

**BRISTOL
WATER**

An AGBAR Company

Charges Scheme 2011/12



Charges Scheme 2011/12

The Company's rights to charge for water supplies are principally contained in the Water Industry Act of 1991 (as amended) in the Company's licence issued by the Government.

Bristol Water provides water to customers within the area of supply shown below.



Billing arrangements

Bristol Water and Wessex Water have a joint venture company to bill customers and collect payment - Bristol Wessex Billing Services Ltd (BWBSL). All customers' water and sewerage bills are issued by BWBSL. Other miscellaneous and infrastructure charges are billed directly by Bristol Water.

	Standing Charge	Rate
Unmetered	£28	87.82p per pound of rateable value
Metered		
Standard	£36	£1.1637p per cubic metre
Major User	Starts at 5,000 cubic metres per year with banded tariffs – see page 5.	
Vulnerable Customers WaterSure	Lower charge based on actual consumption or the average domestic bill £167	
Option to convert from an unmetered to a metered supply		
Domestic	Free but conditions apply	
Commercial	Quotations provided	

Sewerage services provided by Wessex Water are subject to separate charges where appropriate.

Value Added Tax

All charges set out in this scheme are exclusive of VAT unless otherwise stated. Where customers are subject to VAT, it will be added to charges at the appropriate rate.

Non-household customers are required to inform BWBSL of whether they are liable to pay VAT. A VAT declaration form will be sent to all non-household customers when they first provide us with billing information.

1 Unmetered charges

- a) **Billing** - Unmetered charges are payable in advance on 1 April of each year. Unmetered charges can be paid in two equal instalments on 1 April and 1 October. Alternatively a payment option may be used – please call BWBSL on 0845 600 3600 (Monday – Friday, 8am – 6pm) for payment options. Where any instalment is not paid by the due date, the whole bill, less any payments already made becomes due immediately.
- b) **Notional Rateable Value** - Where properties have been structurally altered then the Company will use a 'notional rateable value' that is based on comparable households or similar properties of the same type. These may be used on a temporary basis or as a permanent charge depending on circumstances. This will also apply where the property has been substantially altered so that the loading units have increased by 25%. (A standard property has a loading unit of 24 through such items as taps and other water fittings).

These charges are detailed in the following table:

Property type	No. of bedrooms	Notional RV £
Bedsit	1	80
Flat/	1	110
Maisonette	2	140
	3	170
	4*	200
Terrace	1	170
	2	200
	3	230
	4*	260
Temporary caravan charge		95

Property type	No. of bedrooms	Notional RV £
Semi detached	1	230
	2	260
	3	290
	4*	320
Detached	1	290
	2	320
	3	350
	4*	380

*note: Add £30 Notional RV for each additional bedroom. Where none of these applies, a fixed annual fee of £186 will be used.

- c) **Trough Charges** - Field troughs unless metered, fixed standpipes and similar devices will be charged at: £220 per annum.
- d) **Caravans** - Caravans are charged the standing charge plus 75% of the standard RV charge. For 2011/12 the charge per pound of rateable value for caravans is: 65.87p.

1 Unmetered charges *continued*

- e) **“WaterSure” tariffs for vulnerable domestic unmetered customers** – This charge applies to customers who meet the eligibility criteria for the vulnerable customer WaterSure tariff (as detailed on page 16 of this charges scheme), but are not able to be charged on a metered basis, as a meter cannot be installed at their property. The charge is set at the lower of the charge based on the rateable value, the applicable assessed charge to the number of bedrooms, or the average charge paid by domestic customers, which for 2011/12 is £167.
- f) **Vacant Properties** – Unfurnished unmetered vacant properties are not charged. Normal charges apply to furnished unmetered vacant properties. If a property is unoccupied due to the customer being hospitalised or residing in care charges will not normally apply. The customer or their representative should contact BWBSL at the earliest possible opportunity to inform them of this situation.
- g) **Sprinkler Charges** - An unmetered customer using a sprinkler or other automatic garden-watering device will be charged an annual fee of £50. The company reserves the right to selectively meter customers using sprinklers or other automatic garden-watering devices, as described on page 15 of this charges scheme.

2 Metered charges

Household Customers

- a) **Billing** – Most metered customers are sent a bill every six months. If the meter has not been read or we have difficulty in accessing and reading the meter of an internally metered customer, an estimated bill will be sent based on past consumption. If a customer believes that the consumption recorded on their bill is incorrect they may contact BWBSL who will investigate. A guide to the normal consumption of a household can be found at www.bristolwater.co.uk The customer may request that the meter is tested to check its accuracy. The cost of this is £70 plus VAT. If the meter is found to have been recording inaccurately, the cost of the meter testing will not be payable.

