




**Save money
with a water
meter**
See page 2
for details

**We're here
to help**

2021/22

You can't lose



With a water meter you always pay the lowest bill - guaranteed!

We've made switching to a water meter easier than ever – and our lowest bill guarantee* means that you won't pay any more than you do now during your two year trial and the money you save is yours to keep!

At the end of the two year trial you can either switch back to your old fixed bill or stay on meter charges permanently if you've made a saving. You can't lose!

**Don't miss out on a cheaper water bill.
Call 0345 072 6065 to apply for a FREE
water meter today!**

Visit unitedutilities.com/meters for full details.

*Our lowest bill guarantee means we'll charge you the lower amount of either your meter charges or your fixed rateable value bill during the two year trial period.

Welcome

Inside this leaflet

Save money on your bills	4
Your bill explained	6
Help with your payments	8
Our promises to you	10
How we manage your personal details	12

How to contact us



Manage your water account at
unitedutilities.com/myaccount



Search 'United Utilities' to download our app from the
App Store or **Google Play**



To talk about your bill, call us on **0345 672 2888**
To report any problems with your water or wastewater services please call **0345 672 3723** (available 24 hours)
If you're struggling to pay your bill we can help, please call **0800 072 6765**
If you have recently lost a loved one and need help with their water account call **0345 072 6093**



@OfficialUnitedUtilities



@unitedutilities

We're here to put things right

We hope you never have to complain but if you feel we've fallen short of our high standards then please call us on the numbers below. We'll always try and put things right there and then over the phone:

Water charges/bills: **0345 075 0711**

Water or wastewater services: **0345 075 0713**

Why not go paperless?

Register at unitedutilities.com/myaccount to view your bills online rather than receiving printed copies in the post.

Save money on your bills



It's easier than you think to make a saving on your water bill:

Save water, save money!

Saving water around the home is good for the environment and your bank balance too. Even though you don't have a water meter, you can still make a saving on your household bills by using water wisely.

That's because a lot of water we use in the home is heated - such as baths, showers, washing machines and dishwashers. So making sure you don't let any hot water go to waste will help to reduce your gas and electricity bills.

Visit unitedutilities.com/watertight for lots of hints and tips on how to use water wisely in the home and garden.

FREE water saving goodies

We have some fantastic water saving items you can order for FREE to help you save water in the home. From easy to fit tap inserts to shower timers and save-a-flush bags, our free items will help you save water around the home and reduce your energy bills too.



Visit unitedutilities.com/watertight to order yours.

You could reduce your bill with a meter

A water meter could be one of the easiest ways to make a saving on your water bill. We fit them for free and our lowest bill guarantee means you won't be worse off! See page 2 for full details or visit unitedutilities.com/meters



Save £5 on your bill

Why not spread your payments over the year by setting up a Direct Debit? It's better than having to pay your bill in one lump sum and we'll even knock £5 off your bill every year for paying in this way.

Set up yours by visiting unitedutilities.com/directdebit or call us on **0345 672 2888**.



Get discounts for drainage

Part of your bill pays for us to remove all that lovely rainwater that falls on your home (we explain more about the services we charge you for on page 6). However, if your home is not connected to the public sewer to drain away your rainwater (for example, your surface water drains to a soakaway instead), we can reduce your bill.

Visit unitedutilities.com/surface-water-drainage for more information and to download a claim form.



Leaks on your water supply pipe – what you can do

Legally your outside water supply pipe is your responsibility to repair, but we like to help out where we can. We offer a private leak repair scheme which means that in certain cases we are able to repair a leak on your supply pipe.

Visit unitedutilities.com/bursthome for further info.



Don't let your money leak away

Even though you don't have a water meter, it's a good idea to check for leaks, especially taps. Remember, heating water has an impact on your energy bills so you don't want to let hot water leak away as this is money going down the drain.

Our leaflet 'How to check your water usage' contains lots of information about how to spot leaks in your home.

Visit unitedutilities.com/leaflets to download this leaflet.

Your bill explained

In this section we've included a simple explanation of the services you pay for and how your charges are calculated.

