



Dŵr Cymru
Welsh Water

A guide to having a water meter

HOUSEHOLD CUSTOMERS

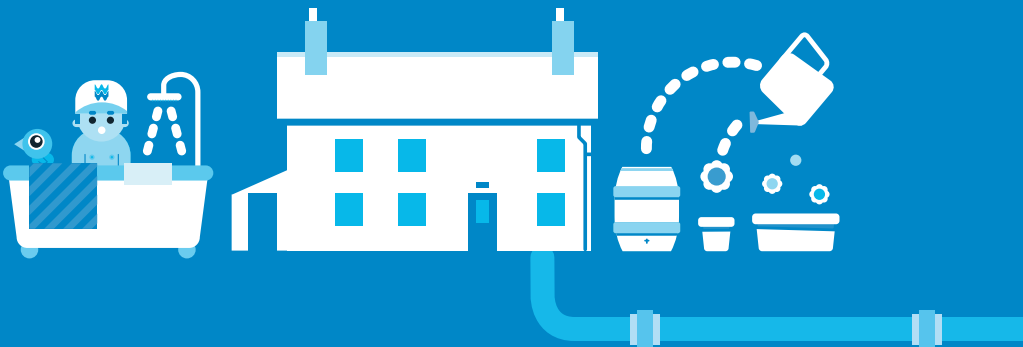
Welcome

Here at Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water, we don't have shareholders, so our focus is on looking after you – our customers and the communities and environment in which you live.

Water is our most precious natural resource and a lot of work, money and energy goes into every drop of water on its way to and from your home.

That's why encouraging all our customers to save water – and save money – is so important to us.

There are several ways to cut down on your water usage. Installing a meter isn't the right answer for everybody, so if you are considering getting a meter installed, please read this guide to find out if it is the best option for you and your family.



A water meter works in a very similar way to a gas or electricity meter. It records the amount of water – in cubic metres – going through the pipe to your premises.

One cubic metre is equivalent to 1,000 litres or about 220 gallons of water.



If you:

- Live on your own
- Have a small family
- Live in a house with a high annual unmeasured charge

You may find that you will save money by having a meter installed.



Please remember that we can only charge you for the amount of water you actually use once the meter is fitted. Until then, we can only give you an estimate of how much your bill is likely to be.

Anyone can have a meter fitted and we'll fit it free of charge, as long as it is practical for us to do so and that this doesn't come at an additional expense to us.

If you live in rented accommodation you should let your Landlord know that you are applying for one. If you have a short term tenancy of less than six months, then you will need your Landlord's written permission before we can fit the meter.

What happens if I have a water leak?

- We are responsible for the water main and the pipe that runs from the main to the boundary of your property. So we will repair a leak on this part of your pipe.
- You are responsible for the pipe that runs from the stop tap – in the street – to your property. You will need to fix any leaks or bursts on this part of the pipe as soon as possible.

For a copy of Welsh Water's 'Leakage Code of Practice' – visit dwrcymru.com or call us on **0800 052 0140**.

A Water Meter

Installing your meter

We aim to fit the meter within three months of receiving your application and will contact you to arrange an appointment.

We will carry out a short survey at the property to decide the most suitable place to fit the meter.

A meter is usually fitted in a small underground chamber, found in the footpath at the boundary of your property. This is because it must be fitted where it will measure all the water used by your household including any outside taps or outbuildings and where it will be easily accessible for reading and maintenance.

In some circumstances we may have to install the meter inside the property but we will discuss this with you first.

Please note that we will have to turn the water off for a short period of no longer than two hours whilst we fit the meter.

Our aim is to carry out the survey and fit the meter at the same time. If this isn't possible we'll need to call again. You or someone over the age of 18, acting on your behalf, will need to be present when we call so we can access your property to carry out the survey.

Ownership

The meter will remain the property of Welsh Water, so it must not be removed or made inaccessible. It is against the law to change the way it reads or to tamper with it in any way. If you have an internal meter fitted, you are responsible for protecting the meter against damage and frost.

