

# Surface water drainage - household 2025/2026

## Saving for a rainy day

It always seems to be raining in the North West. So it's good news that our vast network of underground sewer pipes help to drain away the drops!

Part of your water bill pays for us to take away the rainwater that falls onto your home – including your roof, your driveway and your path.

Some properties, however, are drained naturally. The rainwater flows directly into a brook, stream, or a soak-away, without ever entering the sewer system. If your home fits this description, you could qualify for a welcome reduction in your bill.

## Does your home fit the bill?

To qualify for money off your bill, you need to prove that the rainwater that falls on your home (including your roof, drive, patio, yard etc.) drains directly into the ground, or a watercourse such as a brook or stream, or a soakaway – without ever entering our sewer pipes.

You'll need to carry out some detective work to find out for sure. There's plenty of information at [unitedutilities.com/surface-water-drainage](https://unitedutilities.com/surface-water-drainage) to help you.

If the rainwater does enter our pipes at any point on its journey – even very briefly – a reduction in your charges won't be possible.

To summarise, you could be entitled to a reduction in the following circumstances:

- (i) If **none** of the surface water from your home enters into the public sewer (for example, all your surface water drains to a soakaway or watercourse) then no charge will be made for surface water drainage.
- (ii) If **some** of the surface water from your home goes directly to a watercourse (not via the public sewer) and you pay a third party for its disposal, the charge for surface water will be reduced by the amount you pay to the third party (up to a maximum of the amount we charge you for that part of our service).

## Unfortunately, you won't be entitled to a reduction if:

- Any proportion of your surface water drains to the public sewer
- Only part of your surface water goes to a soakaway with some surface water still draining to the public sewer.
- You have re-directed your roof drainage into water butts.
- You drain to a watercourse, brook or stream via a public sewer.
- You have any rainwater harvesting systems installed at your home (for example, you use rainwater to flush your toilet cistern).

Think you could be eligible? Then please fill in the attached application form, and don't forget to draw us a picture in the space provided. This will help us if we need to visit to carry out a test to check whether your home drains to the public sewer.

## How much could you save?

If you have a water meter, the maximum reduction in your wastewater charges for 2025/2026 would be £100.49.

If you don't have a water meter, your charges are calculated using the rateable value of your home so it's difficult to give an exact amount. However, the reduction in your wastewater charges would be approximately 26%.

The reduction in your surface water charges will apply from the date you moved into your home, going back a maximum of six years.

Once the changes to your bill have been made, they will apply automatically each year. However, please do let us know if you make any subsequent alterations which affect your drainage arrangements.

## For further information



[unitedutilities.com/surface-water-drainage](https://unitedutilities.com/surface-water-drainage)



If you have a meter call **0345 672 2999**  
If you don't have a meter call **0345 672 2888**  
For opening hours please visit [unitedutilities.com/contactus](https://unitedutilities.com/contactus) where you can also get in touch with us online.

