

NI Water
Scheme of Charges 2020-21
(With effect from 1st October
2020)

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1 Introduction to charges

- 1.1 This document provides details of the charges which Northern Ireland Water (NIW) will apply from 1 October 2020.
- 1.2 Charges apply when water and sewerage services are used to support non-domestic activity. The use of services for non-domestic purposes is generally determined by reference to the property classification assigned for rating purposes by Land and Property Services.
- 1.3 Charges for water and sewerage services, and the various allowances and discounts available to customers, are included in sections 3 – 6. Charges which we apply when connecting to the water and sewerage network are outlined in section 7. Charges for developer related services are outlined in section 8.
- 1.4 Sections 8 and 9 sets out our terms and conditions and responsibilities for both customer and NIW.
- 1.5 If you need to contact NIW by telephone, letter, email or web our contact details are provided in Appendix 1 at the back of this document.
- 1.6 NIW has a formal complaints procedure to deal with complaints about any aspects of the service provided. A copy of the Complaints Procedure can be downloaded from our website (www.niwater.com/complaints/). If you are not happy with how we have dealt with your complaint or would like free independent advice, you should contact the Consumer Council. More information is contained in Appendix 2.
- 1.7 It should be noted that all charges shown do not include VAT. For further information please refer to Appendix 3.
- 1.8 This document can be viewed or downloaded from our website at: <https://www.niwater.com/your-bill-and-our-charges/>. It is also available in other formats, free of charge, such as Braille and Large Text, please phone our Waterline on 03457 440088 for more details (calls are charged at low call rate).

2 Summary table of main charges

2.1 The main charges for water and sewerage services provided by NIW to non domestic customer are outlined in Table 2.1 below.

2.2 All charges shown do not include VAT. Detail of how VAT is applied is provided in Appendix 1 at the back of this document.

Table 2.1 - Non-domestic charges 2020-21

	Water	Sewerage
Measured water and sewerage (see section 3)		
Standing charge (£):		
Water supply pipe size up to 20mm	69	84
Over 20mm up to 25mm	117	141
Over 25mm up to 40mm	217	260
Over 40mm up to 50mm	341	409
Over 50mm up to 75mm	678	808
Over 75mm up to 100mm	1,229	1,462
Over 100mm	1,747	2,083
Volumetric charge (£/m³)	1.106	1.853
Large user volumetric charges (£/m ³):		
Annual consumption over 100,000 up to 250,000m ³	0.885	
Annual consumption over 250,000 up to 500,000m ³	0.830	
Annual consumption over 500,000m ³	0.774	
Unmeasured water and sewerage (see section 4)		
Standing charge (£)	30.85	42.94
Variable charge (£/£000 net annual value)	11.84	16.17
Charge cap (standing charge + variable charge) (£)	470	505
Trade effluent (see section 5)		
(R) Reception charge (£/m ³)		0.2291
(V) Volumetric charge (£/m ³)		0.2583
(B) Biological charge (£/m ³)		0.1709
(S) Sludge charge (£/m ³)		0.1994
Standard strength combined charge (£/m ³)		0.8577
Standard strength Chemical Oxygen Demand (mg/l)		260
Standard strength suspended solids (mg/l)		240
Assessed water and sewerage (see section 3.7 – 3.10)		
Standing charge (£)	61.69	85.88
Assessed charge (£) per loading unit per annum	5.95	9.47
Unmetered animal drinking trough (£) per trough system	241	

2.3 NIW will not issue bills to domestic customers in 2020-21, but payments will be made on our customers' behalf by the Department for Infrastructure. Details on domestic payments have been included in Appendix 4 at the back of this document.

3 Measured water and sewerage charges

3.1 Where a water meter is fitted, measured water charges are payable. Where the property is also connected to a public sewer, either directly or indirectly, then measured sewerage charges are also payable. You will only be billed for the services you receive e.g. a water bill if you only have a water supply, or a water and sewerage bill if you are connected to both mains services.

3.2 Measured charges water and sewerage charges consist of a standing charge plus a volumetric charge.

Standing charges

3.3 The standing charge is a fixed charge which is based on the internal diameter of the water supply pipe serving the property. The water and sewerage standing charges are shown in the table below.

Table 3.1 - Measured standing charges

Supply pipe internal diameter	Water	Sewerage
Up to and including 20mm (£)	69	84
Over 20mm up to and including 25mm (£)	117	141
Over 25mm up to and including 40mm (£)	217	260
Over 40mm up to and including 50mm (£)	341	409
Over 50mm up to and including 75mm (£)	678	808
Over 75mm up to and including 100mm (£)	1,229	1,462
Over 100mm (£)	1,747	2,083

Volumetric charges

3.4 The water volumetric charge is based on the total water consumed within the property, normally this will be the consumption recorded on the water meter. The sewerage volumetric charge is based on the water you use and return to the sewer. We assume that 95% of the water we supply is returned to the sewerage system. Water supplied from other sources will be also be taken into account when calculating the sewerage volumetric charge (see section 3.31 – 3.33).

3.5 When calculating both water and sewerage volumetric charges, the domestic allowance, where applicable, will be deducted.

3.6 The volumetric charge is calculated by multiplying your water use and the

sewage you discharge (in cubic metres) in the billing period by the price per cubic metre shown in the table below.

Table 3.2 - Measured volumetric charges

	Water	Sewerage
Volumetric charge (£) per cubic metre	1.106	1.853

Assessed charges.

- 3.7 Where metering is not reasonably practical or involves undue expense to the customer, NIW will offer an alternative assessed charge. The assessed charge has two elements: a standing charge and a variable charge which is based on an assessment of water consumption on the property determined by using the loading units (see table 7.6). If the customer pays rates for their property then a domestic allowance will be available.
- 3.8 The assessed water and sewerage charges are shown in the table below.

Table 3.3 – Assessed charges

	Water	Sewerage
Standing charge (£)	61.69	85.88
Variable charge (£) per loading unit	5.95	9.47

- 3.9 Assessed charges will apply from the beginning of the charging year in the year of application and will not be applied retrospectively to previous years. Customers who opt to be billed according to assessed charges will not have the option of reverting to unmeasured charging.
- 3.10 Where an animal drinking trough system does not have a meter fitted, or where it is not possible to install a meter; an assessed animal drinking trough charge of £241 will be applied.

Allowances and discounts for measured customers

Domestic allowance

- 3.11 Where a measured water customer pays rates for their metered property, a domestic allowance may be available for each individually rated property. The domestic allowance is subtracted from the volume as recorded by the meter, before calculating the volumetric charge and is worked out for the exact number of days covered by the bill.

- Domestic allowance available to measured water customer is 100m³ per 6 month billing period;
- Domestic allowance available to measured sewerage customers is 95m³ per 6 month billing period.

3.12 Any unused portion of the allowance cannot be carried forward into a new bill period. The domestic allowance does not affect the standing charge.

3.13 Customers wishing to apply for the domestic allowance should contact NIW; proof of your rateable status may be required to confirm eligibility. The domestic allowance may be backdated to the date you can show that you started paying rates for the property, up to a maximum of 6 years. Existing non-domestic customers who received a domestic allowance for water supplied during 2019-20 will receive the same allowance in 2020-21. In the case of caravan parks where reduced rates are paid for static caravan units, the domestic allowance will be applied at a similarly reduced rate per rateable static unit.

