

Priority Services Register: Our services for customers with additional needs



Our Code of Practice

This leaflet forms part of our Customer Code of Practice, which outlines the services we provide for household customers. It has been produced in compliance with our licence.

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Introduction

Our services for customers with additional needs

At South East Water we want to ensure that all our customers can access our services, including those who may have additional needs. Priority Services Register is our package of free services for customers with mobility restrictions, who are deaf, blind or partially sighted, suffer a long term sickness or illness, as well as our elderly customers. Additionally, if your first language is not English we may be able to help you with our interpretation service when you call. Contact details are on the back of this leaflet.

Our Priority Services Register scheme will not reduce your bills, but it can help ensure we provide the right services to meet the additional needs of our customers, or family members who may be caring for them.

Registering with Priority Services Register is simple. You can:

- › **Contact us and let us know which service, or services, you wish to select. Our contact details are on the back of this leaflet, and include a minicom/text phone service**
- › **Complete the enclosed application form, and return it in the pre-paid envelope.**

You can ask someone you trust, such as a relative, friend, neighbour, carer or social worker, to do this for you. The information you provide will only be used by authorised staff for the purpose of managing our services to you.

Customers registering with Priority Services Register can choose to:

- › **Receive prior warning of planned work which may mean interrupting your water supply**
- › **Receive important information in a more convenient format, such as large print or the spoken word, when our standard presentation style is not suitable**
- › **Register their own spoken or written password for our staff to use so that customers can identify them if we need to call at your home**
- › **Nominate somebody else to receive your water bill on your behalf, or someone we should contact if it remains unpaid. The person you nominate must agree to this**
- › **Receive easy-to-read, large print bills for the partially sighted. We can also arrange to call you and read your bill to you**
- › **Receive information about specialist organisations which are able to provide advice on possible adaptations to water fittings and appliances around the home.**

Further details of our services

Warning of supply interruptions

Planned work

It is occasionally necessary for us to interrupt customer supplies so that we can carry out planned work.

We make every effort to ensure that customers are given prior notice. This will usually be by means of an information card posted through your door.

Emergency repairs

Sometimes supplies are interrupted due to sudden problems, such as a burst main. In these events we will complete emergency repairs as quickly as possible. We will try to contact registered Priority Services Register customers as quickly as possible to let them know about the situation, and to give an indication of how long it may last. Should the problem be prolonged, an alternative supply of water will be made available.

We will use discretion in deciding whether Priority Services Register customers should be notified if an emergency interruption occurs between the hours of 10pm and 8am.

In an emergency, dialysis patients will be given maximum priority as far as notification and information about the supply interruption is concerned.

To ensure that we give the best possible service, please tell us in the relevant section of the application form if you feel that your health could be put at risk by any water supply interruption, even if planned and pre-notified.

Access to information

We produce a range of leaflets that together form our Customer Code of Practice. They provide household customers with key information on the services we provide and how to access them.

Our other Customer Code of Practice leaflets include:

- › **South East Water: Your water company**
- › **Water metering: A guide for household customers**
- › **Our Guaranteed Standards of Service**
- › **Leaks from customers' supply pipes**
- › **Household water charges, payment options and debt recovery**
- › **If things go wrong.**

We provide all of the above leaflets on request and if the standard document is not easy to read we can supply it in a more convenient format, such as large print.

All of the leaflets are also available on our website **southeastwater.co.uk**, where they can be enlarged to suit individual reading preferences.

Any subsequent request for updated or amended information will be provided in the same style. Just complete the appropriate section on the enclosed form.

Water bill nominee scheme

If you are concerned about understanding or remembering to pay your water bill, you can nominate someone else for us to deal with on your behalf.

Priority Services Register customers can ask us to do one of the following:

- › **Send your bill to your nominee rather than you**
- › **Send a copy of your bill to your nominee at the same time we send the original to you**
- › **Send a copy of your bill to your nominee if the bill remains unpaid.**

Your nominee does not become liable for your bill but we will allow extra time for them to try to help sort things out if any problems arise.