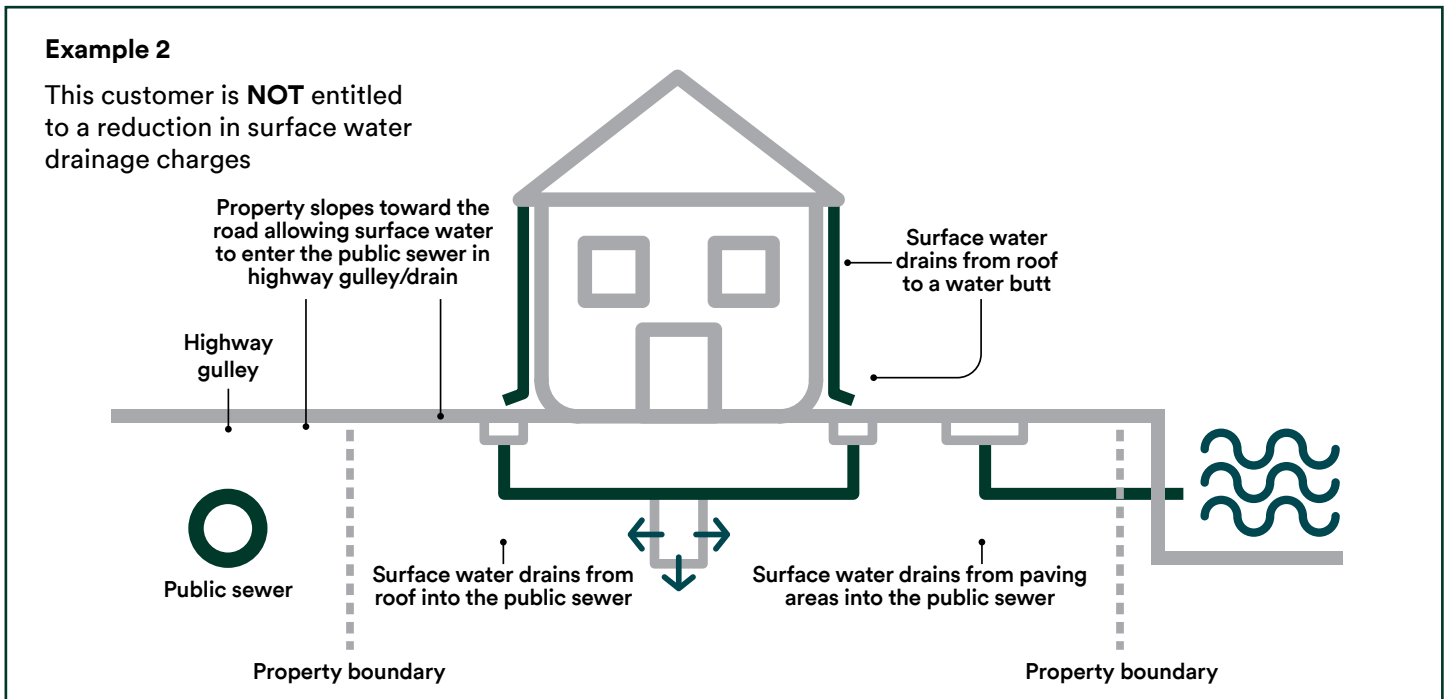
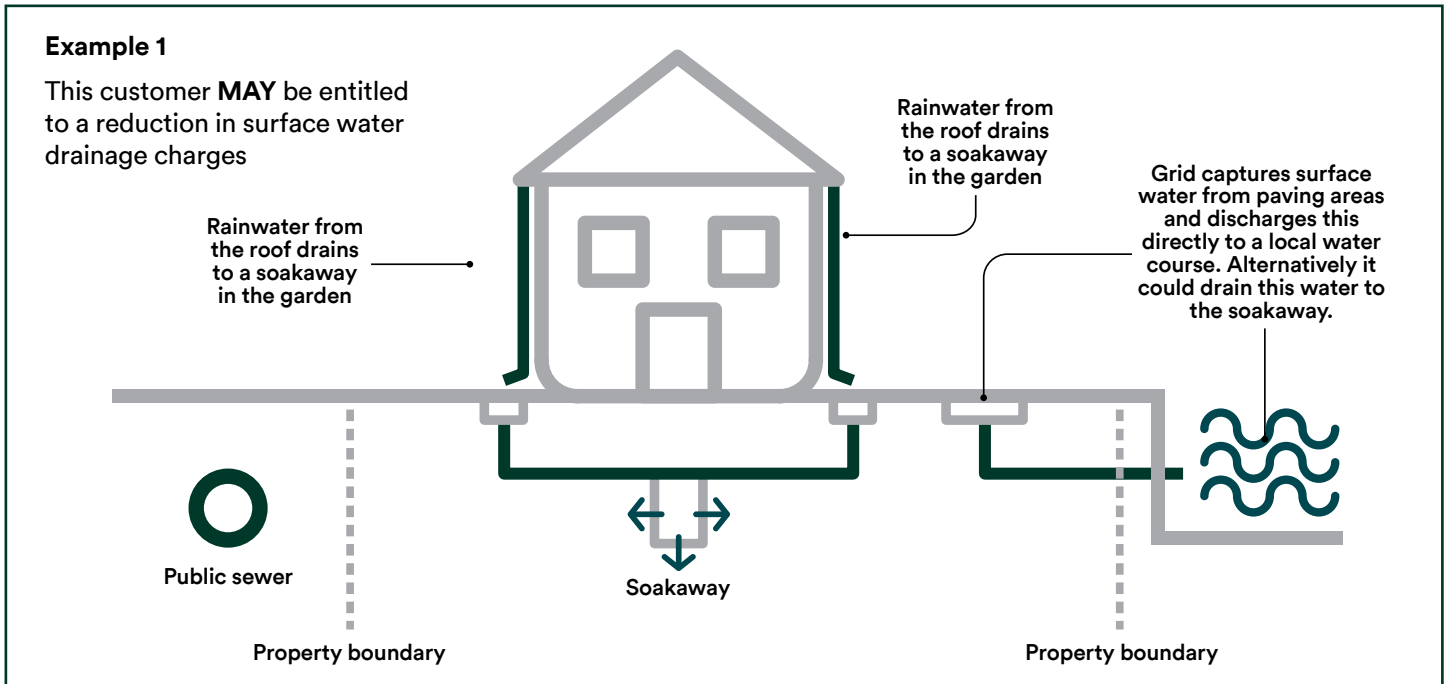


