seswater.co.uk/meter) or call us on 01737 772000 to speak with our Billing team between 8.30am and 5pm Monday to Friday. You can make the switch on our website [seswater.co.uk/meterswitch](http://seswater.co.uk/meterswitch), over the phone or by emailing [meterswitch@seswater.co.uk](mailto:meterswitch@seswater.co.uk). If you don't switch straight away, within the next six months we will still send you an example of what your metered bill would be which will be calculated on your actual usage.

Office Opening Hours:  
Monday – Friday : 8:30am to 5pm

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For further information contact the Customer Services team at  
SES Water, London Road, Redhill RH1 1LJ  
Tel 01737 772000 or Fax 01737 766807 [www.seswater.co.uk](http://www.seswater.co.uk)