



ESP WATER

OUR PROMISES TO YOU



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ESP
WATER

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We always want to give you the absolute best service possible, and we work hard to ensure that all our customers receive a consistently high level of service, monitoring our performance very carefully.

Our promises to you, outlined below, set out our customer service standards, which include all the minimum standards set out in the government standards scheme (GSS) regulations and enhancements where we can offer them. **Payments are for both households and businesses unless otherwise stated.**

It also sets out several specific circumstances where you may be entitled to receive a payment if we fail to meet the standards we promise. If you have been adversely affected because of our service failure, please let us know what you believe your losses to be, and we will investigate it for you.

If we fail to achieve the standards outlined in 1.1 to 1.3 below, we will credit your account with a payment that is equivalent to that offered by the upstream water company for your area.

1.1 Appointments

- When we make an appointment to visit you, we will offer you either a morning (before 12pm) or afternoon appointment, or you can request an appointment within a two-hour duration.
- If we must change the appointment, we will give you 24 hours' notice.

If we fail to meet these standards, we will credit your account. Payments will be made within 10 working days. If we fail to make a payment within this time, you are entitled to a penalty payment equivalent to the upstream water company for the area.

1.2 Account queries

- We will reply to any written enquiry about your bill within 10 working days of receipt.
- If you ask for a change to your payment arrangement, (for example to pay by instalments) and we are unable to agree to the request, we will reply and tell you the reason why within five working days of receipt.

If we fail to meet these standards, we will credit your account. Payments will be made within 10 working days. If we fail to make a payment within this time, you are entitled to a penalty payment.

1.3 Written complaints

- We will respond to all written complaints within 5 working days of receipt.

If we fail to meet these standards, we will credit your account. Payments will be made within 10 working days. If we fail to make a payment within this time, you are entitled to a penalty payment.

1.4 Interruptions to supply

- Occasionally we need to turn off the water supply to carry out essential, planned work. We will let you know in advance and tell you when the supply will be restored.
- For planned interruptions of more than four hours, we will give you at least 48 hours' notice in writing. We will restore the supply by the time stated in the notice.
- After an emergency or unplanned interruption, we will restore supplies within 12 hours for most bursts. If necessary, we will give you an alternative supply.

If we fail to meet any of these standards, we will automatically credit £30 (households) and £75 (planned) or £50 (unplanned) (businesses) to your account and a further £30 or £75 respectively for every additional 12 hours that you remain without water. Payments will be made within 20

working days. If we fail to make a payment within this time, we will pay you a further £25 (Households) or £50 (Businesses). **Should the upstream water company offer a higher payment then we will credit your account with the equivalent value.**

It is sometimes difficult to know who has been affected by these interruptions. If you were affected and we have not credited your account, please call our 24-hour query number within 3 months of the emergency or unplanned interruption.

1.5 Water pressure

- If your water pressure falls substantially below normal, please let us know. We will first check whether this is due to an operational fault for example a burst main. If not, then we will carry out further checks with pressure loggers.
- If we have identified a pressure level in the communication pipe below seven metres static head for at least one hour on two separate occasions within a 28-day period, you are automatically entitled to a £30 payment. This can only be made once in a 12-month period.
- If significantly high-water pressure causes any damage to your water fittings because of our negligence, we will pay for the cost of any repairs to these fittings.

It is sometimes difficult to know who has been affected by low pressure. If you were affected and we have not credited your account, please call us within three months of the last of the two occasions of low pressure. **Should the upstream water company offer a higher payment then we will credit your account with the equivalent value.**

1.6 Sewer flooding

Regrettably, on rare occasions, certain conditions can cause overflowing and flooding from sewers.

- If sewage, from one of our networks has entered your property internally please call us straight away and we will attend within 4 hours and resolve the issue within 12 hours.
- If flooding from the public sewer affects your property internally, we will automatically pay you an amount equivalent to your annual sewerage charges for each internal flooding incident or a minimum of £150, up to a maximum of £1,000 per incident.
- You should have insurance to cover any damage caused by sewer flooding of your home. But, if such a flood occurs because of our negligence, we will also consider any additional expense, including uninsured losses. These claims can be made up to 12 months after the event.
- If a member of your household suffers from a pre-existing health condition at the time that your property becomes flooded with sewage and you arrange to move into temporary alternative accommodation, we will consider making a discretionary payment of up to £50 per day towards your costs. The maximum for this compensation is £500.
- If flooding from the public sewer materially affects your property externally, you may be entitled to claim a payment equal to 50 per cent of your annual sewerage charges for each incident from a minimum of £75, up to a maximum of £500.

Please note that you are not entitled to a payment for both internal and external sewer flooding for the same incident. Payments will be made within 20 working days. If we fail to make a payment within this time, we will pay you a further £20 if you are a household and £50 if you are a business. Please call us to make a claim.

It is sometimes difficult to know who has been affected by sewer flooding. If you have been affected and we have not credited your account, please make a claim within three months of the incident.

You will not be entitled to a payment if the sewer internal or external flooding is caused by one or more of the following:

- Exceptional weather
- Industrial action by our employees
- An action by you
- A defect, inadequacy or blockage in your drain or sewer.

1.7 Flooding from water mains

- If the inside of your property becomes flooded because of a burst water main on our network which is not your fault, contact us immediately and we will provide a specialist clean up and drying service free of charge.
- We will also consider your claim for uninsured losses and other out of pocket expenses if you contact us promptly at the time of the flooding.