Please complete the nominee section of the enclosed form and tell us the name, address and telephone number of someone you trust – a friend, relative, neighbour or carer. Select which of the three options you prefer and ask your nominee to sign the form to confirm their acceptance of the arrangement.

Water bill information

Everybody should be able to understand their water bill for themselves. Priority Services Register customers can choose to receive their water bills in an easy-to-read large print format if our standard style of billing document is difficult to read.

We can also provide water bills in braille or audio for visually impaired customers.

Please complete the enclosed form or call us if you would like to select this service.

We can also help you to understand more about your water bill:

- › **How it is calculated**
- › **How much water you have used**
- › **How and when your payment should be made.**

If you would like assistance with either working out or paying your bill, call our Customer Service Centre on **0333 000 0001** and we will talk you through your bill and payment options.

Priority Services Register customers who have a water meter can request a free check reading service if you think that your meter reading is incorrect. Also if we find that there is a leak on your supply or internal plumbing we will help you locate the leak and provide a free emergency repair, which could be a simple repair or isolation of a leak fitting, appliance or section of pipework. We will also provide a full leak allowance for any lost water. More information is available in our Customer Code of Practice **Leaks from customers' supply pipes** leaflet. Please visit our website or contact us if you would like a copy.

Equipment advisory service

We know that it can be difficult for some customers to grip and operate the controls on taps and other domestic fittings and appliances.

There are a number of specialist organisations which we are able to recommend and sometimes demonstrate the range of adaptations and equipment which could make it easier for you to use baths, showers and other water appliances in your home. For information on how to get this type of advice, please contact our Customer Service Centre.

Bogus callers: Be stranger aware

South East Water asks – knock knock, who's there? Be stranger aware.

We want you to be safe in your home, so never let anyone enter unless you are sure they are who they say they are.

South East Water employees wear distinctive uniforms, drive vans with our company logo on them and have identity cards with a photograph of the holder.

Priority Services Register customers can register a password for our representatives to use if they ever need to call at your home. This will help you to be sure of their identity before opening the door to them. The password can be spoken or written down and can be a word or number of up to six characters.

Passwords can be changed by writing to us at any time. Please keep a record of your password. If you forget it, you can request a copy, which we will send to you through the post.

When a caller claims to be from South East Water, follow our three-point checklist

- › **Check their company photographic identity card**
- › **Look for the South East Water logo on their uniform and van**
- › **If you are uncertain about anyone claiming to be from South East Water you can call our bogus caller telephone line 0333 000 2244 to double check.**

If you register a password, you can also ask our staff to quote your security password. To set up a password, please contact us or return the enclosed form.

WaterSure: Protection for vulnerable customers

In addition to our Priority Services Register scheme, Water Industry Regulations provide protection to any metered households where someone living at the property is in receipt of a qualifying benefit and:

- › **There are three or more children (under 19 years old) also living in the property, or**
- › **There is a person with a medical condition that requires significant additional use of water also living in the property.**

The qualifying benefits are:

- › **Universal credit**
- › **Housing and Council Tax benefit**
- › **Income support**
- › **Working tax credit**
- › **Income-based job-seeker's allowance**
- › **Child tax credit (except families in receipt of the family element only)**
- › **Pension credit**
- › **Income based employment and support allowance.**

Examples of medical conditions include:

- › **Weeping skin diseases (e.g Psoriasis)**
- › **Crohn's disease**
- › **Ulcerative colitis.**

Other medical conditions requiring additional use of water and supported by a doctor's certificate may also qualify.

WaterSure means that eligible customers' charges are capped at the average annual household metered bill for the area. If your actual usage charges are lower than the average for the area, you will pay the lower charge.

Assistance will be backdated to the last meter reading prior to the date the application is made and is valid for 12 months from the date of that meter reading.

If you would like more details on WaterSure or any of the other tariffs and support we offer, please contact our Customer Care Team on **0333 000 0001**.

For more information about South East Water

Please refer to our website southeastwater.co.uk or the other Customer Code of Practice leaflets as listed on page 4.