Large water user tariff

3.14 Customers who use in excess of 100,000m³ of water per annum, and who have implemented water efficient practices, can apply for the large user tariff per single metered connection.

3.15 The large user tariff is similar to the standard metered rate in that it is made up of a standing charge and a volumetric charge. The standing charges are the same as those that apply to the measured tariffs, but the volumetric charge is discounted for usage in bands of consumption above 100,000m³ per annum. The charges provide a discounted volumetric rate for various bands of consumption.

Table 3.4 - Volumetric charges for large water users

Consumption band	Discount	Charge
Annual consumption up to 100,000m ³	None	£1.106
Annual consumption over 100,000 and up to 250,000m ³	20%	£0.885
Annual consumption over 250,000 and up to 500,000m ³	25%	£0.830
Annual consumption over 500,000m ³	30%	£0.774

3.16 Customers wishing to apply for the large user tariff should write to NIW. Eligibility will depend on consumption and on the commitment of the customer

to water efficiency. This may include, but is not restricted to, the installation of water saving devices, recycling plants and a review of water efficiency by independent industry experts. The granting of a large user tariff shall be at the discretion of NIW and will be granted for each financial year.

3.17 Where a customer in receipt of the large user tariff fails to comply with agreed payment terms NIW reserve the right to withdraw the tariff and revert the customer to the standard tariff.

Non return to sewer allowance

3.18 The non-return to sewer allowance will be 5% unless it has been agreed with NIW that a different allowance will be applied in respect of either:

- Any further proportion of water used but not discharged to a sewer;
- Any volume subject to the trade effluent charge; or
- Any discharge to the sewer from any source not recorded on the water meter (except surface water drainage).

3.19 Where more than 5% of the water supplied is not returned to the sewer, the customer may apply for an allowance against the total volumetric charge using the appropriate application form which can be downloaded from our website or requested by telephoning the Billing line (see appendix 1 for details). Any allowance granted will be applied from the date of application and will not be applied retrospectively.

3.20 After an allowance has been granted, any changes which affect the percentage of water returned to the sewer must be notified to NIW. Any adjustment to the allowance will be given from the date the change was notified or from the date we become aware of the change. The customer must provide accurate records, in a timely manner, to enable the calculation of the allowance. Failure to provide this information will result in no allowance being given. NIW reserve the right to review the allowance at any time. Failure to provide additional information, should it be required to verify a current allowance, may result in the allowance being removed.

3.21 NIW may require customers to have additional meters installed to record water used for certain activities where the water is not returned to a sewer after use.

Leakage allowance for measured customers

- 3.22 If a leak occurs on a customer's pipe-work after the meter, water will be registered as consumption on the meter and a high bill for water and sewerage services may result. All water supplied through a meter for non-domestic purposes, whether consumed or lost through leakage, will be billed. The billed amount will be the measured consumption less any appropriate domestic allowances. Information on leakage and how to read the meter is available in our Code of Practice 'Billing and metering for non-domestic customers', copies are available free of charge from NIW or on the NIW website.
- 3.23 Sewerage charges are based on water used and returned to the sewer. Where a leak has occurred, customers can apply to have the sewerage charges on their bill adjusted to take account of the water which leaked and did not reach the sewer. This can be requested on each occasion provided it can be demonstrated that any previous leaks were effectively repaired. The sewerage charges on the bill will be adjusted (averaged based on previous normal consumption records) subject to the following conditions:
- The leak occurred on underground pipe-work within the customer's property;
 - It can be proved where the water has leaked to
 - The leak has been repaired usually within 4 weeks from the date of discovery;
 - There is no evidence that the leak has been caused by a customer's negligence or wilful damage;
 - In general all claims should be made within 6 weeks of the date the leak was repaired or the bill on an actual read issued, whichever is later;
 - Any allowance granted will relate to the period from the date of the last bill (based on an actual read) until the date of its repair; and
 - Additional supporting evidence may be required to substantiate the claim, such as a plumbers report, photographs or alternately a NIW site visit may be required.
- 3.24 If a leak occurs within the domestic portion of a property used for both domestic and non-domestic purposes this will register as consumption on the meter. A large bill may result even though non-domestic usage (and therefore

chargeable consumption) may not have increased. In these circumstances, customers can apply to have both the water and sewerage elements of the bill adjusted subject to the conditions set out above.

- 3.25 If a leak has occurred on that section of the service pipe for which NIW has responsibility (the portion between the meter and the property boundary) commonly referred to as the communication pipe, or, if the leak has occurred as a result of damage caused by NIW or NIW contractors, then both the water and sewerage elements of the bill will be averaged based on previous normal consumption records.
- 3.26 NIW will contact customers if the recorded consumption, according to scheduled meter readings, is outside the normal consumption parameters for that property. Abnormal consumption may be due to genuine usage but it may also be an indication of a leak on the supply. NIW encourages measured customers to regularly monitor consumption by reading the meter so that any leak which may occur is identified and repaired as early as possible. Further guidance on leakage and how to read the meter is available on our website and in our Code of Practice titled 'Billing and metering for non-domestic customers'. Copies of that document will be available on request, free of charge, from NIW or can be accessed on the NIW website at <https://www.niwater.com/sitefiles/resources/pdf/non-domestic-billing.pdf>.

Other matters relating to measured charges

Determining your standing charge

- 3.27 The standing charges for each charging meter are determined by the internal diameter of the water supply pipe (there are no charges for subsidiary meters). If the size of the customer's supply pipe is not recorded and cannot be determined by the customer then NIW will assess a notional pipe size according to the size of the meter or the internal diameter of the communication pipe; whichever is the smaller. The customer will then be charged accordingly.
- 3.28 If your supply pipe is greater than 80mm in diameter and has been sized to serve a fire hydrant point, and as a consequence, is larger than necessary to serve the normal consumption you may be granted a standing charge reduction of one size band. This reduction does not apply to dedicated fire supply mains

and does not apply in cases where a supply pipe was sized to serve a projected consumption which has since diminished. Customers should notify NIW where this affects a measured account. Any adjustment granted will be applied from the date of application and will not be applied retrospectively. Where a supply is solely for the purposes of fire-fighting, no standing or volumetric charges are payable.

Rainwater harvesting systems

3.29 A rainwater harvesting system collects and recycles surface water, so as to reduce the volume of water supplied by us and used at the premises. The use of such a system means rain water is collected and only foul effluent will enter the sewer. The measured sewerage tariff is discounted accordingly and a volume based charge of £1.18 per m³ will be levied. The volume charged will be determined in one of two ways:

- Where a meter can be fitted to the rainwater harvesting system this charge will be based on the consumption recorded on the water meter less that volume which it can be proved is not returned to the sewer; or
- Where a meter cannot be fitted, the volume will be based on the area of catchment of the system and 80% of the NI long term annual rainfall (1.14m per annum).

3.30 Customers using rainwater harvesting systems should note that they are notifiable items under the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 2009. As such customers must inform NIW by completing the Water Regulations Notification form which can be downloaded from the Water Fittings Regulations section of our website at www.niwater.com/water-fittings-regulations.