1.8 Drinking water quality

- If we believe there is a problem with the quality of your tap water due to our water supply system, we will provide you with appropriate advice on what to do and with an alternative water supply where we think necessary.
- On rare occasions and as a precautionary measure this advice may be in the form of a “Do not use,” “Do not drink” or “Boil water” Notice. If we issue you with a “Boil Water” Notice or a “Do not drink” notice, we will consider compensation.
- If you tell us, you are unhappy with the taste or smell of your water, we will contact you by the next working day to investigate. Please note that all our tap water contains chlorine, which helps to keep the water safe to drink – it is therefore normal for your tap water to have a slight chlorine taste or smell. There is more information about water quality on our website.
- If you report a water quality problem which we consider could have an impact on the safety of your water supply, we will contact you within two hours and visit you within four hours (if it is convenient with you); and arrange for an alternative supply, if necessary.
- In this circumstance, if we take a sample of water for analysis at our laboratory, we will give you an explanation of the key results by phone within 48 hours if you request it, and confirm the key results in writing, within 10 working days. Please note that this does not apply if we tell you the analysis will take more than 48 hours.

If we fail to meet these standards when you report a water quality query to us, we will automatically credit £25 to your account within 10 days. If we fail to make a payment within this time, we will pay you a further £20. **Should the upstream water company offer a higher payment then we will credit your account with the equivalent value.**

- Very occasionally water can become discoloured a reddish-brown colour and can cause staining of laundry. If this occurs, please contact us so that we can arrange to visit your property and investigate for you.

1.9 Water shortages

- If we must interrupt or cut off your supply because of a Drought Order, we will automatically pay you £15 (Households) or £55 (Businesses) for each day, or part day, that your water supply is interrupted. This is up to a maximum of the average household water bill from the previous year. **Should the upstream water company offer a higher payment then we will credit your account with the equivalent value.**

1.10 Leakage

- We will repair any major leaks on our water mains that have been reported by customers within 5 working days or minor bursts reported on our system within 10 working days.

- Leaks on private water supply pipes are the responsibility of the homeowner or business owner / landlord to get repaired.

We will consider a one-off claim for a leakage allowance from customers with a metered supply provided that the leak is repaired within 30 days of it being confirmed by us.

1.11 Water Meters

- We will aim to read your meter at least once a year, however if we cannot gain access, we will estimate your water usage or we will accept your own reading if you provide it.
- For those of our customers with additional needs, who are having difficulty reading their meter we will provide a Customer In-Home Display unit. If this is not possible and you would like your meter relocated, we will carry out a free survey. If it is possible to move your water meter, we will move it free. If we are unable to move it, we will let you know why.

1.12 Working near your property

If we are planning to work in your street and must restrict access to your property, we will contact you to let you know about our plans in advance. If we fail to do so you can claim a credit payment of £10 by contacting us. Claims must be made within three months of the restriction.

1.13 Priority Services Register

We will respond to all queries concerning our priority services register within 5 working days of the query being made. If we fail to meet this standard, we will pay compensation of £25. If we fail to make a payment within 10 working days, then we will pay a further £15.

1.14 Debt recovery action

- Where we have issued a County Court claim/ judgment in error, we will withdraw the claim and write to you with confirmation. We will consider making a compensation payment which is proportionate to the level of loss or inconvenience caused to the customer because of our error.
- Where we have requested Credit Reference Agencies (CRA's) to publish a default for non-payment on a customer's credit file (or a payment status that indicates a customer is in arrears) and it is due to an error on our part, we will withdraw the record from the CRA's, write to you with confirmation and credit your account £25.
- We will consider making a compensation payment where a customer has demonstrated in writing that they have been unfairly prejudiced because of the error and suffered financial loss. Each case will be assessed by us and we will consider making a payment which is proportionate to the level of loss or inconvenience caused to the customer because of our error.

1.15 Exceptional circumstances

In certain circumstances it will be impractical for us to meet our service standards. In such cases you will not be entitled to a payment.

Examples of where exclusions may apply are:

- Exceptional or severe weather conditions
- Industrial action
- Third party action including action by customers.

Where a payment is made, it does not act as an admission of liability for any other purpose. Similarly, its acceptance by the customer, will not affect any other liability owed to them.

1.16 If you are not satisfied

If you are not satisfied with anything relating to our promises, you're welcome to contact us by telephone, letter, email or through our website. Our complaints process can be found on our

website (www.espwater.co.uk) or at Section 9 of our Code of Practice document. We will make it our priority to consider and resolve your complaint promptly and to your satisfaction.

If you still feel your complaint has not been adequately resolved, we will inform you of your right to refer the matter to another body. You can refer any unresolved dispute you have with us to the Consumer Council for Water (CCW), who will investigate it.

CCW is an independent statutory body, which represents and protects the interests of water and wastewater customers. You can contact them on:

CCW

23 Stephenson Street, Birmingham, B2 4BH.

Tel: 0300 034 2222

Email: enquiries@ccwater.org.uk

Website: www.ccwater.org.uk

HOW TO CONTACT US

YOU CAN WRITE TO US AT:

ESP Water
Blue Bird House
Mole Business Park
Leatherhead
KT22 7BA

FOR BILLING, YOU CAN CALL US ON:

0333 000 0059

Our office hours for billing and account queries are:

Monday - Friday 08:30 - 17:30
excluding bank holidays

YOU CAN EMAIL US AT:

For billing related enquiries:
billing@espwater.co.uk

For all other enquiries:
GeneralEnquiries@espwater.co.uk

YOU CAN VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT:

espwater.co.uk

EMERGENCIES CONTACT:

For any emergencies with your water or wastewater supplies please call our 24 hour emergency number on 0330 123 4201