

Making life easier

A guide to paying
your water bill



Passion in every drop

A wide-angle photograph of a natural landscape. In the foreground, a steep hillside covered in dry, brown grass slopes down to a dark blue lake. The lake's edge meets a range of mountains in the background. The mountains are rugged with dark, rocky peaks and patches of green vegetation at their base. The sky above is a clear, pale blue with a few wispy white clouds.

From making a brew to flushing the loo, most people never give a moment's thought to where their water comes from – or where it goes once it disappears round the U-bend.



But behind the scenes, we run a massive 24-hour operation to help your life flow smoothly.

It's a hidden world of water pipes the length of motorways; sewers as high as buildings; space-age science labs and treatment works; call centres that never sleep, and 5,000 employees stationed from Crewe to Carlisle.

Your water bill sets out how much you owe. But it can't describe the pride, skill and technology that go into every drop of water which reaches your household tap.

This is what you pay us for, and we love our job!

This leaflet covers:

- An explanation of the services you pay for
- How to pay your water bill
- Tips for reducing your bill
- Advice if you're struggling to pay

Your bill explained

Although your water bill may look a bit complex, in simple terms you pay for the following services:

Water

The quality of your tap water is the best it has ever been.

We catch it from the sky in reservoirs, treat it at hi-tech plants and get it to your home via 42,000km of pipes.

Keeping the North West's taps flowing costs millions of pounds every month. At the same time, we're investing millions more to build huge new water pipelines to keep pace with growing populations and climate change.

Well, you can't do without your morning shower can you?

Wastewater

We're investing millions, so that you can spend a penny!

Every time you take a shower, flush the loo or do the washing up, the used water

goes on an adventure in our vast sewer network*.

The nasties are taken out at one of our treatment works before the water is returned safely to rivers and the sea.

We're also pumping cash into the latest treatment technology, so that the water that goes back to the environment is of the highest quality.

The result? Happy fish, cleaner coastlines and loos that are flushed with success.

**if you have a water meter installed and can show that more than 5 per cent of the water we supply to your home does not drain into our sewer you can claim a reduction on your charges. Visit unitedutilities.com/leaflets to download our 'non-return to sewer claim form for household customers'.*

Surface water and highway drainage

Rainwater falling on roads, pavements and driveways has to go somewhere – or the North West would quickly find itself under water!

This surface water is captured by drains before finding its way into our sewer system*.

We're spending millions to make sure our sewers can quickly take away all that lovely rainwater. That way, when the heavens open, you can keep your head above water.

**a bit of good news here: if your home is not connected to the public sewer to drain away your rainwater (for example, your surface water drains to a soakaway instead) we can reduce your bill. For more*

information and to download a claim form visit unitedutilities.com/surface-water-drainage

Standing charges

This is a fixed annual charge associated with the costs of providing our services and is shared amongst all our customers.

Meter or no meter?

How we calculate your bill will depend on whether you have a water meter installed in your home. If you do, your costs are based on how much water you use. We charge you for every cubic metre of water you use (a cubic metre is 1,000 litres of water). For our most up-to-date charges, visit our website unitedutilities.com/your-bill

If you don't have a water meter, we use something called 'rateable value' to calculate your bill (see right for more details).

What is rateable value?

If you don't have a water meter, we calculate your bill using the rateable value of your property. Rateable values were set by the Inland Revenue prior to 31st March 1990 and were based on the annual rental value of your property. As we didn't set these values we're not allowed to change or alter them. So if the rateable value of your property results in your water bill being high, installing a water meter may be your best option. For a more detailed explanation visit unitedutilities.com/rv



Ways to pay



Click, call, counter, cash... you're spoilt for choice when it comes to ways of paying your water bill.

Smartphone app

We have an app for both Apple and Android phones that allows you to make payments whenever and wherever you wish. You can also use the app to send us your meter reading and check your payment history. Search 'United Utilities' in the Apple App Store or Android Play Store to download to your phone.

Phone

You can check your balance and pay your bill using our automated payments line. Try it on **0800 980 6050**. Remember to have a credit or debit card handy, plus a note of your customer account number, which you'll find at the top of your water bill.

My Account

If using the internet makes your life easier, why not register for our online service? My Account gives you access to your water account 24 hours a day to pay your bill, set up a direct debit, give a meter reading and update your personal details. You can even opt for paperless billing and do your bit for the environment. Register now at unitedutilities.com/myaccount

Direct Debit

Set it up and then forget about it! You can select the payment intervals that suit you best (e.g. weekly, monthly, quarterly, yearly) and choose any day of the month for the money to leave your account. Best of all, we'll knock £5 off your bill every year.

