

Fighting the fat

Please don't pour fat, oil and grease down the kitchen sink because this accounts for about two-thirds of sewer blockages.

Fat, oil and grease stick to the inside of drains and sewers. Over time, this hardens to form a concrete-like material that can block the entire pipe, causing flooding. Please help keep your drains and the environment clean by:

- Wiping and scraping utensils and plates before washing
- Pouring excess fat, oil and grease into a container to harden and disposing of it with your household rubbish
- Using a fat trap to collect excess fat and oil
- Using strainers in sinks to collect food particles.

Metering

Widespread metering will ensure that water continues to flow through taps in the water-stressed South East and is the fairest way to charge for it – as well as helping you to save water, save energy and save money. About 40 per cent of you already have water meters in your properties and we have now begun our programme to extend that to 92 per cent by 2015. The new meters, which are free, can be read remotely, so we do not need to disturb you. As part of this programme, we are providing advice on how to save water as well as an optional change-over tariff to move gradually from unmetered to metered bills. Provision is being made to help customers who may struggle to pay their metered water bills. Visit www.southernwater.co.uk/meters

For more information on all of these subjects, visit www.southernwater.co.uk and click on the icon:



More information is available at www.southernwater.co.uk/PainInTheDrain

for more information about metering, getting your meter tested and the consequences of interfering with a meter.

Private sewers

The Government intends to transfer responsibility for private sewers to water companies from October 1, 2011. This relieves householders of the burden of maintenance for pipes that run under the highway and reduces potential disputes where private sewers are shared. Over time, this will also reduce incidents of environmental pollution and customer distress because collapses and blockages in sewers are the cause of over 80 per cent of sewer flooding incidents in our region. For more information, visit www.southernwater.co.uk/privateSewers

Or contact: Customer Service Centre, Southern Water, PO Box 41, Worthing BN13 3NZ
Telephone: 0845 272 0845 Email: customerservices@southernwater.co.uk
Plus, to find out how you can save water, save energy and save money, visit www.southernwater.co.uk/waterEfficiency



Water quality

We carry out 600,000 tests a year on the water we supply to ensure we provide some of the best drinking water in Europe. To see a water quality report for your area, visit 'where I live' on our website.

Leaks

Although we are not responsible for the supply pipe which takes water from our main to your home, we will provide one hour of free work to locate a leak in it. We will mend three underground leaks in the supply pipe up to the wall of your property free of charge during your occupancy. Full details are published in our Code of Practice on leaks at www.southernwater.co.uk/leaks, including who is responsible for what pipes, what happens if a free repair is not available, what to do if you suspect a leak and what help and allowances are available. To report a leak, call **0800 820999**.

Guaranteed Standards Scheme (GSS)

The minimum standards of service which we provide to our customers are laid down by government. They require us to pay a fixed financial penalty to you should we underperform across a range of activities, including answering account letters within 10 working days, internal sewer flooding, keeping appointments, low water pressure, interruptions in supply and payment arrangements. Visit www.southernwater.co.uk/gss

Customer Charter

In addition to detailing the payments we will make to you if we don't keep our promises under the GSS scheme, our Customer Charter fully explains the minimum standards of service you can expect from us across many areas of our business. See the charter online at www.southernwater.co.uk/charter or obtain a copy by contacting us.

Complaints

We will respond fully to all written complaints about our services within 10 working days. A leaflet is available which details the procedure at www.southernwater.co.uk/complaints

Debt

We can help if you are having difficulty paying your bill. Our Code of Practice on the Payment of Water Services Charges offers options on how to pay your bill. Visit www.southernwater.co.uk/code or contact us for a copy.

Special help

Customers, such as the elderly and disabled, can receive help, including alternative billing arrangements, large print, talking or Braille bills and a password scheme for extra peace of mind – all free of charge. Visit www.southernwater.co.uk/specialHelp

WaterSure

We offer a special tariff which may give financial help to those on income-related benefits who either have a medical condition requiring extra water or who have three or more children living at home. The household must be on a metered supply. Please visit www.southernwater.co.uk/watersure or telephone 0800 027 0363.

A guide to our charges 2011-12

If your home is not metered, our charges are calculated according to the rateable value of your property or by a fixed charge. If your home is metered, you will pay for the actual amount of water you use.

Mr Save-It says



Save water, save energy, save money

- ✓ Fix dripping taps and save up to a bathful of water each week
- ✓ Fit aerators to taps and cut the water they use by half
- ✓ Boil only the amount of water you need for a hot drink
- ✓ Collect rainwater for your garden by installing a water butt
- ✓ Spend one minute less in your daily shower to save water and energy
- ✓ Fit a Save-a-flush bag to save a litre of water with every flush
- ✓ Save water by turning off the tap when brushing your teeth
- ✓ Use full loads in your washing machine and dishwasher

Southern Water Charitable Trust Fund

Our Charitable Trust Fund makes grants to meet water and/or sewerage charges for people in hardship or unable to pay. An application form and further details are available at www.southernwater.co.uk/trustfund or telephone us on 0845 270 0897.

Our regulator

Owat protects customers' interests. It sets price limits and minimum standards of performance for water and wastewater companies. It then monitors performance, encouraging companies to become more efficient. Visit www.ofwat.gov.uk

The way in which we have calculated all your charges is detailed on your bill. If you would like information about our different tariffs, you can view them on our website www.southernwater.co.uk/charges

Consumer Council for Water

CCWater protects the interests of existing and future water and sewerage service consumers. It can also help if you have a complaint. Contact CCWater, London & South East Region, First Floor, Victoria Square House, Victoria Square, Birmingham B2 4AJ. Lo-call: 08457 581658 Web: www.ccwater.org.uk Email: londonandsoutheast@ccwater.org.uk

Data processing

Our staff and suppliers may use your information, within the UK or abroad, to help manage our services. This may include providing you with information about water-related products and exchanging data with relevant credit reference and fraud prevention agencies. Some processes may be automated. We may record incoming telephone calls and restrict delivery of emails. We may exchange relevant information with local water companies to keep records updated. Our Privacy Policy and further guidance are available at www.southernwater.co.uk/privacy or by request. We are registered with the UK Information Commissioner – Z5449252.

Be aware of bogus callers

Sometimes we may need to visit you at your home and, when we do, we want you to feel safe. Our advice is always be **AWARE** of potential bogus callers.

Attach your door chain before opening the door to strangers

Water company staff and our suppliers always carry identification

A company uniform and vehicle logo are things to reassure you

Remember, if you are unsure, keep callers out and either telephone us on 0845 278 0845 or the local police

Employees of Southern Water will always be happy to wait