



Water and
Sewerage Bills
2003-04



Water and Sewerage Bills 2003-04

How will the average household bill change on 1 April 2003?

In April 2003, household customers will see an average increase in their water and sewerage bills of 1% (excluding inflation). Average bills for water and sewerage range from £202 (Thames Water Utilities Ltd) to £342 (South West Water Ltd).

Tables 1 and 2 show:

- average annual household bills for water and sewerage for 2002-03 and 2003-04;
- the percentage change in bills between those two years; and
- the percentage change in bills (excluding inflation) since privatisation.

Measured and unmeasured household bills

The average household bills in tables 1 and 2 include all customers, with or without a meter.

Most households (77% in 2002-03) do not have a meter. Bills for their water and sewerage services are generally based on the rateable value of their property, plus a fixed charge. These customers cannot affect the size of their bill by changing the amount of water that they use.

An increasing number of households (expected to be 24% in 2003-04) receive a metered supply. The bills for their water and sewerage services are based on the amount of water that they use, which is recorded on the water meter, plus a standing charge. Most newly connected properties are metered.

Table 3 shows the average unmeasured and average measured household bills for 2003-04.

How are changes in average bills decided?

The annual change that companies can make to bills, on average, is limited to the price limit set by Ofwat, plus inflation. Table 4 sets out the price limits for the year beginning 1 April 2003.

Will my bill change in line with the price limit set by Ofwat?

The price limit applies to the average change in charges. Bills for some customers may change by more and some by less than this average. For example, a company may increase water charges by less than sewerage charges, or increase the volumetric charge by more than the standing charge. All these individual charges are set out in the companies' charges schemes.

What are the companies' charges schemes?

Within the price limit set, each company is responsible for deciding individual charges. Companies publish these annually in a charges scheme for which they must obtain Ofwat's approval. We have applied the following principles in approving charges schemes.

- Charges for each service should reflect the cost of that service – this has meant, for example, that for water and sewerage companies the change in water charges is not always the same as the change in sewerage charges.
- Companies should set levels of measured and unmeasured household charges to ensure a fair balance of charges for each category of customer.
- Standing charges for customers with a meter should generally be no more than the customer-related costs of providing a metered service.
- Companies should offer lower sewerage charges (rebates) for customers whose properties are not connected for surface water drainage.

In approving companies' charges schemes, the Director General of Water Services takes into account the guidance that the Secretary of State issued in February 2000, on social and environmental aspects of charging.

In line with the requirements, companies must offer a special tariff for vulnerable metered customers. This has meant that charges for all other customers are slightly higher than they would otherwise have been.

Table 1 : 2003-04 Average household bills for water

In April 2003, household customers will see an average increase in their water bills of 0.9% (excluding inflation). Since privatisation in 1989, average household bills for water have increased by 21% (excluding inflation).