To set up a Direct Debit visit our website unitedutilities.com/dd or call us on one of the numbers shown in the 'Contact us' panel on the right. If you're already a My Account customer (see facing page for details) you can set up a Direct Debit when you log in to your account.

Standing order

You can set up a standing order via your bank. Contact us and we'll send you a form for your bank/building society.

Pay by cash

If you would prefer to pay by cash, please take your water bill or United Utilities Payment Card to any of the following locations:

- **Payzone outlet**

To find your nearest outlet visit payzone.co.uk/customers

- **PayPoint outlet**

To find your nearest outlet visit consumer.paypoint.com

- **Post Office**

To find your nearest Post Office visit postoffice.co.uk

There are no counter fees for cash payments at Payzone or PayPoint outlets or Post Offices.

Pay by cheque

To pay by cheque, please make it payable to 'United Utilities Water Limited', write your account number on the reverse and send this to us at the address shown on your bill. Please don't send cash or post-dated cheques.

Pay by debit or credit card

There are a number of options if you wish to pay your bill by debit or credit card:

- log in to your account at unitedutilities.com/myaccount
- pay using our **smartphone app**, search 'United Utilities' on the App Store or Google Play to download
- go online at unitedutilities.com/paybill
- phone our automated payments line **0800 980 6050**
- call our billing team (see separate panel on right)

Internet banking

If you use your own internet banking, you will need the following details when setting up a payment arrangement:

Sort code: 010917. Account number: 58933956. You will also need your customer account number (shown at the top of your bill) as a payment reference when prompted by your bank, then we'll know where the payment has come from.

***Important:** when you set up a payment arrangement within your online banking account, your payment amounts must align with any agreed standing order you have with us - otherwise it is likely you will receive reminders from us for money still owed.*

Contact us to find out more



If you'd like to discuss any of the options on this page please call us on:

0345 672 2888
(if you don't have a meter)

0345 672 2999
(if you have a meter)

