



Reducing your mains water bill

Unless you get your water from an alternative source such as ground or surface water, you are likely to pay for a **mains water supply**. Like other utilities such as electricity and gas, mains water supply, sewerage and drainage charges can be a large part of a clubs expenses.

Here are some simple steps **you** can take to make sure you are getting the best value you're your water supplier, are not being over charged and that you are on the best tariff for your needs.

Who provides your water?

Scottish Water operates Scotland's publicly owned network of pipes, mains, and treatment works. It acts as the wholesaler in the market, selling water and sewerage services to suppliers (and on to all the homes & businesses except those with their own supply)

Suppliers (licensed providers) provide retail services, such as billing, meter reading and handling customer enquiries and are able to compete for the custom of all business customers in Scotland. Suppliers buy services at wholesale from Scottish Water most likely through Business Stream however there are other water suppliers in Scotland that have received licences from the Water Industry Commissioner.



If you are one of the 130,000 business customers in Scotland receiving water and sewerage services, **you can choose** your supplier, however big or small your business and wherever you are located. For information on switching your supplier/retailer go to <http://www.scotlandontap.gov.uk/>

Household customers in Scotland receive their water and sewerage services from Scottish Water and pay their charges along with their Council Tax.

This guidance document assumes your golf club is one of the majority who are Business Stream customers, however if you get your water from another supplier you should contact them direct to discuss your supply.

How much water do you use?

Unlike most domestic premises which are charged on their Rateable Value (RV), the majority of businesses in Scotland are **metered** and with a fixed charge for the meter size (mm) and a variable charge for the water consumption through each meter (they are however still charged for property and roads drainage on RV even if metered). For more information on your charges go to <http://www.business-stream.co.uk/water-rates-charges/understanding-your-charges>.

Are you being billed correctly?

Historical data held by SW Business Stream may be out of date or inaccurate so it is advised that you make sure you are being charged correctly.

1. For help in understanding your bills go to : <http://www.business-stream.co.uk/our-redesigned-bills/>
2. Check you are being billed for the **correct meter** – Open up the chamber where your meter is and cross reference the serial number on the meter tag with the number on your bill.
3. Check you are being billed for the **correct meter size**. This relates to the fixed charge. You may have a meter too large for the amount of water you are using due to reductions in irrigation and water efficiency measures being implemented over the years.
4. Ensure **Actual readings** (A) where possible to avoid unexpected bills after Estimated (E) readings.
5. Discussing any inaccuracies direct with Business Stream and changing your water meters (up or down) to the correct size will alter the amount of fixed charge you will be paying (for both water and wastewater) and charges will be correct going forward. A form is filled in online which if approved is forwarded to Scottish Water who may or may not accept the meter resize. If accepted there is an initial charge for surveying the meter, this survey will give an actual cost for replacing the meter which will have to be paid before the resize goes ahead.

Changes to your meters

Sub-metering your facility will give you a better understanding of water use in different areas such as the clubhouse, the maintenance facility and the course.

Automated Meter Reading (AMR) can be added to your meter to electronically record, monitor and benchmark water usage. See <https://www.business-stream.co.uk/water-supply-services/automated-meter-reading-service>

Where does your water go?

Some businesses have to have a **Trade Effluent Licence**. The charge for this is based on a specific scientific formula dependant on the 'strength' of the effluent the business wants to discharge to the public sewer. Other businesses such as Golf Clubs are normally charged for **Waste water and Drainage**.

Waste water is also charged on a fixed rate dependant on the size of the incoming water meter, and a volumetric rate. The same checks above should be made to the outgoing meters. Not all of the water you use goes back into the public sewer so the volumetric rate is **assumed** to be 95% of your water coming in (accounting for 5% human ingestion and evaporation etc). In many businesses such as retail and offices etc this is accurate.

If property (roofs etc) and roads drainage goes to sewer, charges will apply based on property rateable value (RV).

However, if all or some of the waste water doesn't go to the public sewer (termed **Non return to Sewer**, e.g. it goes to a septic tank, reed bed/soakaway, to ground /watercourses after irrigation, leakage, a lot less than 95% will go to sewer. Many clubs have already been able to negotiate a lesser % for their waste water charges by calculating this non return to sewer volume. This can be achieved by sub-metering the irrigation system for example.

If property drainage goes to a burn for example through private drainage you only have to pay roads drainage. Outside taps also incur a charge.

Water Bill and Tariff negotiations

Business Stream are keen to deliver a high quality service to all their customers and want to retain your business, so they are willing to work with you to make sure you get the best value for money. Water charges are standardised but **potential reductions** can be negotiated directly with Scottish Water Business Stream.

There are **discounts** available based on payment methods (direct debit etc), the way the customer is billed (e-billing / paperless billing), payment terms (in advance, within 7/14 days etc) and the length of contract (1-5 yrs).

Business Stream offer a **Service & Supply Contract** to large water users which gives **added value** services designed to save the customer money and make life easier at no cost and a discount off the published default tariff. In addition there is 24/7 emergency standby provided by the Relationship Managers ensuring that contracted customer receive help when things go wrong.

Further Advice

Resource Efficient Scotland

We recommend you utilise the Government funded free advice available from Resource Efficient Scotland www.resourceefficientscotland.com for advice regarding water supply, metering, bill analysis and water use efficiency.

Business Stream – as part of their added value contract services, Business Stream can offer consultancy on issues such as water auditing, leak detection and repair, network mapping, smart metering and water efficiency (these services would only be available at cost).

Water Tariff Consultants

There are many consultants that can assist you with water audits and analysing and negotiating your water bills. Many have successfully managed to achieve cost savings as charge rebates but will often take a cut of any rebates /savings often for 1-3 years into the future.

Information in this article is intended to provide only a general outline of the subjects covered. It should neither be regarded as comprehensive nor sufficient for making decisions in place of professional advice for the specific needs of your club. Scottish Golf accepts no responsibility for any loss arising from any action taken or not taken by anyone using this guidance.

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