

1 Code of Practice for Domestic Customers



It is a regulatory requirement for us to publish a **Code of Practice for Domestic Customers**, providing a comprehensive guide to the services offered by the Company. Our Code of Practice is made up of a suite of leaflets which are listed at the end of this Fact Sheet (also available on our website). This Fact Sheet incorporates some more general information on how we operate as part of the UK Water Industry.

Your water company and other relevant organisations

SES Water was founded in 1862. Today, the company supplies water to about 745,000 people living and working in an area of more than 830 square kilometres. We provide water supply services through a licence granted by the Secretary of State under the Water Industry Act 1991.

There are a number of organisations whose job it is to regulate the water industry.

Water Services Regulation Authority

(Ofwat) is the independent body responsible for the economic regulation of the Water Industry in England and Wales. One of its duties is to protect the interests of customers. It must make sure that we comply with the conditions of our license. These conditions include: restrictions on the overall increases we can make in our charges; controls on the levels of service we must provide; requirements about the information we must give our customers.

Ofwat can be contacted on 0121 644 7500.

The Consumer Council for Water (CCW)

If you are unhappy with the way that we have handled a complaint, CCW will investigate through its own procedures and work with us to understand why we took the decisions we took. CCW makes sure consumers' complaints are being handled promptly and efficiently. It can also offer independent advice.

You can visit the website at www.ccwater.org.uk, or call them on 0300 034 2222.

Opening hours: Monday to Friday, 8.30am until 5.00pm.

Or you can write to them at:
The Consumer Council for Water (CCW) c/o
1st Floor, 23 Stephenson Street, Birmingham,
B2 4BH.

The **Environment Agency (EA)** determines how much water we can take from boreholes, rivers, and other sources. It also regulates the condition in which it is returned to the rivers after it has been used and treated.

The EA is divided into eight regions. Our area is in the Thames Region.

The Secretary of State for the Environment controls some important areas of our work. In particular, setting the quality standards for drinking water, which include the European Union's requirements, and is responsible for

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ensuring we comply with those standards. This work is done through the **Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI)**, which carries out water quality audits on all undertakings and publishes an annual report of the results.

The **Environmental Health Officer (EHO)** of your local council also has a responsibility for the quality and health issues arising from the use of water.

Solving Disputes

Under the Water Industry Act 1991 either we or you can refer certain disputes to Ofwat for determination. Their address is:

Centre City Tower,
7 Hill Street,
Birmingham, B5 4UA

Disputes which can be referred to Ofwat are as follows:

- a customer's right to a payment or credit under the Guaranteed Standards Scheme;
- the charges and conditions set by a company for making connections to water mains;
- the terms and conditions for a non-domestic supply;
- the need for a customer's property to have a separate service pipe;
- the charges and conditions for providing a water main (requisition);
- the terms and conditions for the adoption of a self-laid main; and

- a refusal to allow a customer to pay by measured charge because a meter is not practical or is unreasonably expensive to install.

The Water Industry Act, 1991 also gives you the right, in certain circumstances, to take legal proceedings against us, for any loss or damage caused to you by our failing to comply with certain of our duties under the Act.

Water Industry Redress Scheme

If your complaint remains unresolved after it has gone through all the stages of our complaints procedure and has been reviewed by CCW, you may be eligible to take your concerns to WATRS, the Water Industry Redress Scheme who can provide an independent binding decision. Details on how and when to apply can be found at www.watrs.org and their address is:

WATRS
International Dispute Resolution Centre
70 Fleet Street
London
EC4Y 1EU

As a subscriber to the Water Industry Redress Scheme, SES Water has committed to comply with the **WATRS Code of Conduct** as follows:

- Provide ADR free of charge to customers
- Support the principles set out in the ADR specification
- Respect the independence of the ADR Service Provider

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- To be bound by the decision of the ADR adjudicator if accepted by the customer and to implement the decision as required by the Scheme Rules.
- To co-operate with and have due regard to the recommendations of the ADR Panel
- To provide accurate and reliable information to and co-operate with the ADR adjudicators.

Advice on the applicability of particular disputes to the Water Redress Scheme can be obtained from the company or, alternatively, from CCW.

Water Quantity

Supplies will be sufficient to meet reasonable demand at all times, subject only to unavoidable emergencies and essential maintenance work.

