

Customer charter summary

Our commitment to you

As a valued customer, it's important you have a great customer experience with us. Our Customer Charter outlines your rights and responsibilities as a South East Water customer. It also sets out South East Water's rights and responsibilities as your water, recycled water and sewerage provider. To view the full customer charter, visit southeastwater.com.au.

Who are we

South East Water is your water company. Every time you turn on a tap, flush a toilet, wash the dishes, make a cup of coffee, have a shower or do your laundry, we're there – for you and 1.77 million other Melburnians.

Our role is to bring you high quality water and take wastewater away every day – and we're working 24 hours a day to make that happen.

Your water and sewerage bill

As a customer you'll usually receive a bill from us once every 3 months unless you have another arrangement in place. On this bill we'll charge you for:

- water
- sewerage
- recycled water (if you have purple taps).

Where relevant, you may also be charged for:

- trade waste (if you operate a business and have a trade waste account)
- Melbourne Water's drainage rates
- the Parks Charge collected on behalf of the Victorian Government's Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA)
- any fire services on your property.

Your bill will have information about your account:

- your water usage
- how much you need to pay and when
- ways to pay
- how you can access support for your bill.

For a full list of what your bill contains, look at pages 13-14 of the full Customer Charter.

We have 2 types of charges:

- **Service fees** – these are fixed fees we charge for access to our water and sewerage services. Property owners are responsible for these fees.
- **Usage fees** – these fees are based on how much water you use and how much wastewater you dispose into our system. For residential customers, the person(s) living at the property are responsible for these fees.

Common reasons for a high bill

If you find your bill is higher than usual, there might be a good reason why this has happened.

- **Check your water meter readings** – if we couldn't access your water meter we may have estimated your reading based on how much water you've used in the past. This might be more or less than you actually used.
- **You might be using more water than usual** – it could be anything from watering thirsty plants or topping up your pool during hot weather, to having more people than usual in your home using the toilets, sinks and showers more often.
- **Do a quick check for leaks** – fixing just one leaky tap could save bucket loads.

Managing your account through our online portal [mySouthEastWater](#)

You can self-serve on a lot of billing and account issues through our online portal in a time that's convenient to you. You can access our online portal to:

- Check your account balance and water usage
- Read, download and pay your bills
- Set up direct debit payments
- Ask for more time to pay
- Set up a flexible payment plan
- Tell us you're moving house
- Add and manage any concessions
- Update your details and communications preferences
- and more.

You can create a mySouthEastWater account online – to get started you'll just need a copy of your bill handy.

Paying your bill

Your bill is usually due 14 days after the date it's issued. There's lots of ways you can pay, including:

- electronic funds transfer (EFT)
- direct debit
- BPAY
- credit card
- in person at any Australia Post office
- phone
- Centrepay (via Centrelink)
- in advance
- by mail

If your bill is unpaid after 7 days from the due date, we'll first send you a reminder notice and then try to get in touch to offer you support. See page 24 for more information on [how we try to contact you](#).

Getting financial assistance

Anyone can experience financial pressures from time-to-time and staying on top of household bills isn't always easy. Whether you're after greater flexibility with your payments, information about sustainable water use or looking for a bit more help, we're here to help if (and when) you need it.

We can support with:

- more time to pay
- concession discounts with an eligible concession card
- water saving tips
- flexible payment plans
- helping you to apply for a Government Utility Relief Grant.

If your bill is overdue, and you are having trouble getting it back on track, a specialist team may also support with:

- doing regular meter readings and frequently reporting to customers on consumption
- pausing our collection of overdue amounts to allow for a usage only payment plan for an agreed period of time
- a payment matching arrangement
- pausing the accrual of interest
- waiving any interest accrued
- waiving any or all fees
- waiving a debt.

If you're finding it hard to pay your water and sewerage bill, please let us know as soon as you can. The earlier you let us know, the sooner we can help.

Finding and fixing an issue

- If you spot a leak or burst in your street, please call our 24-hour Faults and Emergencies Team on [13 28 12](tel:132812).
- If you think you have a leak in your internal plumbing, you can learn how to check for leaks at southeastwater.com.au/checkforleaks
- If you need to do repairs on your internal plumbing, you must engage a licensed plumber to legally do this work.