You can find lots more information about your bill, including our up-to-date charges, at unitedutilities.com/your-bill

Your bill helps to pay for the following services:



Collecting, storing, treating and supplying fresh water to your home



Taking away all your used water (which we call wastewater), cleaning it and returning it to rivers and the sea



Taking away rainwater that falls on your home and the roads

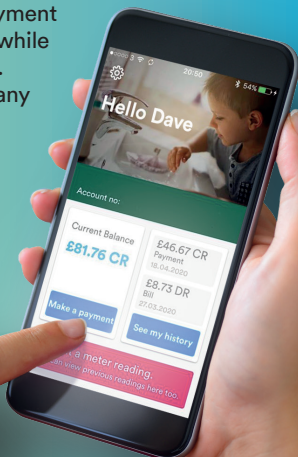


A standing charge for essential things such as bills and dealing with enquiries

'Appy days!

No more having to queue at the bank or the Post Office, you can make a payment with just a few taps on your phone while you're sitting at home with a cuppa. You can also use our app to report any leaks you spot when you're out and about. You can even view your bills on our app if you've chosen to go paperless at unitedutilities.com/myaccount

Search 'United Utilities' on the **App Store** or **Google Play** to download.





Watch our video

Why not visit unitedutilities.com/understanding-your-bill to watch a short video which explains how we calculate your bill and the services this pays for.

As you don't have a water meter, your water and wastewater charges are fixed for the year and are calculated using the rateable value of your home (see explanation below).

Your standing charge is a fixed charge for the year and isn't based on your rateable value. Our charges for the year ahead change every 1 April – you can find them at unitedutilities.com/your-bill

How we use rateable value

As you don't have a water meter, we use your home's rateable value to calculate your bill. Rateable values were set by the Inland Revenue prior to 31 March 1990 and were based on factors such as the size, condition and location of your home. As we didn't set these values, we're not allowed to change them and they're no longer reviewed by any other body.

We work out your bills by multiplying your home's rateable value with a charge for each of our services. Rateable value isn't related to how much water you use and for many customers, a water meter can be one of the easiest ways to reduce your bills. See page 2 for details on how to order a meter.

You can find more information about rateable values at unitedutilities.com/rv

Take control of your water account



With our FREE online My Account service, you're in control. Once registered, you can view your water account 24 hours a day to:

- Pay your bill
- Set up a Direct Debit
- Switch to paperless billing
- Let us know you're moving

Visit unitedutilities.com/myaccount to register

Help with your payments

We really do understand that making ends meet can be stressful sometimes so please contact us if you're having difficulties with your water bill payments.

We've included details below on some of the ways we can help but please call us on **0800 072 6765** to make sure you receive the right support or visit **unitedutilities.com/difficulty-paying-bill**

- ✔ **Back on track:** if you're finding it difficult to pay your water bill and receiving benefits we can help; also, in this financial year, we have additional help for those on a low income who have been financially affected by COVID-19.
- ✔ **Help to pay:** if you receive Pension Credit, and all other adults in your household receive Pension Credit or state pension, you can apply to have your bills capped at an affordable amount.
- ✔ **Payment matching:** if you've built up a lot of debt, for every £1 you pay we'll match it with £1 too, with our contribution increasing to £2 if you continue to make payments until your debt is cleared.
- ✔ **Restart grant:** if you're in real financial difficulty, you may qualify for a one-off payment from our Trust Fund to help clear your debts.
- ✔ **Water Direct:** we can make it easier for you to budget by applying to the Department for Work and Pensions to pay your bill direct from your benefits.
- ✔ **Payment break:** if you have a low income or receive benefits and are struggling due to losing your job or having to pay out for an unexpected household emergency, we can delay your bill payments for an agreed period of time.
- ✔ **Help with Universal Credit:** we can delay your water bill payments for up to eight weeks until your first Universal Credit payment arrives.

Friend or family member struggling with their bills?

If you have a friend or family member who is struggling with their bill payments, especially if their income has been affected by COVID-19 and they have a low income, we have a helpline you can call to find out more about the financial support we have available. You can then let them know about all the ways we can help and encourage them to get in touch so we can make their bills more affordable. Please call **0800 107 8862**, we're available 8am - 8pm Monday to Friday and 8am - 4pm on Saturday.

Priority Services



Help when you need it most

We can all benefit from a bit of extra help at some stage in our lives. This could be due to age, ill health, disability, mobility needs, mental health problems, financial worries or language barriers.