The information we provide is intended to be accessible to all our customers. If you would prefer this leaflet in an alternative format, such as large print, braille or audio, please contact us. Additionally if your first language is not English we may be able to help you with our interpretation service when you call. Contact details are on the back of this leaflet.

Customer Care

South East Water offers a wide range of tariffs, payment schemes and support to customers with additional needs or difficulty paying their bill.

For more information contact our specialist team on **0333 000 2468** or visit southeastwater.co.uk/customer-care



Priority Services Register registration form

Please complete the form in BLOCK CAPITALS and return it to us in the envelope provided.

Customer details:

Account Number -

Title: First Name:*

Surname:*

Address Line 1:*

Address Line 2:

Town:* Postcode:*

Email address:

Telephone number:* (we need at least one telephone number)

Landline: Mobile:

Minicom: *required information

Warning of supply interruptions

My health could be affected by an interruption to my water supply.

Please provide details to help us to respond more appropriately in the event of an unplanned interruption.

- I am a dialysis patient I am blind or partially sighted
- I have restricted mobility I am deaf or hard of hearing
- Other details:

Access to information

If you would like us to send you any of our Customer Code of Practice Leaflets, please indicate below. (These leaflets are also available via our website southeastwater.co.uk)

- Water metering: A guide for household customers
- Household water charges, payment options and debt recovery
- Leaks from customers' supply pipes
- Guaranteed Standards of Service
- If things go wrong
- South East Water: Your water company

Please indicate if you would like to receive your leaflets in alternative formats:

- Large print Braille

Water bill information

I would like to receive my bills in:

- Large print Braille Audio
-

Water bill nominee scheme

I would like to nominate the following person to receive my bills, and to discuss and instruct you in relation to my bills, as appropriate:

- Instead of sending them to me
- As well as sending them to me
- If my bill is unpaid

Nominee details:

Title: First Name:*

Surname:*

Address Line 1:*

Address Line 2:

Town:* Postcode:*

Telephone:*

Your nominee must accept this arrangement. Please ask them to sign below.

Signed:* _____ Date:*

Password scheme

I would like South East Water staff to use a password when calling at my home:

My password is: (maximum of 6 characters)

The information you provide to us will be used for the purpose of providing and managing water and related services to you. Your information may be exchanged with your wastewater company in relation to their services to you, and with approved third parties, which may include fraud prevention, credit reference, and collection agencies.

Please register me in the South East Water Priority Services Register scheme.

Signed: _____ Date:

All registration forms must be signed.

*required information

Independent advice

Age UK

Tavis House, 1-6 Tavistock Square, London, WC1H 9NA

Free helpline: 0800 169 6565*

Web: ageuk.org.uk

Disabled Living Foundation

Ground floor, Landmark House, Hammersmith Bridge Road, London, W6 9EJ

Tel: 0300 999 0004

Web: dlf.org.uk

Action on Hearing Loss

19-23 Featherstone Street, London, EC1Y 8SL

Information Line (Voice):

Tel: 0808 808 0123 (freephone)

Information Line (Text):

Tel: 0808 808 9000 (freephone)

Web: actiononhearingloss.org.uk

Royal National Institute of Blind People

105 Judd Street, London, WC1H 9NE

Tel: 0303 123 9999

Web: rnib.org.uk

The Citizens' Advice Bureau

The address and telephone number of your local office may be found in the telephone directory.

Web: citizensadvice.org.uk

*See organisations' websites for details of call charges

How to Contact Us

Our Customer Service Centre is open:
Monday to Friday from 8am to 7pm
Saturday from 8am to 1pm
We are closed on Sundays and Bank Holidays



Call

Account enquiries

0333 000 0001

Water supply and general enquiries

0333 000 0002

Minicom/text phone

0333 000 0004

Payment helpline

0333 000 0005

24 hour water supply emergencies line

0333 00 00 365

24 hour automated payment line

0333 00 00 247

24 hour Leakline

0333 000 3330



Online

southeastwater.co.uk/contact



Write

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SEWaterUK



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