Bills are payable immediately although payment options are available and generally cover the period since the previous bill. Where bills span financial years, they are apportioned on a daily basis for the old and new charging rates.

- b) **Assessed Charges** – Where it is not possible to fit a meter and the customer does not wish to remain on Rateable Value charging, an assessed charge may be levied. This will consist of the Standing Charge plus a charge per bedroom of:
First Bedroom: £94
Each Additional Bedroom: £38

Where customers live in sheltered accommodation with communal laundry facilities, we may discount the bedroom-related portion of the assessed charge by 15%. Please contact BWBSL for more details of this discount.

Where an assessed charge property is occupied by only one person we will not charge for additional bedrooms. Customers must contact BWBSL to inform us of their eligibility for this discount. Proof of single-occupancy may be required.

Assessed charges cannot be backdated.

c) **“WaterSure” tariffs for vulnerable domestic metered customers** – This charge applies to customers who meet the eligibility criteria for the vulnerable customer WaterSure tariff (as detailed on page 16 of this charges scheme), and have a meter installed at their property. The charge is set at the lower of the charge based on actual water consumption, or the average charge paid by domestic customers, which for 2011/12 is: £167.

d) **Leakage Allowance** - The following allowances are given, subject to certain conditions as detailed in our domestic leakage code of practice booklet:

First leak – 100% of consumption above normal usage

Second leak – 50% of consumption above normal usage

e) **Vacant Properties** – Metered vacant properties are not charged, however meter readings will still be taken and if any consumption is recorded normal charges will apply.

If a property is unoccupied due to the customer being hospitalised or residing in care, charges will not normally apply. The customer or their representative should contact BWBSL at the earliest possible opportunity to inform them of this situation.

Non-Household customers

a) **Large Users** – Non-domestic customers using over 5ML per year are eligible to apply for one of our major user tariffs. These tariffs are detailed in the following table:

Band	Forecast annual use in cubic metres	Fixed annual charges £	Volume charges (pence per cubic metre)
Super A**	over 500,000	42,500	79.51
A	to 500,000	24,000	83.21
B	to 250,000	9,800	88.89
C	to 100,000	5,200	93.49
D	to 50,000	2,300	99.29
E	to 15,000	185	113.39
Standard	under 5,000	36	116.37

**Customers applying for this band will need to provide evidence of consumption

2 Metered charges *continued*

b) **Assessed Charges** –

1. Where water is not used by the customer in a production process a banded charge of £45 per band will be levied. Bands will consist of up to 5 employees. In addition a standing charge of £36 will be made.
2. Where water is used by the customer as part of a production process, the Company will undertake a site survey during which evidence of process consumption must be provided by the applicant. The Company will then make an individual assessment.

c) **Meter Installation Charges** – the following charges are made to non-household customers:

- i. Initial survey: first hour £35
- ii. Subsequent hours (per hour or part thereof) £48
- iii. If a suitable external boundary box already exists, the meter will be fitted at the time of the survey for a charge of £21. If no suitable external boundary box exists and the meter has to be fitted internally the cost will be higher.
- iv. Where no suitable box exists, or pipework alterations are required, we will provide the customer with a quotation for a meter installation, or for any pipework alterations including any meter boxes. Alternatively, we will provide a specification for the customer to do the pipework alterations themselves. Where the customer undertakes the work, a £21 charge will be made to fit the meter, provided the work is done to specification. Any revisit will be charged at £48.

d) **Leakage Allowance** - The following allowances are given to non-household customers, subject to certain conditions as detailed in our commercial leakage code of practice booklet:

Customers using 0 – 200m³ per year:

First leak – 100% consumption above normal usage

Second leak – 50% of consumption above normal usage

Customers using 201m³ – 15,000m³ per year:

First leak – 50% of consumption above normal usage

e) **Vacant Properties** – Normal charges apply to vacant metered agricultural properties. For other vacant metered non-household properties charges will not apply, however, meter readings will still be taken and if any consumption is recorded normal charges will apply.

3 Miscellaneous charges

The Company reserves the right to recover all its costs, including a reasonable margin, in the case of any damage to Company assets or in respect of any issue not specifically covered elsewhere in the charges scheme. Such charges are subject to review from time to time. Any delays in payment of such charges will incur a full commercial rate of interest.

a) **Value Added Tax** – All charges set out in this scheme are exclusive of VAT. VAT will be added to water supply charges (including water for construction) raised to non-household customers who are defined within divisions 1 – 5 of the Standard Industrial Classification List 1980 (SIC). Water supply charges to all other customers are zero rated for VAT purposes. Where customers are subject to VAT, VAT will be added to charges at the appropriate rate. Non-household customers are required to inform BWBSL of they are liable to pay VAT. A VAT declaration form will be sent to all non-household customers when they first provide us with billing information.

