

This leaflet forms part of our code of practice for domestic customers, which provides customers with essential information about our company. All of our codes of practice are approved by Ofwat.

Other leaflets within our code of practice which are also available in Braille, large print, CD or on audio tape:

- Our promise to you (our service level and how we will compensate you if things go wrong)
- Getting answers (who to contact and how we will manage your complaint)
- Getting water to your home
- Dealing with leaks (our code of practice on leakage, guidance on pipe ownership and our repair policy)
- Your water meter
- Paying your water bill
- Managing debt (our code of practice on debt)
- Water and sewerage watchdogs (who to contact for additional information)

We also offer leaflets on protecting the environment and water efficiency in the home and garden.

To order any of the above, please call **0845 604 8071**.

Essex & Suffolk Water
PO Box 292
Durham
DH1 9TX

www.eswater.co.uk

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Can we
help you?

A guide to our services for customers who need extra help.

How to contact us

For all billing enquiries:

Call our Customer Centre on **0845 782 0111** between 8am and 6pm, Monday to Friday, and between 8am and 1pm, Saturday.

For all water enquiries:

Call our Customer Centre on **0845 782 0999** (24 hours).

For all leisure enquiries:

Call **0870 240 3549** between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday.

Meter installation department:

Call **0845 782 0333** between 8am and 4.45pm, Monday to Friday.

Or write to:

Essex & Suffolk Water
PO Box 292
Durham DH1 9TX

Or by email through our website:

www.eswater.co.uk

Leakline:

If you have a leak on your property or suspect there may be one in the verge or road, please call 24 hours or road, please call 24 hours **0800 526 337** (freephone).

Minicom enquiries:

A minicom text only facility is available for the deaf and hard of hearing. To use this service please call **01245 212 239**.

We also accept calls from RNID Typetalk.

Language Line (Comunicado):

If English is not your first language you can call **0845 310 9900** for our free telephone interpretation service.

Consumer Council for Water Eastern
Carlyle House
Carlyle Road
Cambridge CB4 3DN

Tel: **0845 795 9369**
Fax: **01223 323 930**
Email: eastern@ccwater.org.uk

Help is at hand

Essex & Suffolk Water is pleased to offer a wide range of services, designed for those customers who may on occasion, need extra special help. These services are free of charge.

Other service providers such as gas, electricity and telephone companies may operate a similar register for customers.

This leaflet will help you decide if you could benefit from any of the services, and if so, explains how you can take advantage of them. We have also included a simple application form to allow you to register with us for your chosen services.

If you prefer, you can register by telephone.

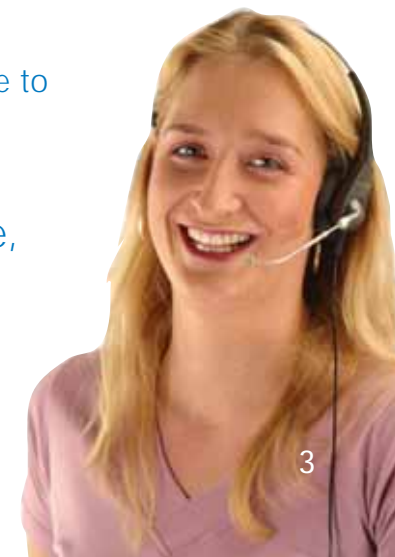
Call us on **0845 782 0999** between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday. If your water or sewerage services are supplied by a different company, you will also need to advise them of your requirements.

Thames Water: 0845 920 0800
Anglian Water: 0845 791 9155

Information on our special assistance register is available on our website www.eswater.co.uk which can also be accessed if you use a screenreader facility.

Any information given will be treated in the strictest confidence and will only be available to relevant members of Essex & Suffolk Water employees and our agents.

This leaflet is also available in Braille, large print, CD and on audio tape.





Maintaining your supply

We will take extra special care not to interrupt or restrict the supplies to customers with specific health, family and other special needs. However, sometimes we may have to turn off or restrict water supplies so we can carry out essential repairs or because of an emergency. If so, wherever possible, we will make sure that you receive information about any interruptions, where the emergency supplies can be found and when we hope to be able to restore supplies to normal.

This will normally be by loud hailer or a card through the door, unless we are aware that this is not a suitable method of contacting you.

If you are on home dialysis or you need water due to a medical condition, to take medication or to prepare babies bottles, we can also supply you with bottled water free of charge.

You can help us to provide the best possible service, by letting us know if an interruption to the water supply would cause you particular problems.

Please complete the application form with this leaflet, or register by telephone on **0845 782 0999**.

