

Extracts from "Water Industry Act 1999 - Delivering the government's Objectives"

GUIDANCE ON CHARGES SCHEME PROVISIONS FOR NON-HOUSEHOLD CUSTOMERS

- 2.44 There are also many non-household users who are not businesses: the occupiers of premises used for public and community functions, arts, education, or health, places of worship, community sports facilities, clubs, charities and voluntary bodies. It would be inappropriate to charge all such customers as if they were businesses. The principal should be that those making similar demands on services should be charged on the same basis. Some premises, such as places of worship, village halls, scout and guide huts, clubs and charity premises may be unoccupied for considerable periods or will use a low volume of water. If charged on the same basis as other non-household users, they could face particularly high costs because of the disproportionate effect of standing charges for low volume users. Where premises impose customer-related costs in line with or lower than those of typical households, they should be able to benefit from tariffs which reflect their small demand on the water system.
- 2.45 Sewerage services to non-household premises should adopt the approach outlined in paragraph 2.27.¹ In particular, surface water drainage charges should be set in a way that is sensitive to the actual use of this service by different types of premises. Premises with large grounds, such as burial grounds, schools and hospitals, may have a large proportion of their land not draining to a public sewer. Companies should be prepared to set their charges to such premises accordingly

¹ 2.27 The costs of each charging element should be broadly in line with the use made of these different components of the system. Some companies offer a rebate for the costs of surface water drainage where customers do not benefit from this service, although customers may need to apply for such a rebate. The Secretary of State welcomes and supports the provision of rebates for customers whose surface water does not flow into public sewers. Information on the numbers of properties which do not receive a surface water drainage service is not comprehensive. Companies should seek to obtain better information on this matter, and should consider the scope for offering automatic rebates in such circumstances – also bearing in mind the need to avoid unacceptable increases in other customers' bills if such an approach were adopted.