Registering for Priority Services is FREE and means you'll benefit from additional services to support your needs including:

- ✓ A dedicated team on hand to listen and help.
- ✓ You can nominate a carer, family member or friend to check your bills and speak to us on your behalf.
- ✓ Braille, large print and 'talking' bills and text relay service.
- ✓ Knock and wait service if you have mobility needs.
- ✓ A password scheme to protect you from bogus callers.
- ✓ Translation services.
- ✓ Notice of interruptions to your water supply.
- ✓ Additional support if you have a medical need for water.

So if you, or someone you know, need a bit of extra help, please register online at unitedutilities.com/priorityservices or call 0345 072 6093.

Once registered we'll contact you every two years to check your circumstances haven't changed, just to make sure you're continuing to receive the right support for your specific needs.

Our promises to you

You deserve the very best when it comes to your water and wastewater services. This section sets out the standards of service you can expect to receive from us and what we'll do if things go wrong. Some of these standards, known as the Guaranteed Standards Scheme, are laid down by law.

We'll always do what we can to go beyond these standards.

Your bill

- We'll respond to written contacts about the correctness of your account within 10 working days of receipt. If we fail to do this we'll automatically pay you £20
- We'll deal with your written request for a change to your payment arrangement within five working days of receipt. If we fail to do this we'll automatically pay you £20
- If you've paid in full and on time in the way we've asked you to, and we make a mistake and the court issues a summons or county court judgment, you can claim compensation of £150

Keeping appointments

- We'll agree with you whether it will be a morning or afternoon appointment. We'll also confirm the earliest and latest times we'll arrive. If you need a more specific time, we can offer you an appointment within a two-hour time band
- If we fail to tell you that your appointment is for the morning, the afternoon or within a specific two-hour time band, we'll automatically pay you £25
- We'll give you 24 hours' notice to cancel any agreed appointment. If we don't we'll automatically pay you £25
- If we turn up early, late or not at all for your agreed appointment we'll automatically pay you £25

Written complaints

- We'll respond to written complaints about your water and wastewater services within 10 working days of receiving your letter, email or fax. If we don't do this we'll automatically pay you £25

Water supply being turned off because of planned work

- When carrying out work on the mains we'll give you written notice of the times between which we expect your water supply to be cut off
- If the water is to be off for more than four hours, we'll give you written notice at least 48 hours in advance. If we fail to do this we'll automatically pay you £25
- If we identify that we've failed to restore your water supply within the times we've told you in the written notice we'll automatically pay you £30 plus another £30 for every additional 12 hour period we leave you without water
- If we restore your supply by the times we've told you in the written notice, but your water has been cut off for more than 12 hours, we'll automatically pay you £30 plus another £30 for every additional 12 hours that we leave you without water

Water supply going off because of an emergency or burst pipe

- Where water mains have burst, we aim to restore your supply within 12 hours. If we identify that we've failed to get your supply back on within 12 hours, we'll automatically pay you £30 plus another £30 for every additional 12 hour period that we leave you without water

Water pressure

- If the water pressure in the communication pipe to your property falls below seven metres static head twice within a four week period (each time for longer than an hour) you can claim £50 once per year. In simple terms, this means the water pressure should be powerful enough to fill a 4.5 litre (1 gallon) container in 30 seconds. If we're aware of this problem we'll pay this automatically. Unfortunately we won't be able to pay compensation if the drop in pressure is because we've had to introduce restrictions due to a drought or because of work we've had to do to resolve an emergency such as a burst main, planned works on our water mains or issues with your own pipework

Sewer flooding

- Where the flooding from sewers enters your home we'll automatically pay a sum equal to your sewerage charge for the year (minimum payment £150 up to a maximum of £1,000 per incident)
- In addition to this sum we'll automatically pay you up to £100 for the disturbance the flooding causes. We'll determine the amount payable on a case-by-case basis
- We'll consider making a contribution to your uninsured losses where the flooding has caused damage to your home and contents
- If you have critical health related circumstances at the time of the flooding and need to move into temporary accommodation we'll consider making a discretionary payment of up to £50 per day, up to a maximum of £500 towards your costs
- Where the flooding from sewers enters only your land or garden, you can claim back a sum equal to half of your sewerage charges for the year (minimum payment £75 up to a maximum of £500 per incident). Your claim will only be valid if you were materially affected by the flooding incident to your land or garden. You will therefore need to show or explain the effect of the sewer flooding on your land or garden when you make a claim. Normally, we'll make this assessment when we visit to view the flooding and we'll leave a claim form with you if we consider you've been materially affected. We only accept written claims for external flooding and will assess your claim based upon the information you provide
- Sorry, but you won't be able to make a claim for sewer flooding to your land or garden if you are entitled to an automatic payment for sewer flooding inside your home for the same incident