COMPANY	% change in bills ¹			Average bill for ³	
	1989-90 – 2003-04 (excluding inflation) ^{2,3}	2002-03 – 2003-04 (excluding inflation) ^{2,3} (including inflation) ³		2002-03 £	2003-04 £
WATER AND SEWERAGE COMPANIES					
Anglian Water Services Ltd	10.6	0.9	3.6	112	116
Dŵr Cymru Cyfyngedig	-1.5	-4.1	-1.5	124	122
Northumbrian Water Ltd:					
Northumbrian Water	5.0	-0.2	2.4	88	90
Essex & Suffolk Water	19.6	-0.9	1.7	111	113
Severn Trent Water Ltd	45.7	1.7	4.4	107	112
South West Water Ltd	18.9	3.2	5.9	114	121
Southern Water Services Ltd	10.9	-1.1	1.5	90	91
Thames Water Utilities Ltd	26.2	-1.3	1.3	105	106
United Utilities Water plc	40.5	4.9	7.7	109	118
Wessex Water Services Ltd	19.2	2.9	5.6	113	119
Yorkshire Water Services Ltd:					
Yorkshire Water Services	7.5	2.9	5.6	104	110
York Waterworks	8.8	1.8	4.5	90	94
WATER ONLY COMPANIES					
Bournemouth & W Hampshire Water plc	23.4	-0.8	1.8	100	102
Bristol Water plc	11.0	-0.3	2.3	105	107
Cambridge Water plc	5.0	-0.2	2.5	92	94
Dee Valley Water plc	-8.3	-1.6	1.0	105	106
Folkestone & Dover Water Services Ltd	49.1	2.5	5.2	129	135
Mid Kent Water plc	4.1	-1.0	1.6	126	128
Portsmouth Water plc	3.9	-0.8	1.9	75	76
South East Water plc	8.9	0.9	3.6	122	126
South Staffordshire Water plc	17.4	1.0	3.7	86	89
Sutton & East Surrey Water plc	11.2	-1.7	1.0	125	126
Tendring Hundred Water Services Ltd	60.6	5.6	8.4	141	153
Three Valleys Water plc:					
Three Valleys Water	23.5	0.6	3.2	112	116
North Surrey Water	44.9	0.7	3.4	107	110
INDUSTRY AVERAGE	21.0	0.9	3.6	107	111

¹ Percentage changes between 2002-03 and 2003-04 are calculated from average bills expressed in pounds and pence.

² Percentage increases exclude the effect of inflation. Inflation, as measured by the Retail Price Index, increased by 62% between November 1988 and November 2002 and 2.65% between November 2001 and November 2002.

³ Percentage changes and level of bills for 2002-03 and 2003-04 are estimates based on provisional and forecast data provided by each company.

Table 2 : 2003-04 Average household bills for sewerage

In April 2003, household customers will see an average increase to their sewerage bills of 1.2% (excluding inflation). Since privatisation in 1989, average household bills for sewerage have increased by 21.7% (excluding inflation).

COMPANY	% change in bill ³			Average bill for ²	
	1989-90 – 2003-04 (excluding inflation) ^{1,2}	2002-03 – 2003-04 (excluding inflation) ^{1,2} (including inflation) ²		2002-03 £	2003-04 £
WATER AND SEWERAGE COMPANIES					
Anglian Water Services Ltd	9.5	1.9	4.6	156	163
Dŵr Cymru Cyfyngedig	33.1	0.0	2.7	151	155
Northumbrian Water Ltd	30.9	0.6	3.3	113	116
Severn Trent Water Ltd	4.7	2.3	5.0	96	101
South West Water Ltd	62.7	2.6	5.3	210	221
Southern Water Services Ltd	32.9	2.2	4.9	151	159
Thames Water Utilities Ltd	19.1	-1.4	1.2	94	95
United Utilities Water plc	32.3	1.1	3.7	122	127
Wessex Water Services Ltd	13.8	3.0	5.7	134	142
Yorkshire Water Services Ltd	21.0	1.8	4.5	112	117
INDUSTRY AVERAGE	21.7	1.2	3.8	121	125

1 Percentage increases exclude the effect of inflation. Inflation, as measured by the Retail Price Index, increased by 62% between November 1988 and November 2002 and 2.65% between November 2001 and November 2002.

2 Percentage changes and level of bills for 2002-03 and 2003-04 are estimates based on provisional and forecast data provided by each company.

3 Percentage changes between 2002-03 and 2003-04 are calculated from average bills expressed in pounds and pence.

Table 3 : Measured and unmeasured household bills 2003-04

AVERAGE UNMEASURED		Increase of 1.2% (excluding inflation) and 3.9% (including inflation) over last year.
Water	£116	
Sewerage	£129	
Total	£245	
AVERAGE MEASURED		Increase of 1.4% (excluding inflation) and 4.0% (including inflation) over last year.
Water	£96	
Sewerage	£113	
Total	£209	
In 2002-03 approximately 23% of households were on metered charges. This is expected to rise to 24% by the end of the year.		