Customers with borewells

3.31 Customers using water from a borewell or other private supply, and who also discharge to the mains sewer, are required to have their own meter fitted on the supply to establish the volume of sewage returned so that an appropriate charge can be levied. The charge will consist of two elements: standing and volumetric charge.

3.32 The standing charge will be calculated based on the following criteria:

- If the borewell is to augment a mains supply the sewerage standing charge

based on the existing mains supply pipe size will continue to apply based on the standard tariffs.

- If the borewell is to replace a mains supply then the sewerage standing charge will be based on the borewell supply pipe size, based on the standard tariffs.

3.33 The volumetric charge will be calculated using the volume of water recorded by the water meter, less a non-return to sewer allowance for any volume not discharged to the sewer. The volume will be charged at the standard volumetric rate.

Bills straddling two consecutive years

3.34 Customers whose measured bills are issued after 30 September 2020, which include consumption prior to this date will be charged proportionally using applicable tariffs for the periods before and after 30 September.

3.35 Charges will be calculated by:

- Firstly, applying the 2020-21 (April-September) tariffs to the estimated use for the period up to 30 September 2020; and
- Secondly, applying the 2020-21 (October-March) tariffs to the remainder of the consumption.
- Standing charges will be applied on a pro rata basis.

Issuing of bills when it has not been possible to read a meter

3.36 Meters are normally read on a 6 monthly frequency and bills are issued accordingly. Bills are based on the actual usage shown on the meter. If a reading is not available, the usage will be estimated based on previous consumption. Where a meter has stopped recording or fails to register the quantity of water consumed correctly, the usage will be estimated for any period when the meter was out of order, based on the most reliable consumption data available (normally from previous or subsequent periods). Appropriate adjustments may subsequently be made when an actual meter reading is received at a later stage.

3.37 Customers receiving an estimated bill can provide NIW with a meter reading by contacting the Billing line on 03458 770030 within 7 days of receiving the

estimated bill. A replacement bill based on the customer's accepted reading will be issued, within 10 days.

Queries over the accuracy of a meter

3.38 If a customer has concerns regarding the accuracy of their meter they should contact NIW to discuss. Should the customer wish to have their meter accuracy tested, the relevant charge must be paid in advance, after which NIW will arrange for the meter to be replaced and the original meter tested at an independent test centre. For bulk meters, an exchange will be deemed to be complex if it requires either traffic control measures to be put in place, a larger/deep excavation, a mains shutdowns, saw cuts to be made or additional fittings to be installed.

Table 3.5 - Meter accuracy testing charges

Size of Meter	Simple exchange	Complex exchange
Small diameter	£255	N/A
Bulk meter - Up to 50mm	£255	£740
Bulk meter - 50-100mm	£230	£235
Bulk meter >100mm	£410	£920

3.39 Your water meter test will be carried out by independent, accredited test facility. The customer will be advised of the results of the test as soon as they are available. The charge for testing will be retained by NIW if the test demonstrates that the meter was working within acceptable tolerance parameters. If the meter fails the test the fee will be refunded. In accordance with The Measuring Instruments (Cold-Water Meters) Regulations 2006, a meter which has been in service is considered to be recording with acceptable accuracy if the test is within +/- 2.5% at the nominal flow rate for the meter being tested and the minimum flow-rate is within +/- 6%.

3.40 If the meter is found to have been over-recording or under-recording flow NIW will normally adjust the last two bills (unless it can be shown that the meter became faulty at a later date) by applying the test results to the previously recorded consumption. If the last two bills have been based on estimated readings the charges will be amended on the basis of retrospective application of current consumption determined from meter readings taken by NIW from the replacement meter.

Change in meter position

- 3.41 Where it is possible to satisfy a customer's request to reposition a meter, the work will be charged at cost. Meter relocations to facilitate readings by customers with a disability will be free of charge. This work is likely to involve the installation of a new meter chamber and alterations or replacement of the service pipe which will require excavation and reinstatement of surfaces. The estimated cost of the work will be billed to the customer and will be payable in advance. Any adjustment between the estimate and the actual cost will either be billed or returned to the customer following completion of the work.

Automatic consumption monitoring by customers

- 3.42 If a customer wishes to install monitoring equipment (automatic meter reading equipment (AMR) or other data logging devices) on the NIW meter serving their property they must obtain prior permission from NIW by completing the relevant application form (which is available on request). Installation of such equipment without seeking prior approval may constitute an offence of tampering with the meter. There will be a fee of £85 for processing the application which will cover administration and a site visit to supervise the installation of the equipment. If the customer decides not to proceed NIW will refund £22 for the installation site visit. Additional site visits to supervise equipment installation, maintenance or removal will be chargeable at £22 per occasion payable in advance. If the existing NIW meter needs to be replaced or upgraded to facilitate such monitoring, NIW will pay for the meter but the customer will be liable for all of the costs associated with removal of the existing meter and installation of the replacement meter. This work will be charged at cost.
- 3.43 In cases where consumption monitoring equipment has been installed by customers and the billed consumption is disputed, the meter dial reading shall provide the basis for billing
- 3.44 NIW reserves the right to accept or refuse any request to permit the installation of consumption monitoring equipment or requests to upgrade the existing meter to facilitate such monitoring. Prior to installation of equipment the customer will be required to sign an agreement with NIW.

Customer requested disconnection

3.45 If a customer wishes to request disconnection of the water supply to their property they must inform NIW by completing and returning the 'Request to disconnect a metered water supply' form which can be downloaded from the 'Your bill and our charges' section of the NIW website, www.niwater.com.

3.46 There are two types of disconnection – permanent and temporary.

- Permanent disconnection - applies when a customer confirms that a supply of water is no longer required. There is no charge for a permanent disconnection but any future request to reinstate a water supply following permanent disconnection will be regarded as a request for a new water connection and charged in accordance with Section 7 of this document. Standing charges will not apply following permanent disconnection. Water and sewerage standing charges continue to apply when a metered property is unoccupied and unfurnished or; furnished and no water consumption is being recorded by the meter.
- Temporary disconnections - Customers can request to have the supply temporarily disconnected to reduce any charges for which they will be liable. Customers no longer requiring a water and sewerage connection on a temporary basis can request such a disconnection by completing and returning a "Request to Disconnect a Metered Water Supply" form. There is no charge for temporary disconnection but a reconnection charge will apply when reinstatement of the water supply is requested.

3.47 Disconnection and reconnection charge are shown in the table below.

Table 3.6 – Disconnection and reconnection charges

Type	Charge
Reconnection at NIW's stopcock (following temporary disconnection or following non-payment and subsequent disconnection) – payable in advance of reconnection	£127
Where our representative or agent visits premises to disconnect the supply and the disconnection is averted by late payment.	£96
Where the reconnection cannot be made at NIW's stopcock all the actual cost involved for the physical reconnection will be payable subject to a deposit of £50 being payable in advance of disconnection / reconnection	At cost
Permanent disconnection	No charge

4 Unmeasured Water and Sewerage Charges

- 4.1 Unmeasured charges for water and sewerage services are paid by non-domestic customers who are occupying properties connected to the water main and public sewer but do not have a meter.
- 4.2 There are two elements to both the unmeasured water and sewerage charge:
- A standing charge applied to all unmeasured properties; and
 - A variable charge based on the properties Net Annual Valuation (NAV) assigned to the premises in the Land and Property Services (LPS) Non-Domestic Net Annual Value List.
- 4.3 There will be a cap on unmeasured water and sewerage charges (i.e. the total charge payable – standing charge plus variable charge – will be limited by the cap).