We are obliged to provide you with enough water for normal domestic purposes: that is, drinking, washing, cooking, central heating, sanitation, watering the garden and washing the car (but not with a hosepipe). However, under normal conditions, we aim to ensure that you will have enough water for 'non-essential' usage too.

Non-essential usage (such as using a hosepipe or sprinkler in your garden) may have to be restricted occasionally depending on the amount of water the system can supply, and the amount that our resources can prudently meet. Our pipes, pumps and treated water reservoirs are all designed to satisfy

normal levels of peak demand when an average level of resources is available. Providing more than this would mean higher costs and this extra capacity would be lying idle most of the time. Therefore, at times of exceptionally high demand, or exceptionally low resources, we may have to restrict the use of hosepipes for garden watering, car washing, etc., so that everyone can receive adequate supplies for essential purposes.

We plan that such restrictions should not be necessary for more than one year in ten. Continuing work on resource development and demand management is designed to ensure that resources are entirely adequate until the year 2035, given average winter rainfall. (Remember that you can still water your garden when hosepipe restrictions apply by using watering cans.) Rebates will not be made in respect of restrictions as the hosepipe facility is provided at no extra charge to unmeasured customers. Customers supplied by meter pay on the basis of use and therefore no rebate would be payable.

In the kind of exceptional drought conditions that occur on average once every 100 years, standpipes may need to be used.

Water Pressure

We aim to supply all our customers with a minimum water pressure of 10 metres (approximately 1 bar) at the boundary of their property. This pressure at the boundary stopcock ordinarily means that water will rise and fill a storage tank at second floor

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level. The minimum flow at the cold water tap in the ground floor kitchen will be 9 litres per minute - equivalent to filling a one-gallon bucket in 30 seconds with all other taps and appliances turned off.

Pressure and flow rates in your home can be affected by a number of factors including:

- the height of the property above the water main and its height relevant to the local service reservoir;
- the condition, size and length of the service pipe;
- whether the property shares a service pipe with other properties;
- peak demand conditions.

If you think that your water pressure is too low, we will come and investigate the situation. This service is free of charge during normal working hours. Contact our Customer Services team.

If the cause is our responsibility, we will take appropriate action. If it is not our responsibility, we will tell you what you need to do.

Getting in touch

Customers can call us on 01737 772000 from Monday to Friday between 8.00am and 6.00pm. We also offer a range of other contact methods to suit our customers' needs. You can find out more about these at <https://seswater.co.uk/contact-us>

During an emergency SES Water asks that customers call its main telephone line 01737 772 000 which is open 24/7, 365 days a year.

How to identify us

All field teams working on behalf of the SES Water wear a uniform and drive a company van with SES Water printed on the sides and at the back. All SES Water staff carry an identity card with their photograph, name, SES Water logo and number. They are always happy to wait for customers to check who they are by calling the main telephone number 01737 772 000 to double check their identity.

Customers can set up a password by joining the SES Water's Priority Services Register. SES Water staff will use this password when they visit a customers' premises. Customers can find more information about the Priority Services Register here: <https://seswater.co.uk/your-account/priority-customers>

Water meter information

SES Water has a robust policy and process in place for testing of meters to ensure the readings provide are wholly accurate.

Where there is any question over the integrity of the meter, the meter is promptly removed once all after avenues have been exhausted and sent to an independent body to test and verify.

Where a metered premises has been vacated, and where the water supply is available to use, the standing charges remain payable in addition to any water usage registered by the water meter. Further information can be found in our Charges Scheme which can be found at the end of this factsheet.

Where a third party damages our assets it will be charged for the repair. The charge will include the direct and indirect costs incurred by SES Water in fixing the damage. Which shall include the cost of investigating the damage; administration; materials and labour related to the repair and reinstatement; and any charges by the local Highways Authority.

Information on how SES Water would bill customers where it suspects a meter has been tampered with, can be found in its Charges Scheme at the end of this factsheet.

Other information included in our Code of Practice:

Please refer to the following Leaflets and Fact Sheets for further information on all other aspects of our service:

- [Charges scheme](#)
- [Water quality report](#)
- [Leakage code of practice](#)



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For further information contact the Customer Services team at
SES Water, London Road, Redhill RH1 1LJ

- [Every drop counts](#)
- [Having a water meter fitted](#)

Our fact sheets :

- [Making a complaint](#)
- [Debt](#)
- [Moving property](#)
- [Support Schemes](#)

Office Opening Hours:
Monday – Friday : 8:00am to 6.00pm

water fact sheet