b) **Reconnection Charges** – The standard reconnection fee following disconnection for non-payment is: £120

Where a customer or property has been disconnected for the second time, a security deposit will be payable in advance before reconnection. Please see following paragraph for more details.

c) **Security Deposits** - Where a customer or property has been disconnected for the second time then a deposit equal to an estimate of the next six months' charges security deposit will be payable in advance before reconnection. The company reserves the right to require non-household customers to provide a security deposit in cash or some other form of security reasonably acceptable to the Company equivalent to one billing cycle plus three months of average charges ('the Security Deposit'). For customers billed monthly this will represent four months' charges, for customers billed half-yearly this will represent nine months' charges. Average charges will normally be based upon those payable in the previous year or in the case of new customers based on a reasonable estimate of charges to be paid in the current year.

A Security Deposit may be required where the Company considers it reasonably appropriate having regard to charges due to the Company and the customer's credit rating, credit and/or account history or financial resources ('the Credit Rating'). This security deposit is a guarantee of future payment of charges, and does not represent advance payment of charges.

The requirement for security may be reviewed by the Company or at the request of the customer to reflect changes in the volume of services provided or adjustments to the Credit Rating. After 2 years, where a Credit Rating improves the Security Deposit may be cancelled and any money deposited repaid with interest. Where a customer's Credit Rating deteriorates the Company may require the customer to provide a Security Deposit. Interest will be paid by the Company on any cash paid to the Company as a Security Deposit at the rate applying to sums deposited as security under s42(4) of the Water Industry Act.

d) **Debt Relief Orders** - Where a Customer enters into any formal insolvency procedure (to include but not limited to liquidation, administration, receivership, bankruptcy, company or individual voluntary arrangement or equivalent procedure) we will apportion any charges on a daily basis up to the date immediately before the date the relevant insolvency procedure becomes effective ('the insolvency date'). Any apportioned charges after the insolvency date will be payable by the occupier of the property in question and fall due on the next day of occupation after the insolvency date and will not fall within the insolvency procedure. The charges will be payable by the person responsible for the payment of water and sewerage charges for the property in question on the same payment terms as would apply if the property had been newly connected on that day.

3 Miscellaneous charges *continued*

- e) **Plumbing Inspections** – We are required by law to inspect plumbing installations for compliance with statutory regulations. Initial inspection and up to two re-inspections are free of charge. If contraventions remain, all subsequent re-inspections will be charged at a rate of £41 per hour, including travelling time where appropriate. Where the Company is requested to attend a site meeting or carry out an inspection on a specific date and, upon attending, the work is not ready for inspection or the person with whom the meeting was requested fails to attend, the Company reserves the right to levy a charge for the abortive visit. Such charges will be made based on a rate of £41 per hour, including travelling time where appropriate.
- f) **Resiting and/or resiting of meters** - Customers may request the Company to move a meter at any time after the first year of installation. The Company will provide a pipework specification where necessary. The meter will be fitted when the work is completed, at a minimum charge to the customer of £37.

Individual quotations will be given where customers request the Company to do the pipework alterations.

Where a customer requests that the meter attached to their supply is downsized or resited, before approving such a course of action, the Company will inspect the location to assess whether this is appropriate. A non-refundable inspection charge of £100 will be made for this service. The estimated cost of the work will be billed to the customer and will be payable in advance. Any adjustment between the estimate and actual cost will either be billed or returned to the customer following completion of the work.

If the re-siting of the meter is to meet the needs of an elderly or disabled customer this service will be provided free of charge.

- g) **Sprinkler Charges** – An unmetered customer using a sprinkler or other automatic garden-watering device will be charged an annual fee of £50. The Company reserves the right to selectively meter customers using sprinklers or other automatic garden-watering devices.

- h) **Standpipe Hire – Charges are -**

	15mm standpipe	60mm standpipe
Handling fee per week	£20	£45
Refundable deposit (subject to condition on return)	£50	£150
Registration Fee	N/A	£50
Weekly charge for 5m length of hose together with associated couplings when required	£2.50	£4.00

Reduced charges are available for customers using 5 or more standpipes or hiring for a period greater than 6 months.