Emergency drought interruptions to supply

- If we've turned off your water supply because of emergency drought restrictions we'll pay £10 for each day or part day you are without water.
- The maximum we'll pay is equal to the amount of the average household water bill for the previous year.

Compensation arrangements

- *Bill Queries, Appointments and Written Complaints* - Where we compensate you automatically we'll do so within ten working days of the failure occurring. If we fail to do so we will also automatically send you a further £10
- *Supply Interruptions and Sewer Flooding* - Where we compensate you automatically for a supply interruption or for sewage flooding we'll do so within 20 working days. If we fail to do so we'll automatically pay you a further £20
- If we fail to make an automatic compensation payment, as we were not practically able to identify you as being affected, you can make a claim for payment within three months
- When you make a claim, we treat it on its merits and we aim to settle it within 20 working days. If you wish to make a claim, you should do so either via the telephone or in writing within three months of the event giving rise to the claim
- If you're more than six weeks behind with paying your water services charges we'll automatically take the compensation payment off the amount you owe to us
- Payments can be made by BACS payments direct to your bank account or by cheque. We aim to pay using the fastest and most convenient method

Exclusions

- There are times when our levels of service cannot be met or the compensation scheme does not apply. The reasons vary from standard to standard, but they include us not meeting the standards because of circumstances beyond our control. These might be things such as unexpected weather conditions, the actions of a third party or industrial action. The standards and the exclusions which apply to the Guaranteed Standards Scheme are laid down in The Water Supply and Sewerage Services (Customer Service Standards) Regulations 2008. Visit unitedutilities.com/leaflets for further information on all of our guaranteed standards of service.

Please note: All occupiers are jointly responsible for charges.

Important – how we manage your personal details

Your personal information (your ‘personal data’) is very important and this is why we are very careful about what we do with the information about you that we need to collect so that we can manage your account and our relationship with you.

We have set out in detail what we do with your personal data in our Privacy Notice, which is available on our website unitedutilities.com/privacy. This also explains what your data protection rights are and how you can contact us if you have any concerns.

Although we suggest that you consider the Privacy Notice carefully, the main processing activities include:

- Collecting and sharing information of existing and new accounts about your ability to pay, whether you are in debt, your occupancy of the property with Credit Reference Agencies (CRAs). We also share this information with fraud prevention agencies, for example the Police, the Department of Work and Pensions, Action Fraud, to validate and populate your account details as well as to prevent or detect fraud. We also do this to help us make decisions regarding your account. Sharing this information may affect your credit rating.
- Collecting and sharing information with tracing and debt collection agencies, CRAs, local authorities, government agencies if you fall into debt and we need to locate your whereabouts.
- Collect and share information about the risk of flooding, flooding history to your property and your area with flood management agencies such as the Environment Agency, local authorities, to help manage any local network and flooding issues.
- Collect and use any data we have obtained or you have given to help us improve our services to you in a focussed way. This may include for example carrying out customer satisfaction surveys, promoting payment plans, our priority service schemes or water usage advice.
- We may use your data for marketing water-related products which we think may be of interest.

We will collect and share your data as described above and in the Privacy Notice from the information you have provided us verbally, or communicated to us in writing such as emails, letters, texts, faxes, or via our mobile app, social media as well as any customer feedback you provide. Please note that we also record outbound and inbound phone calls to us for training and coaching purposes as well as to improve our services.

Full details of how we handle your personal data can be found in our Privacy Notice. If you have any difficulty in accessing the internet for any reason, then please get in touch by calling **0345 672 2888** and asking for the Data Protection Team or via e-mail DataProtectionandFraud@uuplc.co.uk and we will be happy to help.