

south east water



Our Code of Practice

If things go wrong



Pure know h₂ow

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

South East Water is committed to providing a first class service to our customers, but we know that we don't always get it right first time.

When this happens, we know you want us to resolve things quickly and effectively. This leaflet explains our process to ensure this happens.

If you have an issue or complaint, please let us know as soon as possible. Our contact details are on the back of this leaflet. Calling us, using our Live Chat service on our website or contacting us through Twitter or Facebook are the quickest and easiest ways to resolve a problem. If it's not possible for our advisors to provide an answer immediately, they will arrange to ring you back.

We supply your drinking water only. If your concern relates to your wastewater services you will need to contact the company that provides these services direct.

Depending on where you live, this will be either:

Thames Water: thameswater.co.uk Tel: 0800 316 9800*

or

Southern Water: southernwater.co.uk Tel: 0330 303 0368

We bill for wastewater services on behalf of Thames Water and Southern Water, so queries about wastewater charges would be handled by our Customer Service Centre.

* See Thames Water's website for details of call charges

How our complaints process works

If we're unable to resolve your complaint with you on the phone, using our Live Chat service or through Twitter or Facebook, you can email or write to us. We aim to resolve all complaints at the first stage. You can find more information about these stages on pages 4 and 5.



Initial contact

Calling us is the quickest way to resolve a problem. If you write to us, our trained advisors will investigate the problem and respond within 10 working days of receiving your email or letter. If we cannot give you a full response within this time, we will tell you when we will provide it and give you the name and direct contact number for your case handler if you require further information.

If we fail to respond within 10 working days, we will apply a credit of £20 to your water account.

Complaints Review Team

We aim to resolve any complaint before the review stages but if you're not satisfied with our response, or feel it has not fully addressed your concerns, please let your case handler know straight away.

Your complaint will be passed to our Complaints Review Team which will review the case and respond within 10 working days.

Within 8 weeks of us receiving your complaint we will either:

- *be able to resolve your complaint or*
- *advise you that we are still not in a position to issue our final response. We will tell you why this is and also when we expect to be able to do so*

Independent review

If you remain dissatisfied following our review, you can ask for a review of your case by the Consumer Council for Water, an organisation independent of the water industry representing the interests of customers:

Consumer Council for Water
1st Floor
Victoria Square House
Victoria Square
Birmingham
B2 4AJ

Email: enquiries@ccwater.org.uk

Website: ccwater.org.uk

Tel: 0300 034 2222

WATRS Water Scheme

If you remain dissatisfied following the Consumer Council for Water's efforts to resolve your complaint, you have the right to refer your complaint to the Water Redress Scheme, known as WATRS.

WATRS is a voluntary Alternative Dispute Resolution scheme set up to help address the very small number of customer complaints that remain unresolved. WATRS is designed to provide an independent, impartial and easy-to-use alternative to going to court or a tribunal.

You must have referred your complaint to the Consumer Council for Water to review or investigate before you can apply to WATRS.

You can make an application free of charge via the WATRS website or ask the Consumer Council for Water to send an application form to you.

WATRS

Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution
International Dispute Resolution Centre
70 Fleet Street
London EC4Y 1EU

Email: info@watrs.org

Website: watrs.org

Tel: 020 7520 3801

Any decisions made by WATRS are binding on water companies. WATRS aims to make its decision within 20 working days of receiving an application for your complaint to be adjudicated. Once the water company is notified of the decision it has 20 days to provide any remedies set by WATRS. It can also decide that your complaint is not eligible for the scheme and will explain why.

Complaints dealt with by Ofwat

Under the Water Industry Act, there are some specific types of complaint which are dealt with by the Water Services Regulation Authority, Ofwat, rather than by the Consumer Council for Water.

These include complaints about our powers to lay pipes on private land, compliance with our main water supply duties or with our licence conditions, or about competition law compliance.

Ofwat

Case Management Office

Centre City Tower

7 Hill Street

Birmingham B5 4UA

Email: casemanagementoffice@ofwat.gsi.gov.uk

Website: ofwat.gov.uk/consumerissues

Tel: 0300 034 2222

Decisions made by Ofwat and other third parties

Under the Water Industry Act, when we cannot resolve certain disputes both you and South East Water can ask Ofwat to make a decision. Some disputes may be decided by an independent arbitrator. In certain circumstances you may have the right to make a claim for loss or damage through the courts.

Further information can be found in our Customer Code of Practice leaflet South East Water: Your water company, which is available from our website southeastwater.co.uk, or by contacting our Customer Service Centre. More details are also on Ofwat's website.

For more information about South East Water

Please refer to our website **southeastwater.co.uk** or the other Customer Code of Practice leaflets:

Exercise of pipelaying powers on private land

Household water charges, payment options and debt recovery

Leaks from customers' supply pipes

Our Guaranteed Standards of Service

Priority Services Register: Our services for customers with additional needs

Water metering: A guide for household customers

Your water company

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](https://www.southeastwater.co.uk/customer-care)**

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



southeastwater.co.uk



southeastwater.co.uk/contact



Facebook and Twitter: @sewateruk



Water supply and general enquiries

0333 000 0002

Out of hours emergencies

0333 00 00 365

24 hour automated payment line

0333 00 00 247

24 hour leakline

0333 000 3330



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