In addition, the current charge per cubic metre levied by Bristol Water the Company in respect of metered supplies will be charged for all water recorded as used through the standpipe meter.

i) **Charges for hire of a water bowser, static tank or tanker** - charges are:

All costs will attract VAT at the standard rate	Type of Bowser/Tank		
	'Tow-along'/Static or Stool Tank 1.1 - 2.8	Rigid Tanker 7 – 9	Artic. Trailer 11 – 25
Capacity in cubic metres			
48 Hours Hire (minimum hire period)			
Weekdays	£281	£468	£502
Weekends/Bank Holiday delivery	£461	£723	£757
1 Week Hire	£584	£989	£1,096
Per additional refill			
Weekdays	£209	£357	£391
Weekends/Bank Holiday delivery	£379	£612	£646
Minimum Deposit (variable with estimate of order value)	£400	£1,000	£1,000

All the above costs include delivery and pick up charges. The Company allows 2 4 hours for delivery and collection of "Tow-alongs" and Stool tanks, and 6 hours for Rigid Tankers and Artic. Trailers. Any additional time over this amount will be charged at the rate of £21 per hour, per person.

j) **Temporary Turn Off of supplies**

If a customer wishes their supply to be temporarily turned off we will do so free of charge. Subsequent restoration of supply will incur a fee of £50. This option is only available for metered customers. The Company does not allow troughs or agricultural premises to be temporarily turned off, and an annual standing charge must be paid for these unless they are permanently disconnected.

k) **Permanent Disconnection of supplies**

Requests for a permanent disconnection must be made in writing to: New Supplies Section, Bristol Water, PO Box 218, Bridgwater Road, Bristol BS99 7AU. In some circumstances disconnections may incur a charge.

l) **LeakStop**

The company operates a scheme to assist domestic customers to repair leaks on supply pipes, which are customers' responsibility. The scheme is subject to conditions contained in the LeakStop leaflet.

This operates as follows:

First repair on pipe below ground outside property – free

Second repair on pipe below ground outside property - £110 (inclusive of VAT)

4 Payment options

a) Direct debit

Unmetered customers can elect to make a single payment of the amount due annually, to pay half-yearly, or to make ten monthly payments. Monthly payments are taken on or around the 1st of each month beginning 1st May each year.

Customers with metered accounts can elect to make a single payment of the amount due, to pay half-yearly, or to make 12 monthly payments: metered account instalments are only taken on or around the 1st of each month.

b) Cash

Customers can pay by cash, free of charge, at any PayPoint outlet, the Post Office or the BWBSL office in Nailsea. You can pay by cash, cheque or Postal Order at any bank. You will not normally have to pay a fee at your own bank. Customers should not send cash through the post. Payment cannot be made directly at Bristol Water's Head Office on Bridgwater Road or at any other Bristol Water site.

c) By cheque (payable to BWBSL)

Customers can pay by cheque at their own bank or by posting the cheque to BWBSL. Customers can pay free of charge by cheque at BWBSL's offices at Nailsea and normally at their own bank. Customers will need to check with their own bank whether any charges will be made.

d) Credit/debit card

Customers can pay by Credit or Debit Card by telephoning 0845 600 1019*. The Company reserves the right to charge an additional fee of 1.5% of the value of the payment, for payments made by Credit Card.

e) Online/TV/Telephone/Remote Banking

Online – you can pay online with your credit/debit card at www.billpayment.co.uk*

Pay by Telephone, TV, PC or remote banking – please quote sort code 40-02-50 and account number 61229737*.

f) Standing order

Very few of our customers choose to pay this way as it incurs higher bank charges for them and has to be reset each year when prices change. For those customers who do choose to pay by this method there are the same payment plans available as for Direct Debits.

*payment should be made to Bristol Wessex Billing Services Ltd, quoting the 13-digit reference number shown in the box on the payment slip.

g) Paying by instalments

Choices are monthly (10 for unmetered customers), 23 fortnightly or 46 weekly payments. Customers are issued with a book with pre-printed payment slips. There is no charge provided payment is made in cash at the Post Office, PayPoint or at the BWBSL office in Nailsea and normally at your own bank.

Unmetered instalment plans run from May to February and payments are revised for the May payment. Metered customers have their payments reviewed annually and can spread payments over twelve months.

Where customers do not keep to the payment plans, reminders will be issued and attempts made to contact them by telephone or personal visit.

If the plan is cancelled, customers are asked to make contact to make alternative payment arrangements. Otherwise a recovery process will be started which can result in court action which will lead to additional incurred costs being added to the bill. This debt recovery procedure is described in further detail in our Debt Recovery Code of Practice, available on request from BWBSL.

h) Customers on Benefit

Customers who receive Income Support, Income Based Job Seekers allowance, or Income Based Pensions Credit, or Employment and Support Allowance can apply for deductions from their benefit to be paid directly to BWBSL. Direct payments will only be made when customers have fallen into arrears and there is no other suitable method to deal with the debt. The payment consists of a deduction to cover the current year's bill plus a sum to reduce the arrears. The amount paid in Direct Payments will not exceed 25% of the customer's total weekly benefit. If other Direct Payments are already being taken for housing costs or fuel, the limit may already be reached and it will not be possible to include deductions for water charges. Customers who would like to pay this way should contact BWBSL.

i) Security Deposits

See page 7 under Miscellaneous charges.

j) Debt Relief Orders

See page 7 under Miscellaneous charges

5 Switching to metered charges

Domestic customers who are charged on an unmetered basis have the option to switch to a metered charge, by having a water meter installed. The cost of the meter installation is normally free to domestic customers.