Table 4.1 - Unmeasured water and sewerage charges

	Water	Sewerage
Standing charge (£)	30.85	42.94
Variable charge per each £1,000 NAV (£)	11.84	16.17
Charge cap (£)	470	505

- 4.4 Unmeasured bills will be based on the latest valuation list which came into effect on 1st April 2015. Customers who wish to enquire about their property valuation should contact LPS <https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/land-property-services>, or telephone 0300 200 7801.

Assessed charges for unmeasured customers

- 4.5 NIW have the right to install meters for charging purposes on non-domestic properties and we prefer to bill our non-domestic customers this way. Where metering is not reasonably practical or involves undue expense to the customer, NIW will offer an alternative assessed charge for water and sewerage. More information in relation to assessed charges is provided in section 3.7-3.10.

5 Trade Effluent Charges

- 5.1 Trade effluent is defined as ‘any liquid, either with or without particles of matter in suspension in the liquid, which is wholly or in part produced in the course of any trade or industry carried on at trade premises’ (ref: Water and Sewerage Services Order (Northern Ireland) 2006, article 199). Note this does not include domestic sewage.
- 5.2 A customer requires the consent of NIW to discharge any trade effluent to a public sewer. A trade effluent application pack can be downloaded from <https://www.niwater.com/trade-effluent-charges/>. Failure to obtain permission before discharging trade effluent is a criminal offence, and can result in a fine.
- 5.3 Any customer who considers that the material which they wish to discharge could be trade effluent should contact NIW Waterline (see Appendix 1 for contact details).
- 5.4 A new discharger of trade effluent will be liable to pay charges from the date of consent of the discharge.

Calculating trade effluent charges.

- 5.5 Trade effluent charges will be calculated using the Mogden Formula, which takes account of both the volume and strength of the discharge. In addition, a customer may be required to incur additional charges for the monitoring and/or treatment of other substances. The customer will be informed of any charges before they are levied. Unless otherwise stipulated in the consent, monitoring and sampling costs will be included in the annual trade effluent charges calculated in line with the formula.
- 5.6 The Modgen formula is: $C = R + V + B * \left(\frac{Ot}{Os}\right) + S * \left(\frac{St}{Ss}\right)$
- C is the unit charge in pence per cubic metre for the trade effluent discharge.
 - R is the unit cost in pence per cubic metre of reception and conveyance of sewage.
 - V is the unit cost in pence per cubic metre of the volumetric and primary treatment of sewage treated and disposed of in sewage treatment works.

- O_t is the Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD) in mg/l of the trade effluent after 1 hour quiescent settlement at pH7.
- O_s is the fixed standard strength of the COD in mg/l of the settled sewage.
- B is the unit cost in pence per cubic metre of the biological oxidation treatment of settled sewage.
- S_t is the total suspended solids (SS) in mg/l of the trade effluent at pH7.
- S_s is the fixed standard strength of total SS in mg/l of crude sewage.
- S is the unit cost in pence per cubic metre of treatment and disposal of primary sludge.

5.7 The standard unit costs in the Mogden Formula for the 2020-21 charging year will be as follows:

Table 5.1 - Mogden unit charges.

	Charge (£/m ³)
R - Reception and conveyance	0.2291
V - Volumetric treatment	0.2583
B - Biological treatment	0.1709
S - Treatment and disposal of primary sludge	0.1994
Standard unit charge	0.8577
O_s	260 mg/l
S_s	240 mg/l

Calculating the volume for billing purposes

5.8 The volume of effluent discharged may be obtained from a flow meter installed by the customer. Where the daily discharge is greater than 25m³, a flow meter should be installed by the customer. Where the daily discharge is greater than 50m³ a flow meter must be installed by the customer. Failure to install a flow meter in such instances may be deemed to be a breach of consent. It will be the duty of the customer to operate, maintain and calibrate the flow meter equipment to the satisfaction of NIW.

5.9 In the absence of a flow meter, the volume will be derived from:

- records of total water consumption, including metered water supplied by NIW;
- any volume generated onsite by the operating practice; and/or
- any private sources of water supply augmentation such as borewells

or rainwater harvesting.

5.10 In cases where the volume of trade effluent is determined by reference to total water consumption, deductions will be made as follows:

- a) 25 litres per working day for each member of the workforce where there is no canteen serving cooked meals;
- b) 50 litres per working day for each member of the workforce where there is canteen serving cooked meals;
- c) The volume of water exported from the premises as a part of the product, including water losses from cooling towers, boilers, etc. i.e. the non-return to sewer allowance. Section 3.18 – 3.21 provides details of how to apply for any non-return to sewer allowance.

5.11 Where the information above is used for calculating the volumes for billing purposes, the customer should notify NIW of any changes in circumstances which would impact on the calculated volume.

5.12 Where a customer has neither a metered water supply nor a flow meter, an assumed volumetric figure will be agreed between NIW and the customer. However, any such agreement should be regarded as interim arrangement, until a meter is installed.

Determining strength for billing purposes – industry fixed strengths

5.13 NIW reserves the right to apply fixed strength values for industries in the same sector. NIW will determine fixed strength by sampling a range of dischargers in that sector, or alternatively we may use water industry recommended fixed strengths.

5.14 The following fixed strengths will be used to calculate trade effluent charges for each industry sector listed.

Table 5.2 - Industry fixed strengths.

Industry type	O_t (mg/l)	S_t (mg/l)
Vehicle wash (jet)	517	421
Vehicle wash (roller)	108	315
Industrial Laundry	722	158
Swimming pool filter back-wash	36	123
Small Brewery	2,648	150
Cattle Marts	1,404	1,160
Mobile Domestic Wheelie Bin Cleaners	406	183
Laundrettes	478	97

5.15 If a customer believes their discharge deviates from the fixed strengths, as outlined above, they should provide scientific evidence of the discharge strength to support this claim, for consideration by NIW. In such circumstances, a bespoke agreed strength for that particular discharge may be considered appropriate.

5.16 NIW reserves the right to apply an agreed bespoke strength to individual customer discharge types. The strength used will be based on representative sample results taken of the discharge. Samples may then be collected periodically to validate the agreed strength.

Determining strength for billing purposes – sampled strengths

5.17 Where the annual discharge volume of effluent is 5,000m³ or greater, the effluent may be sampled for billing purposes.

5.18 Where the annual discharge volume is less than 5,000m³, it may, depending on the nature of the trade process and the variability of the effluent, be assumed to be of standard strength and charged at the standard rate. However, where a customer can demonstrate that the effluent is below standard sewage strength, it will be sampled and a lower charge applied if appropriate. Conversely, if it is suspected that the discharge is above standard sewage strength and this is confirmed from samples, charges will be based on actual strength.