Table 4 : 2003-04 Price limits¹

COMPANY	Price limit %	Price limit plus inflation (2.65%) %
WATER AND SEWERAGE COMPANIES		
Anglian Water Services Ltd	2.5	5.2
Dŵr Cymru Cyfyngedig ²	2.0	4.7
Northumbrian Water Ltd ⁸	0.0	2.7
Severn Trent Water Ltd ⁶	2.1	4.8
South West Water Ltd ⁴	4.4	7.1
Southern Water Services Ltd	1.6	4.3
Thames Water Utilities Ltd	-0.8	1.9
United Utilities Water plc	4.0	6.7
Wessex Water Services Ltd	3.8	6.5
Yorkshire Water Services Ltd ^{6,7}	3.4	6.1
WATER ONLY COMPANIES		
Bournemouth & W Hampshire Water plc ⁴	0.4	3.1
Bristol Water plc	0.0	2.7
Cambridge Water plc	-0.4	2.3
Dee Valley Water plc ⁴	-0.5	2.2
Folkestone & Dover Water Services Ltd	3.0	5.7
Mid Kent Water plc ³	0.0	2.7
Portsmouth Water plc	-0.5	2.2
South East Water plc	0.0	2.7
South Staffordshire Water plc	-1.0	1.7
Sutton & East Surrey Water plc ^{3,5}	0.0	2.7
Tendring Hundred Water Services Ltd ²	3.7	6.4
Three Valleys Water plc ⁹	0.4	3.1
INDUSTRY AVERAGE	1.9	4.6

1 The price limits are the annual price limits for each company for the years 2000-2005 set by Ofwat in November 1999.

2 The price limits for Dŵr Cymru and Tendring Hundred Water reflect Ofwat's interim determination published in December 2000.

3 The price limits for Mid Kent Water and Sutton & East Surrey Water reflect the Competition Commission's redetermination in August 2000 of the price limits set by Ofwat.

4 The price limits for South West Water, Bournemouth & West Hampshire Water and Dee Valley Water reflect Ofwat's interim determination published in December 2001.

5 Sutton and East Surrey Water increased their charges by less than their price limits allowed. This was in anticipation of Ofwat lowering their price limits through an interim determination in the future.

6 The price limits for Severn Trent and Yorkshire Water reflect Ofwat's interim determination published in December 2002.

7 The price limit for Yorkshire Water incorporates limits for Yorkshire Water Services and York Waterworks.

8 The price limit for Northumbrian Water incorporates limits for Northumbrian Water Services and Essex & Suffolk Water.

9 The price limit for Three Valleys Water plc incorporates limits for Three Valleys Water and North Surrey Water.

Where does your money go?

For 2003-04, the average water and sewerage bill works out at 65p per day. This compares with the following.

Small loaf	41-69p
Daily newspaper	20-55p
One pint of milk	31-44p
Litre of sparkling bottled water	19-95p
A day's TV	31p

The examples below are a guide to what you get for your money. The figures are based on

average cost per litre of 0.14 pence for water supplied and taken away. The average cost per litre of water may vary from company to company. In practice, what you get for your money may be more or less than shown.

The cost of electricity for using the appliances and heating the water is based on an effective price of 7.54 pence per kilowatt-hour. This will vary across households depending on gas and electricity tariffs, the mix of fuels used and energy efficiency.



5p

Taking a shower

Assuming 35 litres of water: 5p
Heating the water: 9p



12p

Taking a bath

Assuming 80 litres of water: 12p
Heating the water: 19p



9p

Using a washing machine

Assuming 65 litres of water: 9p
Using the machine (including heating some of the water): 19p



78p

Watering the garden

Assuming a hosepipe in one hour uses approximately 540 litres of water: 78p



1p

Flushing the toilet

Assuming 7.5 to 9.5 litres of water: 1p



4p

Using a dishwasher

Assuming 25 litres of water: 4p
Using the machine (including heating some of the water): 15p

Contacting your WaterVoice office

(Your WaterVoice office can be found under 'water' in the phone book).
Calls to all 0845 numbers are charged at local rates.