Customers who wish to switch to a metered charge should contact BWBSL, who will send them the leaflet "Do you want a water meter?". This leaflet is also available on the Bristol Water website – www.bristolwater.co.uk. This explains the benefits of metering and contains information from which a customer can estimate whether it might be beneficial for them to switch to a meter. If the customer wants to proceed, they complete an application form contained in the booklet and send it to BWBSL, who consider the application form to be the statutory document known as a 'Measured Charges Notice', which signifies the start of the process set out by law. The following section describes these processes as they apply for household and commercial customers. For both classes of customer, any meter fitted remains the property of the Company.

5 Switching to metered charges continued

a) **Household properties**

We will arrange to survey the property and fit a meter within 45 working days of receipt of the completed application (60 working days for applications received in March, April, May or June). If, due to circumstances within our control, we fail to do so within this time scale, and if a meter is eventually fitted, then we will switch customers to metered charges starting 45 working days (60 working days for applications received in March, April, May or June) after the date the application was received but will not charge until the meter is fitted. Generally meters will be fitted externally in a chamber in the footpath or garden. On some occasions they may be fitted inside the house and in these cases, a radio frequency device will be fitted on top of the meter to enable us to read the meter from outside the property.

The meter will be fitted free unless:

- i) It will be necessary to separate the customer's service pipe where it is shared with other customers
- ii) It will be necessary to install additional meters* because the customer is served by more than one supply
- iii) There would need to be substantial alterations to existing plumbing or the building to enable the meter to be installed
- iv) Meter has been unlawfully removed

*A second meter may be fitted free of charge provided this does not incur disproportionate costs.

In these cases the customer will need to make the alterations themselves to enable a meter to be fitted free. We will provide a specification for the meter fitting position. The customer can also ask us to fit a meter in an alternative location. Individual quotations will be provided which will include an allowance equal to the price of providing the free meter option in our preferred position. Where the meter is re-sited in order to allow access by a disabled or infirm customer no charge will be made.

Where the customer fails to complete all the necessary works within three months of the application, the application will be cancelled and a fresh application made when the works are ready.

Where, following a survey or notification by the customer that any necessary alterations to the pipework have been completed, we can proceed to fit the meter, the meter will be fitted within 45 working days (60 working days for applications received in March, April, May or June) and the customer brought onto the new metered charging basis. If we fail to fit the meter within this timescale, we will change the customer's basis of charging to being a metered customer from the date the meter is fitted.

In the very few cases where it will not be possible to fit meters at all, or the necessary alterations could be unduly expensive, the customer will then be charged at the lower of the relevant assessed charge or their Rateable Value charge.

In cases of multi-occupancy buildings e.g. a block of flats where the flats cannot be individually metered, we will be prepared to consider a single meter which will be the responsibility of one individual or management company acceptable to Bristol Water. Responsibility for dividing up the bill rests with the occupiers. In the event of non-payment the agreement will be void and all flats will revert to Rateable Value charging, retrospectively for the period equivalent to the outstanding debt.

In cases where multiple dwellings such as blocks of flats or caravan sites are already supplied through a single meter, the right for individual units to opt for a meter is not available. If an individually metered account is required, the owner or tenant should contact the person responsible for paying the metered account. The Consumer Council for Water has information on its website which can help explain the process.

b) Non-household properties

We will arrange to survey the property and fit a meter within 45 working days of receipt of the completed application (60 working days for applications received in March, April, May or June). If we fail to do so within this timescale for reasons within our control, and a meter is eventually fitted, BWBSL will switch the customer to metered charges starting 45 working days (60 working days for applications received in March, April, May or June) after the date the application was received but will not charge until the meter is fitted.

A charge will be made for the survey and meter fitting, as detailed on page 6 of this Charges Scheme.

Where we can proceed to fit the meter after the customer has completed any pipework alterations, the meter will be fitted within 45 working days (60 working days for applications received in March, April, May or June). If we fail to fit the meter by that date for reasons within our control, we will change the customer's basis of charging to being a metered customer from the date the meter is fitted.

In a very few cases, it will not be possible to fit meters at all, and assessed charges will apply as detailed on page 6 of this Charges Scheme. These assessed charges would cease on change of occupier although the new occupier will be given the opportunity to have a revised assessment. Assessed charges will apply from the date of the survey.