5.19 From the analyses of samples collected, the average O_t (COD) and S_t (SS) strength of the effluent shall be determined on a six monthly rolling average.

5.20 Should a customer make changes to the processes generating trade effluent or install an effluent treatment plant which significantly alters the strength of the discharge, a new rolling 6-monthly average should commence from the date on which the changes were made.

Capital contribution – abatement of trade effluent charges

5.21 When a customer makes a capital contribution to NIW assets, charges shall be abated for the first 5 years, subject to an overriding maximum abatement, in any one year, of 10% of the amount paid by the customer towards the capital cost.

Agreement to discharge tankered trade effluent to a wastewater treatment works

5.22 Where agreement has been reached by NIW with a customer to discharge tankered trade effluent to a wastewater treatment works, the amount due to NIW for any charging period will be calculated in accordance with the Mogden formula less the conveyance fraction of R. This fraction is usually set at 50%.

5.23 In the case of tankered waste, the average Ot (COD) and St (SS) strength of the effluent shall be determined from the analyses of samples collected on a six monthly rolling average. In the case of a tankering agreement for a period of less than 6 months, the average settled Ot and St will be determined from samples taken in the billing period.

Further matters relating to trade effluent consents

5.24 Any consent given by NIW to discharge trade effluent may have conditions stipulated such as:

- The sewer or sewers into which the trade effluent may be discharged;
- The nature, temperature or composition of the trade effluent which may be discharged;
- The maximum quantity of trade effluent which may be discharged on any one day, either generally or into a particular sewer; and
- The highest rate at which trade effluent may be discharged, either generally or into a particular sewer.

5.25 Furthermore, requirements for any of the following conditions may be stipulated in the consent on an individual basis:

- The period or periods of the day during which the trade effluent may be discharged;
- The exclusion from the trade effluent of all condensing water;
- The pH of the trade effluent at the time when it is discharged;
- The payment for the reception and disposal of the trade effluent;
- Provision and maintenance of sampling facilities;
- Provision, location, testing and maintenance of such meters as may be required to measure the volume and rate of discharge of any trade effluent;
- Provision, testing and maintenance of apparatus for determining the nature, temperature and composition of any trade effluent being discharged;
- Retaining records of the discharge volume, flow rate, nature, temperature and composition of any trade effluent being discharged and, in particular, the keeping of meter readings and other recording apparatus; and
- The making of returns and giving of other information to NIW concerning the volume, rate of discharge, nature, temperature and composition of any trade effluent discharged.

5.26 The consent will also include arrangements for determining the volume of discharge which will be treated as domestic sewage. This determination is based on allowances for domestic discharge depending on such factors as the number of employees and the presence of a canteen on site.

5.27 Where a customer makes an application for a new trade effluent consent and subsequently withdraws the application, NIW reserves the right to recover any costs it has incurred (including analysis, sampling and inspection costs) in connection with the original application.

5.28 In accordance with The Water and Sewerage Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006, a customer may appeal to the Utility Regulator against any condition imposed. The Utility Regulator's contact details are provided below:

Utility Regulator contact details:

Address: Queen's House

Queen Street

Belfast

BT1 6ED

Telephone: 028 9031 1575

Website: www.uregni.gov.uk

6 Disposal of Tankered Waste

6.1 NIW will provide a discretionary service for the de-sludging of septic tanks, domestic treatment plants and cesspools. Each domestic customer will be entitled to one free tank empty in any 12 month period. Domestic customer can make a request to have their septic tank desludged via our website at <https://selfservice.niwater.com/DesludgeOpen>

6.2 Non-domestic customers and domestic customers making subsequent requests within a 12 month period will be charged as follows:

Table 6.1 - Charges for septic tank de-sludging service.

	Service type	Cost per service
1	Septic tank de-sludge (includes removal and treatment of up to 4.5m ³ of sludge)	£82
2	Package plant de-sludge (includes removal and treatment of up to 4.5m ³ of sludge)	£67
3	Difficult to access septic tanks (includes the removal and treatment of up to 4.5m ³ of sludge)	£110
4	Fast response de-sludge for septic tanks and package plants (includes removal and treatment of up to 4.5m ³ of sludge)	£105
5	De-sludge for larger tanks (includes removal and treatment of up to 9m ³ of sludge)	£170
6	Aborted visit charge as a result of erroneous customer supplied information.	£28
	Privately tankered waste	
7	Charge for reception and treatment of privately tankered domestic type septage (per cubic metre payable in advance for the projected volume during the month)	£10.77 / m ³

Note 1: a package plant is a private domestic sewage treatment plant which contains moving parts and is powered by an electrical motor.

Note 2: difficult access is where a tanker (18 tonne) vehicle cannot get to within 30m of the septic tank and park on a hardstand suitable of supporting the weight of the vehicle. Gates to properties need to be at least 3.5m wide to allow the

vehicle access to the site. NIW will charge £28 if a visit has to be aborted (e.g. due to problems with access to a property).

- 6.3 NIW aims to respond to option 1, 2, 3 and 5 requests within 12 working days from the date of the request. NIW aims to respond to option 4 requests within 2 working days from the date of the request but this service is only available on a charged basis.
- 6.4 If the septic tank serves more than one domestic property, one load will be removed free of charge per property served. In the case of caravan parks where reduced rates are paid for static caravan units, one standard de-sludging of up to 4.5m³ will be performed per two static caravan units. Caravan parks without static units will be treated as non-domestic customers.
- 6.5 NIW is required under the Waste and Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1997, the Waste Management Licensing Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003 and the Controlled Waste (Registration of Carriers and Seizure of Vehicles) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1999; to verify the nature and source of any tankered waste water and reserves the right to refuse to accept any discharge and / or to charge the appropriate charge, at its discretion, dependent upon the quality of the information, provided by the discharger.

Disposal of privately tankered waste

- 6.6 Private licensed waste carriers may dispose of domestic type septage at designated sludge reception centres subject to prior application and approval. The charge to dispose of sludge is £10.77 per m³. This fee is payable in advance for the projected volume during the month.
- 6.7 Sludge deposited must be of domestic septage only. NIW reserves the right to complete random sampling on all vehicles at anytime. Carriers must apply in advance to use this service. Validation of the NIEA Waste Carrier License and DVA Operators License will be undertaken.
- 6.8 Access to any of the sludge reception centres will not be permitted until payment has been received in full. NIW reserves the right to withdraw permission if the carrier fails to comply with the terms and conditions of the approval.

7 Getting Connected to the public water or sewer network

- 7.1 When a property is connected to NIW's mains for the first time, the customer pays for the costs associated with making the connection. A water meter will be installed on new non domestic connections in accordance with legislative requirements and remains the property of NIW.
- 7.2 The cost of a water connection will include:
- a charge for making the connection to the public water main;
 - a charge for building water used in new build properties; and
 - a water infrastructure charge.
- 7.3 If connecting to the sewerage network, a separate sewerage infrastructure charge will also be payable.
- 7.4 NIW requires customers to provide separate water connections to each new separately occupiable unit or dwelling. This includes redevelopments of sites with an existing single water supply where the development increases the number of dwellings or units.
- 7.5 The customer is responsible for obtaining third party land approval and providing written evidence of this to NIW.
- 7.6 Where a water connection is provided but the boundary box / meter chamber is reset, readjusted or interfered with by the developer, such that a meter cannot be installed as per NIW installation guidance, the cost for all works to replace the meter chamber will be charged to the developer. The developer will be deemed responsible where the meter chamber has been reinstated by them, or a third party on their behalf, after connection.
- 7.7 A connection charge is payable in advance. Customers requiring a water connection should decide which of the following options is most suitable:
- (a) A connection only;
 - (b) A full service connection and all associated trench-work, pipe-work and reinstatement; or
 - (c) A mains connection, e.g. large diameter water supply connection.

