

Your Meter

Water is supplied in accordance with our statutory obligations under the Water Industry Act 1991. Under the Act there are the following provisions:

- We own the meter and we will be responsible for maintaining and replacing it when necessary. We will be responsible for maintaining the meter box only where it is also our company stop tap box.
- You are legally required to allow any authorised Bristol Water employee or agent access to read, test or exchange the meter. If the meter is fitted inside your property and you do not reply to our request for access to the meter, we reserve the right to estimate your account based on previous consumption.
- Tampering with our water meter is a criminal offence and will result in a fine of up to £1,000.

You will be responsible for all water recorded by the meter. If at any time it is found that the meter has not registered the amount of water consumed, we will agree an estimate of your consumption for the period since the last reading and charge accordingly. The position of the meter does not affect your responsibility for your private supply pipe.

Our responsibility for pipework normally ends at the property/highway boundary. If your meter box is fitted inside the boundary of your property and is not acting as our company stop tap box, you will be responsible for the maintenance and repair of the meter box.

Only our employees or agents are authorised to remove or replace the meter. If you damage the meter or any device related to it you will have to pay the repair or replacement costs including the costs of visiting and administration.

Domestic Customers

In most cases, fitting a meter will be free unless:

- It is necessary to separate your supply pipes where they are shared with other customers
- It is necessary to install additional meters because you are served by more than one supply (a second meter may be fitted free of charge provided this does not incur disproportionate costs).
- Substantial alterations to existing plumbing or building are required to ensure the meter can be fitted. In these cases you will need to make the alterations yourself to enable a meter to be fitted free. We will provide a specification for the meter fitting position. You 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 you fail to complete all the necessary works within 3 months of the application, the application will be cancelled and a fresh application will need to be made when the works are ready.

In the very few cases where it will not be possible to fit meters at all or the necessary alterations could be unduly expensive, you will then have a choice of:

- Remaining on rateable value charges
- Moving to an assessed charge calculated as follows: Assessed charges for households for 2022/23 are £76.71 for the first bedroom plus £52.09 for each additional bedroom plus a standing charge of £44.92.

Where an assessed charge property is occupied by one person, we will not charge for additional bedrooms. Customers must contact BWBSL, our billing company on 0845 600 3600, Mon-Fri 8am - 6pm or Sat 8am - 2pm to inform us of their eligibility for this discount.

Proof of single occupancy may be required. These charges apply to your water supply only and your sewerage service provider will also apply charges. Assessed charges cannot be backdated.

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 nonpayment 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. Ofwat produces a leaflet 'A Guide to Water Resale', which can help explain the process.

Non-household Customers

Non-household customers should contact their retailer for details of metering and charges.

Switching back to an unmetered supply

You can change back to unmetered billing within 2 years unless:

- The meter was installed on change of occupier
- There is a change of occupier after installation of the meter
- The principal use of the property is no longer residential

- You use something other than a handheld device for watering your garden – for example, a sprinkler
- You have automatic systems to fill up a swimming pool, pond or lake with a capacity of over 10,000 litres
- You have previously reverted to unmetered billing before this meter was installed

If you choose to switch back to an unmetered supply we may choose to keep the meter installed and continue taking readings for information purposes but you will not be billed based on those readings.

Money Back Guarantee Scheme (MBG)

If you switched to a metered tariff after 18 February 2022 you could be entitled to a refund if your metered bills are higher than your unmetered bills under the Money Back Guarantee Scheme.

The difference will be credited when switching back to unmetered billing if the meter is billed for two years after installation. You can change back to unmetered billing before the 2 years cooling-off period unless one of the conditions below applies:

- There is a change of occupier or the principal use of the property is no longer residential
- You use something other than a handheld device for watering your garden – for example, a sprinkler
- You have automatic systems to fill up a swimming pool, pond or lake with a capacity of over 10,000 litres
- Customers who have previously reverted at their current property are unable to revert again

Please note:

- Any meters fitted through a change of occupier are not eligible for this scheme
- If a customer chooses to revert within the two years, they will not be eligible for the Money Back Guarantee Scheme
- If a leak occurs during the two years, we will send a letter notifying the customer that their Money Back Guarantee Scheme has been extended until their next meter reading
- If the customer opts to revert, any overpayment made on the water meter will be credited against the new unmetered bill. If this bill is covered in full and there is credit remaining, this will be refunded to the customer.