5 Switching to metered charges continued

c) **Reversion for meter optants: household only**

Domestic customers who have elected to change their method of charge from a Rateable Value based charge to a metered basis, have the right to request reversion back to a Rateable Value basis subject to certain conditions. Reversion is not permitted for commercial customers.

Only the person who served the original notice requesting the change to a metered basis, or anyone living in the property at the time of the notice, may request reversion.

Over the first 12 months following the meter installation, BWBSL will read the meter at least once and the customer will receive two bills at six monthly intervals. Customers will have one month following receipt of their second metered bill, or within 12 months of the meter installation, whichever is the later, to tell BWBSL whether they wish to remain on the meter or change back to a Rateable Value based charge. If the customer does not request reversion, BWBSL will assume they want to continue to be charged on a metered basis. This is a process controlled by law and unless the customer has asked to revert to unmetered charges they cannot change back to an unmetered supply at that property.

Customers may not revert back to unmetered charges if one or more of the following situations apply to the property:

- The principal use of the property is no longer a home.
- There is garden watering other than by hand.
- Water is used to replenish a swimming pool with a capacity greater than 10,000 litres.
- Water is used to replenish a lake or pond with a capacity of over 10,000 litres.
- Water is used in a bath with capacity of over 230 litres.
- Water is used in a power or multiple jet shower.
- Water is used in a unit incorporating reverse osmosis or in conjunction with a water treatment unit which produces a waste water discharge or which requires the use of water for regeneration or cleaning.
- Where the property is in an area of water scarcity, so determined by the Secretary of State.

d) **Disputes about meter options**

If customers have any queries they should contact the Company. As a normal procedure, the Company will review costs and attempt to resolve differences directly with the customer. If the dispute cannot be resolved with the company, the customer may contact Ofwat, who can be asked to investigate. Ofwat's decision on this matter will be final and binding on both parties.

e) **Selective metering**

Customers can choose to remain on existing unmetered charges unless one of the following applies, in which case the Company reserves the right to meter compulsorily at its own expense. The Company has an ongoing policy of metering some properties on change of occupier.

- There is a change of occupier of the property
- The principal use of the property is no longer a home
- There is garden watering other than by hand
- Water is used to replenish a swimming pool
- Water is used to replenish a lake or pond that exceeds a combined capacity of over 10,000 litres
- Water is used in a bath with a capacity of over 230 litres
- Water is used in a power or multiple jet shower
- Water is used in a unit incorporating reverse osmosis or in conjunction with a water treatment unit which produces a waste water discharge or which requires the use of water for regeneration or cleaning
- Where the property is in an area of water scarcity, so determined by the Secretary of State
- The property is used for business or where the Company considers there is actual, or potential for, substantial discretionary use of water. These types of property are listed below:

- i. All premises that are occupied and used either in whole or in the major part as a place of business (including storage and warehousing facilities) and where water is supplied either for domestic or for non-domestic purposes.
- ii. All premises whether used or occupied either in whole or in the major part for business purposes and where, in the reasonable opinion of the Company, there is expected to be use of water or rate of use of water that is demonstrably inconsistent with average water consumption for that type of property.
- iii. Cafes, guest houses, hotels, inns, licensed bars, licensed premises for music and dancing (including night clubs and discotheques) and other clubs, lodging and boarding houses, motels, public houses, restaurants, taverns, tea rooms and all other similar business establishments carrying on the retail sale of prepared food or meals and/or drinks (whether alcoholic or not) and beverages, including any residential accommodation associated with the principal business use. For the avoidance of any doubt all premises that offer accommodation but have few or no residents staying at any particular time shall still remain liable to assessment in accordance with this provision.
- iv. Convalescent homes, nursing homes, residential homes, day centres, kindergartens, nurseries and similar premises.
- v. Non-domestic premises using water as part of an industrial/ commercial process, including hairdressers, laundries and launderettes.
- vi. All premises associated with leisure, sports and recreational facilities including zoological gardens, golf courses, parks, bowling greens and playing fields, stadia, clubhouses, changing facilities and other ancillary buildings, community centres, caravan and/or campsites, holiday flats and similar facilities.
- vii. Farms, market gardens, garden centres, small holdings and all premises used for agricultural or horticultural purposes including all troughs and similar devices, farmhouse and buildings associated with agricultural use or animal welfare whether consuming water for domestic or non-domestic purposes.

5 Switching to metered charges *continued*

- viii. Any premises that include a pond, lake, pool or other structure used to contain or store water provided by the Company, for any domestic recreational or business purpose and where the combined capacity of such tanks, reservoirs or other structures exceeds 10,000 litres in total volume.
- ix. Any premises where evidence shows that there is, or is likely to be, an annual consumption in excess of that which would normally be expected for that type of property.

