Water Supply

Northumbrian Water is the water supplier for the north east of England. You can find out more in this section about the services that they offer, some of which could give you that little bit of extra help, as well as information on water meters and tips on using water more economically.

Water Meters

Should I get a water meter?

Having a water meter installed can reduce water usage and could save you money. Paying for what you use also means that less water is wasted, which helps to conserve valuable water resources.

The benefits of having a water meter include:

- you pay for the water you use, after you've used it;
- you get a free survey, where Northumbrian Water discuss the right location for the meter with you; and
- there is free installation (in most cases).

Whether or not you save money by having a water meter depends on the number of people in your house; whether you are a high, average or low water user; and how much you are currently paying on an unmeasured basis.

Applying for a Water Meter

If you decide that you want to get a water meter installed, you can apply for one by contacting Northumbrian Water using the details given below, or you can do it on the **Northumbrian Water website**.

Using Water Economically

When you have a water meter you will want to use water wisely, so that you aren't paying for more than you need. However, even if you don't have a water meter, if everyone uses water economically it helps to conserve the valuable resources that we have.

It's easy to reduce your water consumption; not by going without, but by reducing the amount of water that you waste. The following are some tips that will help you to do this.

- Replace the washer on a dripping tap. A tap that drips at the rate of two drops per second will lose 26 litres of water a day, which is almost enough to use for a shower.
- If you are able to, have a shower rather than a bath. A five minute shower uses around 35 litres of water, which is a third of the water it takes to fill your bath.
- Reduce the amount of time you use a garden sprinkler for. A sprinkler can get through as much water in an hour as an average family would use in a day.
- Wait until you have a full load before using your washing machine. A normal wash cycle uses 80 litres of water.
- Fit water saving devices in your home. You can apply for a **free** pack on the **Northumbrian Water website.**
- If possible, install a water butt to collect rain water to use in your garden.

Priority Services Register

The Priority Services Register (PSR) helps utility companies, including energy suppliers, electricity, gas and water networks give extra help to customers who have health, communication, access or safety needs.

Once registered you can get extra help such as:

- Information and communication for your needs e.g. Large Print, Braille, textphone, audio or a language other than English
- A nominated contact. You can have a nominated carer, family member or friend who can deal with things on your behalf
- Getting priority updates in a power cut. If your electricity or gas needs to be temporarily switched off to carry out essential maintenance, you will get prior advance notice
- a free annual safety check on your gas appliances if you are of pension age, are disabled or are chronically ill;
- Emergency power for medical equipment or aids used at home
- Your electricity and gas companies work with local authorities, emergency services and agencies, like the British Red Cross, to provide extra support
- Emergency gas supply or emergency electrical heating/cooking appliances if your gas is interrupted for a long time
- Password scheme. You can set up a safe password when electricity or gas company employees call you or knock at your door, so you know it isn't a scam.

Help to pay your bills

Northumbrian Water can help if you are unable to pay your bills. Sometimes bills may start to mount up and the amount of money that you have coming in is not enough to cover all your expenses. Contact Northumbrian Water to discuss your financial situation if you are struggling to pay your bills. They have a range of schemes available including;

SupportPLUS: can help if you're struggling to pay your water bills due to your financial situation.

Reduced Tariff can help you if you're having difficulty paying your current water bill.

Arrears Support Scheme can help you if you owe a large amount of money to Northumbrian Water and are unable to repay your debt.

Medical Services

If you have a specific health problem, there are several services available that may help you:

Maintaining your water supply

There are unavoidable occasions when your water supply may be disrupted, either following burst pipes or for improvement work. If you are eligible and registered for the confidential medical service, Northumbrian Water takes extra care to ensure that you have a water supply during those times.

Lower charges for customer with medical needs (WaterSure)

If your household has a water meter and has three or more children aged under 19, or someone with a particular medical condition that means you use a lot of water, living in it, you may be eligible for lower water charges. This is known as WaterSure. To qualify, you must also be receiving a state benefit. For further information, contact **Northumbrian Water.**

To benefit from any of the above free services, you need to register your details with **Northumbrian Water** or complete Northumbrian Water's **special assistance registration form.**

Callers at the Door

Please note, there are very few occasions when Northumbrian Water employees visit customers in their homes, and even fewer when they need to come inside.

All of their employees carry identity cards and are happy to be kept waiting on the doorstep while their credentials are checked. To give you extra security, you can register a confidential password with them, which any Northumbrian Water employee needing to gain access to your property will know and use. To register your chosen password contact **Northumbrian Water.**

Complaining about your Water Company

If you encounter a problem and would like to complain to Northumbrian Water, you should contact them using the details given below. They have their own complaints procedure and should reply to you within ten working days of receiving your complaint.

If you have made a complaint and followed **Northumbrian Water's complaints procedure**, but are still not satisfied with the response you have received, or with how it has been dealt with contact **Consumer Council for Water Northumbria (CC Water)**. CC Water is an independent organisation which investigates complaints about water companies, as well as providing advice and making sure that customers' voices are heard. Their service is free.

If CC Water find your complaint to be justified, they will ask Northumbrian Water to put the matter right. CC Water will keep you informed about the progress of the complaint and will write to you to let you know the outcome.

Other Useful Information

- **Water Advice** – Age UK's factsheet

- **LifeBook** – Age UK free resource. It can be easy to mislay important documents and information. Record your details from, who insures your car, to where you put the TV licence. The LifeBook can help you to be more organised and could be invaluable to a family member or a friend if they need to locate important information about you in an emergency. Follow the step-by-step instructions and fill in the sections with your details, contacts and locations of important documents. Complete it online or order one.

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Useful Organisations

Northumbrian Water

Website: www.nwl.co.uk

Telephone: 0800 393 084

Address: Customer Centre, DH1 9WQ

Consumer Council for Water Northumbria (CC Water)

Email: enquiries@ccwater.org.uk

Website: www.ccwater.org.uk

Telephone: 0300 034 2222

Address: Consumer Council for Water, B2 4AJ

Citizens Advice

Website: www.adviceguide.org.uk

Telephone: 0808 223 1133

Address: Citizens Advice, EC1A 4HD

Priority Services Register

Website: https://www.thepsr.co.uk/

Telephone: 0808 223 1133

Address: 4 More, SE1 2AU

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