7.8 If customers have any questions or require advice on getting connected, they should contact NIW Developer Services using contact details provided in Appendix 1.

7.9 In line with Roads Authority (DfI Roads) legislation, NIW is the approved undertaker for the installation of water and sewer apparatus in the public verge, footway and carriageway. This includes responsibility for opening, closing and reinstatement of public property for making connections to public water mains and sewers. Customers who can obtain a Street Works accreditation from TransportNI may also open the public verge / footpath / carriageway. Where a valid Street Works Licence is presented to NIW, customers can undertake all excavation backfill and reinstatement, and may make the sewer connection in the public area with the permission of NIW. Contact details for DfI Roads are provided below:

Address: Clarence Court
10 - 18 Adelaide Street
Belfast
BT2 8GB
Telephone: 028 9054 0540
Email: transportni@dfini.gov.uk

Water connection only.

7.10 A standard connection is one which meets the following criteria:

- The external diameter of the pipe connecting to the water main does not exceed 32mm;
- The service supply between the water main and the boundary box is 10m or less;
- The trench in which the service supply pipe is laid should not be less than 0.5 metre in width;
- The opening does not encroach a public verge / footpath / carriageway; and
- It is carried out between 9.00am and 4.30pm Monday through to Friday.

7.11 For standard connections, where customers require NIW to make the connection, NIW will make the tapping to the public water main, provide the communication pipe and boundary box and connection to the customer's service supply pipe.

7.12 Where NIW approves the use of a self certified accredited plumber to make the standard connection, they will be responsible for making the tapping to the public water main, the communication pipe and boundary box and connecting to the customer’s service supply pipe. NIW will complete the inspection and fit the meter if necessary.

7.13 Standard water connection charges are shown in the table below:

Table 7.1 - Standard water connection charges

	Charge per connection
Standard connections carried out by NIW	£287
Standard Connections to mains that are in Public Realm Improvement areas e.g. under new slab footpaths.	At cost
Aborted visit charge	£193

7.14 Non-standard connections greater than 32mm external diameter will be charged at the actual cost of carrying out the connection, payable in advance.

7.15 Where NIW attends and is unable to complete the connection because the site is not ready, an aborted visit charge will be payable.

Installation of connections in contaminated lands

7.16 Customers considering a connection in contaminated lands should contact NIW Developer Services team using the contact details provided in Appendix 1 to this document.

Full service pipe connection

7.17 Where a full service connection is required, the charge will depend upon the diameter of the watermain, the ground conditions and the length of the service pipe. Charges for each combination of the above factors are shown in the table below. Connection includes tapping, installation of a communication pipe, boundary box and up to 10m of service pipe, complete with excavation backfill and reinstatement. Where conditions allow, an additional connection / service pipe may be laid through the same duct or trench.

Table 7.2 – Full service pipe connection charges.

	Up to 2m in verge /Unmade Ground	Up to 2m from site boundary footpaths only	Up to 5m from site boundary in all surfaces	Up to 10m from site boundary in all surfaces
Band – A Standard connections to mains in public areas that are 100mm diameter or less	£515	£436	£691	£913
An additional service pipe connection through same duct or trench	£270	£293	£289	£303
Band – B Standard connections to mains in public areas that are 101mm and up to 225mm diameter	£534	£516	£545	£762
An additional service pipe connection through same duct or trench	£298	£310	£299	£347
Bands – A&B Additional cost per metre run up to 20m	£21.00	£40		
Bands – A&B Additional cost per metre run up to 20m where the communication pipe is installed in a barrier pipe material	£14.00			
Band – C Standard connections to mains in public areas that are 250mm diameter or greater	At cost			
Band – D Non-standard connections i.e. greater than 25mm diameter including mains connections / tie-ins	At cost			
Application fee payable in advance, for full service pipe connections in Band C and Band D, which will be deducted from the final bill	£280			
Aborted connection charge	£193			

Building water.

7.18 Where a water connection is provided for a new build property or unit, a fixed charge of £22 is payable for water consumed (i.e. building water) in the construction process for each individual connection requested for separately occupied properties / units capable of separate occupation. For non-domestic properties / units the charge payable will be calculated by reference to the water using appliances installed in them using the Loading Units in Table 7.6.

Sewer Connection

7.19 Provided the work does not encroach on public property the connections can be carried out by the customer but supervised by NIW. A standard inspection charge is payable in advance.

7.20 The standard inspection charge assumes materials are supplied and that the applicant carries out all excavation, backfill and reinstatement. It applies only to connections involving a pipe diameter up to 150mm to a single property.

7.21 If a sewer connection does encroach on public verge footpath or carriageway the developer may complete all excavation and reinstatement provided he obtains and presents to NIW a valid Street Works Licence in compliance with Roads Service Legislation.

7.22 Where a developer cannot obtain a valid Street Works Licence, NIW will carry out a full service sewer connection, including all associated trench work, pipe work and reinstatement involved in connecting a lateral drain to a public sewer. The customer will be charged the full cost of all work. Customers will be required to pay an application fee in advance, which will be deducted from the final bill.

7.23 The actual costs of a full service pipe connection will be calculated on the basis of:

- the diameter of the customer connection;
- the diameter and material of the public sewer;
- the existing surface where the sewer is to be laid;
- the make-up of the ground construction;
- the depth of the public sewer;
- traffic management requirements; and

- distance from boundary to connection.

7.24 Where NIW attends the site to carry out such work and the site is not ready, an aborted visit charge will be payable.

Table 7.3 – Sewer connection charges

Type of connection	Charge per connection
Standard connection Inspection fee	£130
Aborted inspection charge (per visit)	£96
Full Service Pipe Connection	At cost
Full connection application fee	£130

Refusal of a surface water connection

7.25 NIW can refuse any application to discharge surface water into the public sewer, where the following conditions are not met:

- The mode of construction or condition of the drain or sewer, or of any associated sustainable drainage system, do not satisfy the standards reasonably required;
- The making of the connections would be detrimental to the sewerage system;and
- Suitable alternatives exist, or could reasonably be provided.

Infrastructure charges.

7.26 Infrastructure charges are levied for the initial connection of premises to a water supply or to a public sewer. They relate to the additional capital expenditure costs incurred by an undertaker in enhancing and reinforcing the network of reservoirs, mains, sewers and treatment works, and developing other resources, to provide capacity for new customers.

7.27 For the purposes of both a water and sewerage infrastructure charge, a connection is defined as:

- The point in time at which a property is physically connected to a water or sewer main owned by NIW;
- Where a building supply has been provided, the point at which the supply changes to one for domestic purposes; and

- For sewerage only, where no water supply is taken from a statutory water undertaker, the point at which the property is physically connected to a sewer owned by NIW.