Digital meters

We're upgrading our existing analogue meters with digital ones with real-time technology. These new meters help you to securely monitor your water use and identify potential water leaks in your home, saving water and money. They also allow you to have the best possible interaction with us and be warned and informed at the right time, while knowing your data is secure.

The data we collect is handled in line with our Privacy Charter.

Get in touch

Online

- Email us at support@southeastwater.com.au
- Live chat with our team

By phone

- General enquiries [13 16 94](tel:131694)
- Faults and emergencies (24 hours, 7 days a week) [13 28 12](tel:132812)
- Account enquiries (Monday to Friday 8 am to 6 pm) [13 18 51](tel:131851)
- Hearing impaired service [13 36 77](tel:133677) (ask for 131 851)
- Interpreter service [03 9209 0130](tel:0392090130)
- Country and interstate callers [03 9552 3737](tel:0395523737)
- Overseas billing enquiries [+613 9552 3737](tel:61395523737)

By mail

South East Water
PO Box 2268
Seaford, Vic, 3198

Enquiries and complaints

We'll do our best to provide you with a great customer service experience every time. But if you have a problem you'd like resolved, you can lodge an enquiry or complaint by contacting us on [13 18 51](tel:131851) or on our website at southeastwater.com.au. If you've got a problem that we need to investigate further, we'll get back to you within 10 business days.

If you're unsatisfied with our response, or feel you need to take the matter further, you can lodge a complaint with the [Energy and Water Ombudsman](http://www.energyandwaterombudsman.gov.au) who resolve complaints between Victorian customers and water companies.

Useful links and information

- See more about our payment support options at southeastwater.com.au/support
- Learn how to check for leaks at southeastwater.com.au/checkforleaks
- Report a burst, leak or sewer spill any time on [13 28 12](tel:132812) or at southeastwater.com.au/faults
- Get live updates on emergency works in your area at southeastwater.com.au
- Learn our top tips for saving water and make every drop count at makeeverydropcount.com.au
- Access our full Customer Charter online at southeastwater.com.au or request a print copy by contacting us on [13 18 51](tel:131851).
- Read more about our organisational performance and annual report at southeastwater.com.au
- Understand more about our sustainability program at www.southeastwater.com.au/climatechange

Our service standards you can expect

- To receive clean and safe drinking water that meets the requirements of the Safe Drinking Water Regulations and the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines.
- To receive a continuous water supply with no more than 5 unplanned water interruptions in a 12-month period.
- We'll fix any unplanned interruptions caused by a problem or fault in our system within 5 hours.
- To receive 2 business days' notice with the time and duration of a planned water service interruption.
- To have a continuous sewerage service with no more than 3 interruptions in a 12-month period.
- We'll fix any unplanned sewerage interruptions caused by a problem or fault in our system within 4 hours.

- We'll contain a sewer spill on your property caused by our pipes within 5 hours of us being notified. If the sewage spills into your home, we'll contain it within one hour of being notified.
- To have a water flow rate that meets minimum service standards. For a standard home, this is 20 litres per minute to the property boundary.
- A flow rate of at least 2 litres per minute at the tap nearest the meter, if your water supply is restricted.
- We won't take actions on your account such as water restriction, legal action or adding additional fees, without attempting to contact you multiple times to offer support first.
- We won't take actions on your account such as water restriction, legal action or adding additional fees, if you're receiving support through our Customer Support Policy.

If we can't meet any of these Guaranteed Service Levels, we'll issue you a rebate on your next bill. For the full list of guaranteed service levels and rebates see page 39 of the full Customer Charter.

Who's responsible for maintaining the pipes?

We're responsible for

- Maintaining the water pipes in the street, up to and including the property meter stop valve. Where there's no meter, we're responsible to the property connection point where a stop valve or tap controls the flow of water to a private extension.
- Maintaining the sewer pipes in the street, up to the property connection branch.

The property owner is responsible for

- Maintaining all internal plumbing, including any pipes past the property meter.
- Maintaining all sanitary drains up to the property connection branch.

Privacy

We collect personal information in line with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*. This means we collect information so we can deliver water and sewerage services and perform our other functions and activities, including promoting, researching and improving those services. When we collect personal information from you, we'll tell you what information we're collecting and why we're collecting it. We always take reasonable steps to keep the personal information that we collect from you secure and confidential. View our full privacy policy at southeastwater.com.au/privacy.