**United Utilities  
Customer Service Centre  
PO Box 50  
Warrington  
WA55 1AQ**

## Examples showing surface water drainage

The two diagrams below show where surface water currently drains to. In example 1, you would be eligible for a discount as no surface water drains to our sewer network. In example 2, you wouldn't be eligible as some of the surface water drains to our sewer.

On the attached form you are asked to provide a drawing to show where your surface water drains to - we recommend you refer to the diagrams below so have a good understanding of what you need to show on your own example.



## Your questions answered

### If I am eligible, do I need to apply every year?

No, your charges will be amended automatically each year. However, if you make any alterations to your home, or existing drainage, please let us know.

(Please note: if you pay a third party to dispose of your surface water you will need to reapply each year).

### My neighbour has recently received an allowance, will I be entitled to one?

Each claim is assessed on an individual basis. For further information please visit our website [unitedutilities.com/surface-water-drainage](http://unitedutilities.com/surface-water-drainage)

### If my claim for surface water drainage is allowed, will the highway drainage charge also be removed?

Unfortunately we cannot offer a reduction in your highway drainage charge. Rainwater drains to our public sewer network from roads and highways, which we then collect and treat before discharging back into rivers and the sea. Since we all benefit from this service, all our wastewater customers must pay this charge, regardless of whether or not we have reduced the surface water drainage part of your charges.

# Application to reduce surface water charges for household customers 2025/2026



Please complete the form and return it to the address shown below.

**Important:** any reduction in your surface water charges will apply from the date you moved into your home, going back a maximum of six years.

Title <i>(please tick)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Mr <input type="checkbox"/> Mrs <input type="checkbox"/> Miss <input type="checkbox"/> Ms <input type="checkbox"/> Other <i>(please state)</i>		
Full name			
Address <i>(including postcode)</i>			
Daytime telephone number			
Evening telephone number			
Mobile telephone number			
Email			
Customer account number <i>(shown on top of your bill)</i>			
Type of property <i>(please tick)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Detached house	<input type="checkbox"/> Semi-detached house	<input type="checkbox"/> Terraced house
	<input type="checkbox"/> Bungalow	<input type="checkbox"/> Flat	<input type="checkbox"/> Link detached
Other <i>(please specify)</i>			
Approximate year built			
If your property is a flat, office or other property with a shared roof, where does the surface water from the roof drain to?			
Does your property have a soakaway?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Do you pay a third party to dispose of your surface water via a watercourse?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
If <b>Yes</b> , please confirm the name of the third party and how much is paid to them per annum below:			
Name of third party:			
Cost paid per annum to third party :			
<b>To help us consider your application, please draw a diagram overleaf of your house, garden/yard showing where your surface water drains to. If you have a soakaway please include its approximate position.</b>			
<b>Declaration (please tick each statement)</b>			
I will notify United Utilities if my drainage arrangements change.	<input type="checkbox"/>		
I agree to allow a representative of United Utilities to visit my home to check my current drainage arrangements.	<input type="checkbox"/>		
I have read the information contained in this leaflet and on the website at <a href="http://unitedutilities.com/surface-water-drainage">unitedutilities.com/surface-water-drainage</a> and I confirm all details provided are correct.	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Signature			
Date			

Diagram of your property showing where the surface water drains and the position of a soakaway (if you have one) or watercourse if you drain directly to that.

**Please enclose all supporting documentation and send it with this form to:  
United Utilities, Customer Service Centre, PO Box 50, Warrington WA55 1AQ**



### **About us**

United Utilities is the North West's water company. We keep the taps flowing and toilets flushing for seven million customers every day. From Crewe to Carlisle, we work hard behind the scenes to help your life flow smoothly.