Table 7.4 – Infrastructure charges

	Charges
Water infrastructure charge	£350 per connection
Sewerage infrastructure charge	£350 per connection

- 7.28 NIW will provide an approval letter following a preliminary survey which will state the amount due for connection fees and infrastructure charges.
- 7.29 The infrastructure charge will be payable on a property which comprises a unit capable of separate occupation on the first occasion that it is connected directly or indirectly to a water main or a public sewer for domestic purposes.
- 7.30 For the purposes of this charge every building or part of a building will be treated as a unit capable of separate occupation and liable to a separate infrastructure charge if:
- In the case of a dwelling:
 - i. It is used or will be used as a separate dwelling; or
 - ii. It includes separate facilities for sleeping, washing, cooking and a WC.
 - In any other case, it has its own connection to a water supply or sewerage service and is in fact capable of separate occupation.
- 7.31 Except for non-standard cases (see section 7.33), the standard amounts of the charges will be payable for each unit connecting to NIW’s water mains and/or sewers. Where no application for a water supply or sewerage service is received or where NIW is unable to recover the charge from the person who requested the connection, the charge will be payable by the person who has the benefit of the new supply or service on the charge becoming payable.
- 7.32 In the case of a new property the infrastructure charge is payable upon connection, unless NIW has agreed alternative payment arrangements with the customer concerned. A customer wishing to agree alternative payment arrangements should contact NIW on receipt of a connection approval letter. Once agreed, NIW will confirm the arrangements in writing to the customer.

Infrastructure Charges - Non-standard cases

7.33 In non-standard cases where a representative has accepted responsibility on behalf of others and that person has either:

- (a) received a demand or undertaken to pay a water and / or sewerage charge in respect of two or more household premises fails to pay such a charge within 14 days of the date of connection; or
- (b) terminated that acceptance of responsibility.

That person shall pay to NIW the standard amount in respect of each such household premises connected.

7.34 There are a number of situations where the infrastructure charges will not be based on the number of occupiable units connecting to NIW's water mains and/or sewers

- i. Where a building is made up of a number of self-contained units and their future occupiers will not be billed individually by NIW for water and sewerage services but the bill will be paid by representative through their agreement, the infrastructure charge will be calculated by reference to the water using appliances in all of units in the building.
- ii. Where buildings do not consist of a house and which are supplied by a service pipe with an internal diameter greater than 15mm, the infrastructure charges due will again be calculated by reference to the water using appliances.
- iii. In the case of additional caravans on a site, infrastructure charges will be based on the net increase in the numbers of caravans / bays on the site, and the use of the relevant multiplier based on loading units.

In such cases the table below details the "Loading Units" for various water using appliance, which will be used to determine the infrastructure charges payable.

Table 7.5 –Nationally agreed loading units for water fittings

Water fitting (See Note 1)	Loading units (LUs)
WC flushing cistern	2
Wash basin in a house	1.5
Wash basin elsewhere	3
Bath (tap nominal size 20mm)	10
Bath (tap nominal size larger than 20mm)	22
Shower	3
Sink (tap nominal size 15mm)	3
Sink (tap nominal size larger than 15mm)	5
Spray tap	0.5
Bidet	1.5
Domestic appliance (subject to a minimum of 6 LU's per house) (See Note 2)	3
Communal or commercial appliance	10
Any other water fitting or outlet (including a tap – but excluding a urinal or water softener)	3
Note 1 Reference to any fitting includes reference to any plumbing, outlet, dedicated space or planning or other provision for that fitting.	
Note 2 In any calculation of the total Loading Units for a property, a minimum of six Loading Units will be included in respect of each house for domestic appliances whether or not the house has any such appliances. The only exception to this will be in the case of any house where neither a washing machine nor a dishwasher can be provided and there is no plumbing, outlet, dedicated space or planning or other provision for either appliance in the house.	

Infrastructure Charges for development or redevelopment of sites formerly connected to water and sewerage services

- 7.35 Where a site is developed or redeveloped (including conversions or subdivisions of buildings) the number of infrastructure charges payable will be the total number of units with connections to water and / or sewerage services after development, minus the maximum number of properties which had connections to water and / or sewerage services at any time in the five years before redevelopment began. The credited properties are known as off-sets. Requests for off-sets must be clearly stated in writing at the time of application, identifying the total number of connections applied for and which sites are requested to be off-set.
- 7.36 Where a site to be redeveloped consists of a large single non-domestic complex – such as a hospital or hotel – and which had a metered connection, NIW will take account of demand on services of the original use of the site in

the five years before redevelopment began when calculating infrastructure charges (note – where part of a site only has been sold for redevelopment, the continuing water use at that part of the site not being redeveloped will be taken into account when calculating the infrastructure charges due).

7.37 NIW will do this by dividing the maximum consumption recorded by the meter in any of the five financial years prior to development by the average domestic household consumption in NIW's area. This will produce the number of off-sets which NIW will set against the infrastructure charges due.

7.38 In cases where infrastructure charge liability is calculated using the relevant multiplier principle referred to above, any off-sets due will be set against the total number of infrastructure charges which have been deemed payable using the relevant multiplier principle.

7.39 Where a large single non-domestic site is redeveloped which did not previously have metered connections NIW will be unable to use demand as a basis for calculating infrastructure charges. Charges will be calculated on the basis of the maximum number of properties in use on the site in the 5 years prior to redevelopment.

7.40 In certain circumstances an assessment of the demand on the infrastructure in the 5 years prior to redevelopment compared to after redevelopment of an unmeasured property may be taken into account if such an assessment is possible.

Requisitions

7.41 Extensions to the public water main or sewer networks to the boundary of the property or development (the off-site water main or sewer) may be provided by NIW on receipt of a Requisition Notice from the owner or occupier of any premises.

7.42 In certain circumstances, owners of existing properties, which do not have a connection to a public sewerage system and where the current private means of disposal has been deemed unsatisfactory by the relevant authority, may also make application under the requisition procedures for an economic assessment of the provision of a dedicated sewerage system to include the provision of a waste water treatment works.

7.43 An application fee is payable for all requisitions at the time of application. This is non-returnable if NIW issued the decision letter. In the event that a resubmission of the application is necessary, a resubmission fee is applicable.

Table 7.6 – Requisition application charges (off-site water main or sewer)

	Charges
Application charge	£337
Application resubmission charge	£85

7.44 Extensions to the public water main within the boundary of a development (the on-site water main) may be provided by NIW on receipt of a Requisition Notice from the owner or occupier of any premises within the development, provided the NIW's conditions are met. An application fee is payable at the time of application, for the first 30 properties within the development and £18.50 for each additional 30 properties or part thereof. This is non-returnable if NIW issued the decision letter and the applicant subsequently decides not to proceed.