Paying your bill

If you have difficulty reading your bill, we can assist in the following ways:

- offer your bill in Braille, large print, CD or on audio tape
- supply you with a magnifying sheet
- read your bill to you over the telephone
- send your bill to a friend or relative who has agreed to help you.

If you let us know which method would help you most, we will do our best to supply the information in this way.

Meter reading service

If you have a water meter and cannot read it yourself, we can provide up to two extra readings each year and make no charge for this service.

Our protect scheme criteria

Some customers who have a water meter and have to use large amounts of water, are entitled to an alternative charge in some circumstances. For customers on our 'protect scheme', their water bills will be based on an average charge rather than the amount of water they use. However if the meter reading is less than the average charge, this is the amount they will pay.

There are government regulations to protect customers receiving certain benefits or tax credits and living in metered properties. The first is a household containing an individual who is entitled to receive child benefit for three or more children up to the age of 19, resident in the property and in full time education. The second is any household containing an individual who has a particular medical condition that causes them to use a significant amount of water. This individual or a member of the household should be in receipt of certain benefits to qualify. These customers do not have to pay more than the average household bill. However if the meter reading is **less** than the average household bill, then this is the amount the customer will pay.

Only certain medical conditions apply, and these are:

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

These conditions are those specifically covered by the government regulations. However, we will consider applications based on other medical conditions that involve significant use of water if this is supported by a doctor's certificate.

In addition you, or one of the people in your household, must be receiving one of the following means tested benefits:

- Council Tax benefit
- Housing benefit
- Income support
- Income-based jobseekers allowance
- Working tax credit
- Child tax credit (except families in receipt of the family element only)
- Pension credit

Please contact our Customer Centre for further details **0845 782 0111**.

If you do not have a water meter, but would like further information about having one installed with a view to reducing your water bill, please contact us on **0845 782 0333**. In most cases meter installation is free of charge.



Safeguard against bogus callers

Please be aware that **BOGUS CALLERS** (that is people who claim to be employed by Essex & Suffolk Water or 'the water board' but who are only interested in stealing from your property) are known to operate in our supply area. If you are in doubt about the validity of a caller claiming to be from Essex & Suffolk Water, **DO NOT** let them into your property.

Are you expecting anyone? Always attach the safety chain before opening your door.

Look for the blue and green Essex & Suffolk Water logo on vehicles and clothing.



Every representative carries an identity card with the Essex & Suffolk Water logo. Ring the number on the card to confirm the caller's identity if you are still unsure. Remember our representative will be happy to wait outside while you check their identification.

Register a password with us for added peace of mind. Do not disclose it to anyone else. Each time we visit you, we will use the password. If you don't hear the right word, don't admit the caller – it's as simple as that! To register a password, use the form in this leaflet, or call us on **0845 782 0999**.

Take care. If in doubt, **KEEP THEM OUT** and telephone our Customer Centre or the Police.



Water appliances

If bath taps, showers and other water-using gadgets are becoming difficult to handle, help is at hand.

Your local Health and Social Services Department of the local Authority can provide you with certain fixtures, free of charge, for the bathroom and kitchen, which will help make your life easier. They are also available to buy.

To find out more about the range of assistance available, contact your occupational therapist or community-based occupational therapist at your local Health and Social Services Department. (See your local telephone directory.)

Useful information guides are also available from the Royal Association for Disability & Rehabilitation (RADAR) on **0207 250 3222** and the Disabled Living Foundation on **0845 130 9177**.



Finding out more

A better service for all

Please tell us if there is anything you think we need to know in order to give you the best possible service. Remember that how much you tell us is up to you, and anything you do tell us will be kept strictly confidential.

We offer a free translation and transcription service for customers who do not speak English as their first language. We can write to customers in their chosen language or arrange for an interpreter to be present at an appointed time. If you would like to discuss your account using British Sign Language with RNID approved interpreters we can arrange this for you free of charge.

Access for all

You will know us as your local water provider, but did you realise that it's the management of those water supplies that has resulted in some of the most relaxing and peaceful locations accessible and available right on your doorstep!

Hanningfield reservoir is a lot more than just a reservoir, it is a wonderful haven of nature, providing something of interest for the whole family. There is an easily accessible restaurant and picnic site which together with our fishing boats (two of which take wheelchairs), make Hanningfield a suitable venue for everyone to enjoy. Additionally, both Hanningfield and Abberton reservoirs have accessible visitor centres run by Essex Wildlife Trust where you can really get close to nature.

And it doesn't stop there, did you know about our other lakes and reservoirs in the north east of England? Kielder Water offers a truly stunning location for an away from it all holiday, with wheelchair accessible lodges, visitor centre, trails and picnic sites, access is easier for all.

Give our leisure team a call on **0870 240 3549** for more detailed information on what is available at any of our sites.