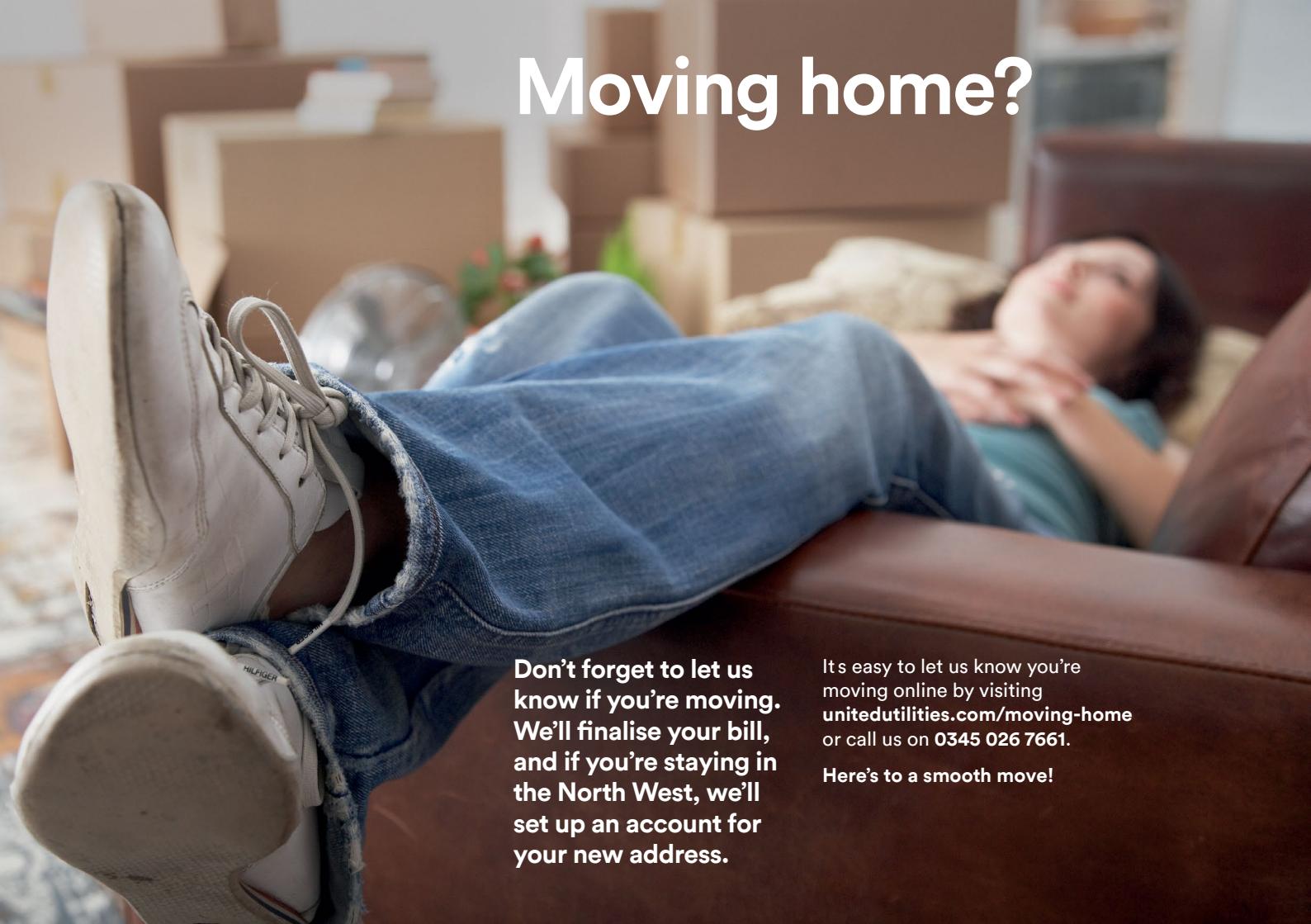


Don't forget, if you register for MyAccount you can pay your bill online, set up a direct debit and opt for paperless billing. Visit unitedutilities.com/myaccount for details.



You can also pay your bill and give a meter reading using our **smartphone app**, search 'United Utilities' on the App Store or Google Play to download.

Moving home?

A close-up, low-angle shot of a person's legs and feet. They are wearing blue jeans and light-colored, lace-up sneakers. Their feet are propped up, resting on a dark brown leather sofa. In the background, several cardboard moving boxes are stacked, suggesting a recent move. A woman's face is partially visible, resting her head on her hand, appearing tired or stressed.

**Don't forget to let us
know if you're moving.
We'll finalise your bill,
and if you're staying in
the North West, we'll
set up an account for
your new address.**

It's easy to let us know you're moving online by visiting unitedutilities.com/moving-home or call us on 0345 026 7661.

Here's to a smooth move!

Shrink your bill with a water meter

A water meter can be a great way of cutting your bill down to size.

If you live on your own, have a small family or live in a house with a high rateable value, you could be better off switching to a water meter.

Over the course of a year, you could save enough to splash out on something a bit more exciting than water!

And that's not all. By helping you to keep tabs on your water usage, a meter can reduce your carbon footprint, allowing you to become an eco-hero in your own household.

We also offer a 'lowest bill guarantee' which means you won't pay more than you do now during the two year trial period and any savings you do make are yours to keep. You can then switch to meter charges permanently if you've made a saving compared to your existing fixed bill. You've got nothing to lose!

To find out more about water meters please visit unitedutilities.com/meters or call us on **0345 072 6065**.

Help when you need it most

We can all benefit from a bit of extra help at some stage in our lives. This could be due to age, ill-health, disability, mental health problems, financial worries or language barriers.

Registering for Priority Services is free and it means that you will benefit from additional services to support your particular needs.

So if you, or someone you know, would appreciate a little bit of extra help, please call us for a chat on **0345 672 2888** or visit unitedutilities.com/prioritieservices

A helping hand

There's nothing worse than feeling worried when your water bill lands on the doormat.

If you're going through a tough financial patch and are finding it hard to meet your payments, please get in touch on **0800 072 6765**. We're easy to talk to, and the last thing we want to do is to leave you high and dry.

We run a range of support schemes, suited to different financial circumstances. We've explained more about some of these schemes opposite, but please call us even if you think these may not be suitable for you as there may be other ways we can help. Alternatively visit **unitedutilities.com/difficulty-paying-bill** for information about all the ways we can help.

Payment matching

If you've built up a lot of debt, for every £1 you pay we'll match it with £1 too, with our contribution increasing to £2 if you continue to make payments until your debt is cleared.

Call us on **0800 072 6765** to find out more.

United Utilities Trust Fund

If you are in real financial difficulty and have nowhere else to turn, you may qualify for a grant to pay off your debt – giving you the fresh start you need.