Customers of Severn Trent Water and South Staffordshire Water
WaterVoice Central
First Floor, Chanelle House
86 New Street, Birmingham B2 4BA
Tel: 0121 644 5252 Fax: 0121 644 5256
Local rate: 0845 702 3953
e-mail: central@watervoicelocal.org.uk

Customers of Anglian Water, Cambridge Water, Essex & Suffolk Water and Tendring Hundred
WaterVoice Eastern
Carlyle House, Carlyle Road
Cambridge CB4 3DN
Tel: 01223 323889 Fax: 01223 323930
Local rate: 0845 795 9369
e-mail: eastern@watervoicelocal.org.uk

Customers of Northumbrian Water and Hartlepool Water
WaterVoice Northumbria
Eighth Floor, Northgate House
St Augustines Way, Darlington DL1 1XA
Tel: 01325 464222 Fax: 01325 369269
Local rate: 0845 708 9367
e-mail: northumbria@watervoicelocal.org.uk

Customers of United Utilities
WaterVoice North West
Suite 902, Ninth Floor, Bridgewater House
Whitworth Street, Manchester M1 6LT
Tel: 0161 236 6112 Fax: 0161 228 6117
Local rate: 0845 705 6316
e-mail: northwest@watervoicelocal.org.uk

Customers of South West Water
WaterVoice South West
First Floor, Broadwalk House
Southernhay West, Exeter EX1 1TS
Tel: 01392 428028 Fax: 01392 428010
Local rate: 0845 795 9059
e-mail: southwest@watervoicelocal.org.uk

Website: www.watervoicelocal.org.uk

Customers of Southern Water Services, Portsmouth Water, Mid Kent Water, Folkestone & Dover Water Services and South East Water
WaterVoice Southern
Fourth Floor (South), High Holborn House
52/54 High Holborn, London WC1V 6RL
Tel: 020 7831 4790 Fax: 020 7831 7253
Local rate: 0845 758 1658
e-mail: southern@watervoicelocal.org.uk

Customers of Thames Water, Three Valleys Water and Sutton & East Surrey Water
WaterVoice Thames
Fourth Floor (South), High Holborn House
52/54 High Holborn, London WC1V 6RL
Tel: 020 7831 4790 Fax: 020 7831 4850
Local rate: 0845 758 1658
e-mail: thames@watervoicelocal.org.uk

Customers of Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water and Dee Valley Water
WaterVoice Wales/Dyfrlais Cymru
Room 140, Caradog House
1-6 St Andrews Place, Cardiff CF10 3BE
Tel: 029 2023 9852 Fax: 029 2023 9847
Local rate: 0845 707 8267
e-mail: wales@watervoicelocal.org.uk

Customers of Wessex Water, Bournemouth & West Hampshire Water, Bristol Water, Cholderton & District Water and Thames Water (at Tidworth)
WaterVoice Wessex
2 The Hide Market, West Street
St Phillips, Bristol BS2 0BH
Tel: 0117 955 7001 Fax: 0117 955 7037
Local rate: 0845 707 8268
e-mail: wessex@watervoicelocal.org.uk

Customers of Yorkshire Water
WaterVoice Yorkshire
Eighth Floor, Northgate House
St Augustines Way, Darlington DL1 1XA
Tel: 01325 469777 Fax: 01325 369269
Local rate: 0845 708 9368
e-mail: yorkshire@watervoicelocal.org.uk



Ofwat is a government department headed by the Director General of Water Services. It is responsible for making sure that the water industry in England and Wales provides customers with a good quality and efficient service at a fair price. It is independent of the water industry.

The ten regional WaterVoice Committees are statutory bodies set up by the Director General to represent water and sewerage customers in their regions.

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