6 'WaterSure' customers

Domestic metered customers may be eligible for a reduced charge in certain circumstances. This reduced charge is the average bill for domestic customers, where this is lower than their actual bill based on measured consumption.

Domestic unmetered customers may also be eligible for the vulnerable customer WaterSure tariff, if a meter cannot be fitted at their property. This charge is the lower of the charge based on the Rateable Value, the applicable assessed charge to the number of bedrooms, or the average charge paid by domestic customers

The current vulnerable customer WaterSure charge is detailed on page 2 of this Charges Scheme.

To be eligible for this charge the conditions are that:

a) The customer, or any other person who lives at the property, is in receipt of one or more of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-related JobSeekers Allowance
- Housing Benefit
- Council Tax Benefit
- Working Tax Credit
- Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (except families in receipt of the family element only)
- ESA (Employment and Support Allowance)

b) And that either the same person receives child benefit for three or more dependent children under the age of 19 who live in the household, or that any person residing in the property is receiving treatment for one or more of the following medical conditions and if the condition causes them to use a significant volume of water.

- Desquamation (flaky skin loss)
- Weeping skin disease (eczema, psoriasis, varicose ulceration)
- Incontinence
- Abdominal stomas
- Renal failure requiring home dialysis
- Crohn's disease
- Ulcerative colitis

The Company will also consider requests for assistance from customers in receipt of the specified benefits who have other medical conditions, which involve significant use of water.

The customer or other qualifying person must occupy the whole or part of the property as their only or principal home. Where the customer occupies only part of the property, this must still be the principal purpose of the property.

Customers who come into either of these categories should contact BWBSL for an application form. Completed forms must be returned to BWBSL including evidence to support the claim in the specified format. BWBSL will then calculate which types of billing arrangement are available so that the applicant can make their choice. Customers may register at any time of the year. If accepted, the entitlement will last for one year unless that is part way through a billing period, in which case the entitlement will cease at the end of the next billing period. Customers who want to keep their entitlement have to resubmit the registration form and evidence. BWBSL will remind customers 28 days before their entitlement is due to end. At that time, it will send them another application form and details of evidence required. If circumstances change, customers must tell the Company although they may stay on the tariff until the end of a billing period. Claims may be subject to checking by the Company or third parties acting as agents for the Company.

Successful applicants to the WaterSure tariff will be charged on that tariff for the entire billing period in which their application is made.

7 Assist Tariff

Where a customer is experiencing substantial difficulty in paying their bill, they may be eligible for the Bristol Water Assist Tariff.

Applications for the Assist Tariff must be made on the customer's behalf by a debt advice agency approved by Bristol Water, such as Citizens Advice Bureaux, Bristol Debt Advice Centre, Age UK or Tenant Support.

The debt advice or other agency must confirm to the Company that on the evidence of a completed means assessment form the applicant's household is not able to afford a level of payment that meets their current annual bill for services provided by the Company to the premises.

Eligibility Criteria

To be considered for the Assist Tariff a customer must be entitled to one or more of the following:

- Council tax benefit under Part VII of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992
- Housing benefit under that Part
- Income support under that Part
- Income-based job-seeker's allowance under section 1(4) of the Jobseekers Act 1995
- Working Tax Credit under section 8 of the Tax Credit Act 2002
- Pension Credit Guarantee under the State Pension Credit Act 2002

To qualify for the Assist Tariff the following requirements must be met:

- The qualifying person occupies the whole or part of the premises as his or her only or principal home
- In the case of premises that are not used solely as a person's home, the other use is not the principal use of the premises
- Water supplied to the premises is not used for water a garden (other than by hand) by means of any apparatus, or for automatically replenishing a pond or swimming pool with a capacity greater than 10,000 litres.

7 Assist Tariff continued

Application Process for the Bristol Water Assist Tariff:

- Must be made by the qualifying person or such other occupier of the premises who may be responsible jointly or otherwise to pay the charges for services provided to the premises
- Must be supported by reasonable evidence of qualification for assistance
- Must be supported by a completed means assessment in a form prescribed by the Company relating to the entire income of those residing at the premises and would be liable to pay charges under the Water Act and such other evidence as the Company may demand
- May result in the Company seeking verification with the applicant's consent from a potential qualifying person's registered Jobcentre Plus of evidence to support their application

Decision

Applications to the Assist Tariff will be reviewed by the Company and the Company will determine whether it is satisfied that the assessment made by the debt agency about the ability of the applicant's household to pay is accurate. If the application is successful the Company will determine which level of Assist Tariff is appropriate for the customer. The Company's decision about eligibility for the Assist Tariff will be final and will take into account all relevant circumstances about the household's financial circumstances and how they have arisen.