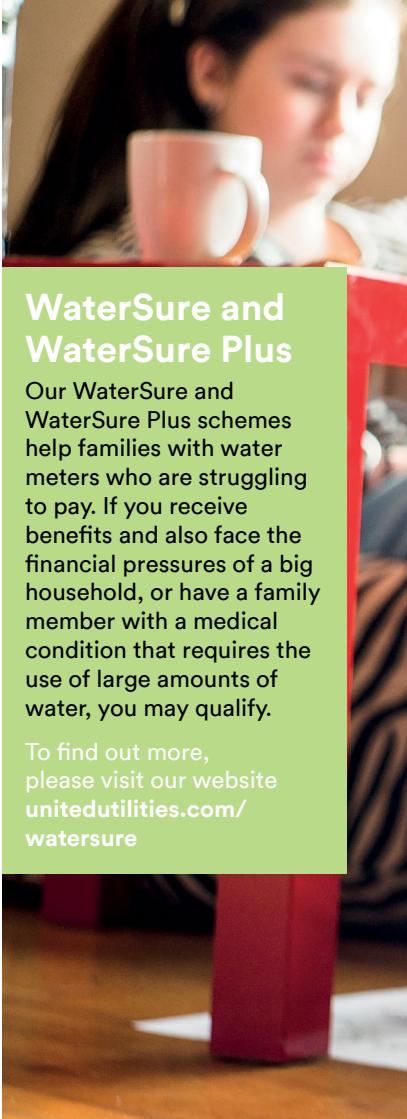
To find out more, please visit uutf.org.uk or call **0300 790 6172**.

WaterSure and WaterSure Plus

Our WaterSure and WaterSure Plus schemes help families with water meters who are struggling to pay. If you receive benefits and also face the financial pressures of a big household, or have a family member with a medical condition that requires the use of large amounts of water, you may qualify.

To find out more, please visit our website unitedutilities.com/watersure

**Please call
0800 072 6765 if you're struggling to pay**



Water Direct

If you receive Jobseekers Allowance, Income Support, Pension Credit, income-related Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit, you can ask the Department for Work and Pensions to pay your bill directly to us out of your benefit.

Call us on **0800 072 6765** to find out more.

Help to Pay scheme

If you receive Pension Credit, and all other adults in your household receive Pension Credit or state pension, you can apply to have your bills capped at an affordable amount.

Call us on **0800 072 6765** to find out more.

Low Income Water Discount

This discount is for customers with low household incomes to help make their water bill more affordable.

Find out more at unitedutilities.com/lowincomediscount

Applying for Universal Credit?

We can delay your water bill payments for up to eight weeks until your first UC payment arrives.

Call us on **0800 072 6765** to discuss.

Payment break scheme

If you have a low income or receive benefits, our Payment Break scheme can give you some breathing space if you lose your job or need to pay out for an unexpected household emergency.

Call us on **0800 072 6765** to discuss.

Back on Track scheme

This scheme is suitable for customers either receiving benefits or on a low income and finding it difficult to pay their water bill following a recent change in financial circumstances.

Call us on **0800 072 6765** to find out more.

Other leaflets that may be of interest:

This leaflet is one in a series of publications containing useful information for our customers. Others that may be of interest to you are:

- **A summary of our household charges**
- **Water meter application pack**
- **Testing your household water meter**
- **A guide to our Priority Services**
- **A guide to using water wisely**
- **Support with your water bill**
- **Our complaints procedure**
- **Lead pipe replacement scheme**
- **Our standards of service**

You can download any of our leaflets from our website: unitedutilities.com/leaflets, or write to: United Utilities, PO Box 459, Warrington WA55 1WB.



Translations

Choose your preferred language on our website by clicking on 'Accessibility help'.



Follow us on social media



@OfficialUnitedUtilities



@unitedutilities

In case you need to contact us:



To talk to us about your bill:

0345 672 2888 if you don't have a water meter

0345 672 2999 if you have a water meter

For opening hours please visit unitedutilities.com/contactus where you can also get in touch with us online.

To talk to us about your water and wastewater services: 0345 672 3723

Opening hours: for emergencies we are open 24 hours.

You can also call this number to check the identity of one of our representatives.

If you have hearing or speech difficulties, and use a textphone, please dial **18001** followed by the number you require.



You can go online:

Visit our website and click on 'Live chat' to webchat with a member of our team or go to unitedutilities.com/contactus



Or write to us at:

United Utilities, PO Box 459, Warrington WA55 1WB



Water for the North West

United Utilities Water Limited,
Haweswater House, Lingley Mere Business Park, Lingley Green Avenue, Warrington WA5 3LP.

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