

Mediation

If we cannot resolve your complaint and we have exhausted the normal complaints procedure set out in this leaflet, we can ask the Chairman of the Consumer Council for Water to consider mediation. This does not apply in all circumstances as the resolution of some types of complaint are subject to statutory provisions. However, the result of successful mediation would be a mutually agreed resolution to the complaint.

Investigating complaints and disputes

Ofwat determines certain complaints including those about:

- the costs and arrangements for installing new water mains
- allegations that the companies may not be complying with their statutory duties or licensed conditions.

Going to arbitration

If your complaint is about any of the following matters it may have to be decided by an arbitrator: conditions for installing a meter; regulations for preventing contamination or waste; regulations on water fittings.

We offer a scheme through the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators, which allows an independent arbitrator to make a decision quickly. Please contact us if you would like more information on this process.

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

Other leaflets within our code of practice are available:

- Our promise to you (our service levels and how we will compensate you if things go wrong)
- Can we help you? (a range of services we offer for customers who need extra help)
- 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).

To order any code of practice leaflet, in Braille, large print, CD or on audio tape, please call **0845 604 8071**.

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

Essex & Suffolk Water
PO Box 600
Durham
DH1 9NW

www.eswater.co.uk

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Getting answers

Our code of practice on complaints



Our code of practice on complaints

At Essex & Suffolk Water our aim is to give you the service you expect, all day, every day.

We try hard to avoid problems but unfortunately sometimes they do occur. If you do have a problem, we would like to hear from you. If you are unhappy about our work or service and we know about it, this gives us the opportunity to put things right for you and make improvements so that other customers may benefit.

This leaflet sets out:

- how to let us know you have a complaint
- how we will manage your complaint
- how to take it further if you are still unhappy
- how to get more information about our services.

Letting us know

In writing

Please write to:
Essex & Suffolk Water
PO Box 600
Durham
DH1 9NW

On the web

www.eswater.co.uk

If you send us a letter or email, please give us your name and address, daytime telephone number if you have one and if possible, the customer number shown on your bill. **We will send you a full written reply within ten working days of receiving your complaint.**

Our guaranteed standards of service set out our service levels and how we will compensate you if things go wrong. You can get a copy of this leaflet 'Our promise to you' by calling 0845 604 8071.



By telephone

Call **0845 782 0111*** (8am to 6pm weekdays, 8am to 1pm Saturdays) for a complaint about any aspect of your bill, **0845 782 0999*** (24 hours) for a complaint about your water.

*calls may be monitored and recorded in order to improve service quality and staff training.

We will try to resolve your complaint immediately. If this is not possible, we will take your details and investigate your complaint. **We will ensure that you receive a telephone response to your complaint within ten working days. If you request it, we will confirm our response in writing.**

If you receive a separate bill for sewerage from Anglian Water and you have a complaint about your sewerage service, contact them on **0845 791 9155** (billing) or **0845 714 5145** (services). If your bill from us includes the charges for sewerage from Thames Water and you have a complaint about the sewerage service (not your bill), call them on **0845 920 0800**.

By minicom

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.

Through Language Line

We offer a free translation service if English is not your first language. Please call **0845 310 9900**.

In person

We will listen to your complaint and do our best to deal with it immediately. If we cannot resolve it at the time, we will investigate your complaint and contact you **within ten working days, with a telephone response to your complaint. We will confirm our response in writing if you request it.**

For all the above, we will make an automatic compensation payment, if we fail to meet any of our promises.

Managing your complaint

All the customer complaints we receive are recorded on the day of receipt and stored on a computerised system. If you register a telephone complaint or make a complaint in person we will give you a contact name and that person will investigate that complaint and respond to you. Every month our directors receive a report on the number of complaints and the speed of our response. We also check the quality of the responses we give.

Our records are audited independently by members of the Consumer Council for Water on a regular basis. Each year information is given to Ofwat on the number of complaints and our speed of response. This information is published so that performance between different water companies in England and Wales can be compared.

However you choose to complain, we will make an automatic compensation payment, if we fail to respond as promised.

Taking it further

Internal review

If you are not satisfied with the response you receive, please let us know. Write to:

Customer Services Manager
Essex & Suffolk Water
PO Box 600
Durham DH1 9NW

The Customer Services Manager will not have been involved in dealing with your initial complaint and will therefore always be independent of the original investigation. They will carry out a full review of your complaint. They can override or support the original response. **Either way, you will receive a full written reply within ten working days.**

Independent review

We believe that independent review is an essential safeguard for our customers and constructive to improvements in our service. On any occasion when we are unable to resolve a complaint to your satisfaction, you can refer it to the Consumer Council for Water, an independent organisation which acts as a watchdog on your behalf. It will investigate your complaint through its own procedures and ask us why we took the decisions we did - and inform you accordingly.

In this region, the Consumer Council for Water can be contacted at:

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

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

Consumer Council for Water is one of ten CCWater committees (nine in England and one in Wales) throughout the country, made up of members drawn from the local community.