If an applicant is not successful then no further application for eligibility may be made by the applicant until six months has elapsed or there has been a material change of circumstance in the customer's financial circumstances.

Re-application process

Customers accepted onto the Assist Tariff must reapply annually for the tariff on the anniversary of their first successful application. The Company will require proof of eligibility to the benefits listed previously, confirmation that there has been no material change in the household's financial circumstances and reserves the right to request the customer to submit a new means assessment via a debt advice agency.

If the customer does not reapply or fails to provide the necessary evidence or provides evidence to show that their financial situation has improved, the Company reserves the right to vary the Assist Tariff level or apply standard charges as appropriate.

Where an application is made or where a customer agrees to pay the Assist Tariff the Company reserves the right to apply the Assist Tariff to premises occupied by such persons already on a payment arrangement that does not cover their annual bill for services provided without the need for a formal means assessment by a debt advice agency.

No other rebates or allowances whether set out in this schedule of charges or otherwise will apply to those customers paying the Assist Tariff.

Assist Tariff structure

The Company will assess the application according to the customer's financial situation and apply the appropriate level of Assist Tariff.

The Assist Tariff consists of five levels, providing varying levels of discount against the average bill charged to domestic customers in that charging year.

For 2011/12 the Assist Tariff charges are as follows:

Assist Level	Tariff	Discount against Average Bill
1	£49	71%
2	£82	51%
3	£115	31%
4	£148	11%
5	£167	0%

8 Major User Tariffs

Customers who use more than 5,000m³ of water each year may apply to Bristol Water to be charged on a Major User tariff. The current details of these charges are detailed on page 5 of this Charges Scheme. Charges are payable monthly. Where a customer is on a Major User tariff this replaces the normal metered charges. The volumetric charges apply to the entire volume billed to the customer. Any customer wishing to apply for Major User tariff should contact the Bristol Water BusinessCare Team (01225 524392 or 01225 524352). Customers may switch to a Major User tariff at any time during the year. Bristol Water reserves the right to terminate a Major User tariff agreement.

9 Complaints procedure

Bristol Water has formal complaints procedures, which customers should follow if they are dissatisfied with any aspect of our service. These procedures can be obtained on request from the Company, or via the following links:

Water Supply Enquiries and Complaints:

<http://www.bristolwater.co.uk/pdf/customerService/codesPractice/enquiriesandcomplaints08.pdf>

Billing Enquiries and Complaints:

<http://www.bristolwater.co.uk/pdf/customerService/codesPractice/enquiriesandcomplaints08.pdf>

10 Compensation policy

Bristol Water is required by statute to adhere to the Guaranteed Standards Scheme, which provides for compensation to customers in the event of service failures. In addition, we have our own Bristol Water Bond, which increases the range and value of compensation payments available to customers. The Bristol Water Bond can be obtained on request from the Company, or via the following link:

<http://www.bristolwater.co.uk/pdf/customerService/codesPractice/bondDetailed.pdf>

Contact details

Operational Enquiries – Bristol Water

Address: P O Box 218, Bridgwater Road, Bristol, BS99 7AU
Tel: 0845 702 3797 (Emergency Service only between 6pm and 8am)
Website: www.bristolwater.co.uk
Email: customer.services@bristolwater.co.uk

Leakline 0800 801 011

Billing Enquiries – BWBSL

Address: 1 Clevedon Walk, Nailsea, Bristol BS48 1WA
Tel: 0845 600 3600 (Monday – Friday, 8am to 6pm)
Website: www.bristolwater.co.uk/customerservice
Email: customer.services@bwbsl.co.uk

Bristol Water BusinessCare (For Major User customers)

Address: 1 Clevedon Walk, Nailsea, Bristol BS48 1WA
Tel: 01225 524392 or 01225 524352
Website: www.bristolwater.co.uk/businesscare
Email: businesscare@bwbsl.co.uk

Consumer Council for Water:

This independent committee aims to protect customers' interests and investigate customer complaints free of charge.

Address: 2 The Hide Market, West Street, St Philips, Bristol BS2 0BH
Tel: 0845 707 8268 (Monday – Friday, 8.30am to 4.30pm)
Website: www.ccwater.org.uk
Email: wessex@ccwater.org.uk

Water Services Regulation Authority (Ofwat)

Address: Centre City Tower, 7 Hill Street, Birmingham, B5 4UA
Tel: 0121 644 7500
Website: www.ofwat.gov.uk
Email: enquiries@ofwat.gsi.gov.uk



Bristol Water plc, PO Box 218, Bridgwater Road, Bristol BS99 7AU