If we can't fit a meter

If we can't fit a meter we'll let you know during or after our visit. You then have the option of staying on the current unmeasured charge or switch to an alternative charge called an Assessed Measured Charge. This is a fixed annual charge that is only available to household customers. Further details can be found in our 'Scheme of Charges' booklet – visit dwrcymru.com or call us on **0800 052 0145** for your copy.

We cannot always offer an Assessed Measured Charge if a meter cannot be fitted – sometimes we may ask you to do some work to enable us to fit a meter, such as removing boxing or panelling. If you choose not to do this work then we will continue to bill you on an unmeasured charge.

Electrical earthing

Many years ago the water service pipe was sometimes used as a means of providing an electrical earthing system to a property. However this practice does not comply with current standards and has not been allowed since 1966. If your water service pipe is used as an earth, then the work we carry out to fit a meter may make it unsuitable for this purpose. In this case we would strongly advise you to have your electrical system tested by an appropriately qualified electrician.

The earthing of a property is the sole responsibility of the property owner and we accept no liability for the use of a water service pipe as an electrical earthing system. If you are not the owner of the property, please pass this advice to the owner or Landlord. Our staff are not qualified to discuss earthing arrangements for your electrical installation with you.

Your Bill

Your metered charges

We will use the readings from the meter to work out how much to charge you for the amount of water you use. If your premises are connected to our public sewer, we will also use the meter reading to work out how much to charge you for your sewerage services. This is based on 95% of the volume of water used because we assume that not all water returns to the public sewer. We know that you will have used water for cooking and drinking.

In addition, there is also a service charge for water and sewerage depending on connection status. Service charges cover the cost of maintaining the meter, reading it and producing your bill. A charge for highway drainage is included in the sewerage service charge.

Metered charges begin from the day the meter is fitted and we will issue you an amended bill within 21 days of the installation. If you already have a payment plan with us it will continue.

We will just review the payments and let you know beforehand of any change.

If you have already paid your unmeasured bill, please continue to pay any unmeasured charges as usual and we will make any necessary adjustments when your metered account is set up. Any money we owe you will be credited to your new metered account.

Bill frequency

We will usually send you a bill every six months. However, depending on when our meter readers are in your area, you may receive your first bill sooner.

Please note that if you choose to pay by instalments we will estimate how much water you will use for the following year, include any balance from your previous account and divide the cost into regular payments. We will review your usage every year and if we need to change the amount you pay, we will let you know beforehand.

Reading the meter

We aim to read the meter twice a year.

By agreeing to have a meter you are responsible for providing access to our employees and/or their representatives to read and maintain the meter.

We do however advise you to take your own regular readings, if it is safe to do so. This will help you to find out if there is any increase in the amount of water you are using, which may be due to wastage or leakage.



Paying your bill

- The easiest and most convenient way to pay your bill is by Direct Debit, set this up at dwrcymru.com.
- Visit dwrcymru.com and click on 'I want to pay my bill' to pay with your debit or credit card or to ask us for a payment book or card.
- Phone our Automated Payment Line on **0800 028 5209** with your credit/debit card details and customer reference number. The line is available 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year, and your call will always be answered immediately.
- Call our contact centre on **0800 052 0140**.

Going back to unmeasured

You can go back to having an unmeasured bill any time up to one month after we have issued metered bills showing a year's charge, starting from the day that the meter was fitted.

After this time the supply will remain metered. However, if you have a swimming pool at the property (which is automatically filled) or use a garden sprinkler, then you must continue to pay metered charges.



Moving home

If you sell your property or move out, then the new occupier will not have the option of changing back to an unmeasured bill. It is therefore a good idea to let any potential buyers know that there is a meter at the property.

Thank you for considering installing a water meter. For further details call our team now on **0800 052 0140** or visit dwrcymru.com.