Table 7.7 – Requisition application charges (on-site water main or sewer)

	Charges
Application charge (first 30 properties)	£280
Additional charge (for each additional 30 proproperties)	£18.50

7.45 In responding to a request, NIW will provide a costing for the work. The costs of the work will include the cost of design, labour, plant, materials, supervision and administration. This may also include, the costs of all pipes, tanks, service reservoirs, pumping works or waste water treatment works as it is necessary to provide. This may also include a proportion of the cost of mains or sewers which have already been laid in the previous 12 years, but were oversized in anticipation of further demand. In calculating the cost to be taken by the person making the requisition NIW will contribute a reasonable cost allowance in respect of supplies of water to premises or drainage of premises for domestic purposes. The table below shows the reasonable cost allowance that would apply for each domestic property. The reasonable cost allowance to be applied to other supplies of water or drainage for domestic purposes will be calculated on an individual basis.

7.46 Different allowances are in operation for properties constructed before 1 January 2000 (which have not previously been connected to mains water or

the public sewer). Any properties constructed before this would be deemed to be existing and subject to the existing cost allowance.

Table 7.8 – Reasonable cost allowance

Requisition	New properties (Post 1 January 2000)	Existing properties (Pre 1 January 2000)
Water main	£1,600	£12,000
Sewer	£2,400	£4,000

Disputes

7.47 Any dispute about the decision of NIW in response to a requisition notice may be referred to the Consumer Council, contact details as follows:

Address: Consumer Council for Northern Ireland,
Floor 3, Seatem House,
28-32 Alfred Street,
Belfast,
BT2 8EN

Telephone: 0800 121 6022

Email: contact@consumercouncil.org.uk

Web: www.consumercouncil.org.uk

8 Developer related charges.

8.1 More detailed information on how to apply for the services listed in this section is contained within the NIW – Developers & House-builders Guidance Notes. Copies can be obtained by contacting NIW using one of the methods highlighted below, or by downloading from the NIW website at <http://www.niwater.com/services-for-developers-and-housebuilders/>.

Provision of Information Including Maps

8.2 Records may be inspected free of charge by prior appointment (Appendix 1 for contact details). Written requests for map information will be charged as follows:

- £16.00 per A4 printed copy for water and sewer details;
- £18.00 per A3 printed copy for water/sewers individually; and
- £4.50 each additional printed copy.
- £30 per A0 / A1 printed maps.

Requests for electronic copies will be based on the number of A3 equivalent sheets to cover the area requested.

8.3 The position of private drains, private sewers and service pipes are not normally shown on maps but their presence must be anticipated and you are strongly advised to carry out your own investigations to locate them.

8.4 Where a site visit is required to determine actual on site water supply, foul and surface water connections, a charge of £145 per visit will be payable in advance. Where NIW attends a site at a prearranged time but is unable to undertake the inspection because the site is not ready or inaccessible, an aborted visit fee of £96 will be charged.

8.5 NIW provides a routine response to requests from Planning Service and conveyancing solicitors where additional information is directly requested from NIW over and above the basic information previously provided. This service will be charged as follows:

- Standard response 10 days £35.
- Same day response (if received before noon) £70.
- Next day response £60.

- 48 hour response £50.

8.6 Where NIW agrees to undertake a search of its records for any customer in relation to other types of request, e.g. history of flooding details, there will be a standard charge of £20 for each routine enquiry plus a charge of £6 for each copy document provided. Actual costs will be charged for any non-routine enquiries. Time will also be charged at £36 per hour or part hour with a minimum charge of £10. Postage will be charged at cost. Details of routine enquiries can be obtained from NIW prior to making a request. Copies of Article 161 agreements relating to development queries will be provided where available, at a cost of £38 for each agreement, and are subject to data protection regulations.

Future development enquiries

8.7 Pre Development Enquiry (PDE) applications can be made to NIW to obtain information about the availability and capacity of water and sewerage infrastructure to service future development. NIW will advise if the existing sewer network, and/or Waste Water Treatment Works can accommodate the proposed future development, or the availability of adequate water supply and pressure.

During a PDE assessment, NIW may identify potential network capacity issues which require further analysis. As a result a detailed assessment of the water/sewer hydraulic model, if available, may be requested by NIW. This is known as a Network Capacity Check (NCC) – refer to section 8.8 for more detail.

Where a proposed development is in proximity to a WWTW an odour model study may be required to determine the development boundary limits.

Note, NIW is committed to delivering new economic and housing growth, sustainably. In some cases, where our existing infrastructure is overloaded, NIW may have to refuse/defer new connections in order to protect the environment and our customers from flooding. The applicant will be notified of specific development constraints as part of the PDE process.

8.8 Charges are as follows:

- **Pre-development enquiry application fee £198**

- **Network Capacity Check (NCC) water network: application fee** £1,472.

On receipt of the fixed fee, the hydraulic model will be updated to reflect the potential additional loading from the proposed development. The applicant will be advised of the point of connection to the water supply network, and the cost of providing the off-site infrastructure or upgrading the network to accommodate the proposed development.

- **Network Capacity Check (NCC) sewer network:** application fee at full cost, less a £500 deposit payable in advance.

On receipt of the deposit and submission of NCC application NIW will write to the applicant advising the cost of completing the model assessment, production of a report and indicative timeframe. The cost and timeframe will vary depending on the scale and complexity of the proposed development and the condition of the hydraulic model.

If the applicant wishes to proceed full payment must be made in advance.

The final report, if commissioned, will detail the impact of the proposed development and, where necessary, outline conceptual solutions to accommodate the new development. An indicative construction cost of solutions, such as off-site infrastructure or network upgrading, will be provided.

The NCC process does not guarantee the applicant connection to the NIW, nor can NIW commit to specific construction timeframes

- **Development Encroachment** (development limits assessment) application Fee £239. Where a full Odour Model Appraisal is necessary to determine the development limits, a letter of quotation will be issued which will advise on the limit of development and the cost of any related capital works. If the applicant decides to proceed, the fee will be payable in advance at cost.

Sewers for adoption – new developmen

- 8.9 An application can be made for an article 161 agreement for the adoption of a development drainage system at a future date provided the sewers are constructed to a satisfactory standard. Details of a drainage layout to serve a

new development should be submitted accompanied by the appropriate application fee. Charges are as follows:

Application fee:

- Application Fee (non-returnable) £317
- If an application has to be resubmitted a fee of £85 will be charged.
- Replacement Article 161 Agreements will be provided for a fee of £85.

Inspection / Adoption Fee:

- Sewer inspection / adoption requests will be charged at 2.5% of the estimated cost of sewer construction (£500 minimum) using a schedule of rates prepared by NIW. The application fee is deducted from the calculated total fee.

Bond Surety (Cash or Guarantee Bond):

8.10 Bonding arrangements are required to the value of:

- 40% of estimated cost of gravity sewer based on NIW's schedule of rates (with a minimum of £2,000).
- 50% of estimated cost of pumping stations and pumping mains (with a minimum of £5,000).

Legal / Administration Fee:

Covering the provision of agreement and transfer of lands:

- Adoption of gravity drainage system only £245.
- Adoption of gravity sewers with associated pumped drainage system £317.

Sewers for adoption – existing drainage systems

8.11 An application can be made for an article 159 sewer adoption. A suitable CCTV survey must be provided by the applicant. Charges will be applied as follows:

Table 8.1 – Sewer adoption charges for existing sewers only

	Charge
Application / Assessment Fee (non-returnable)	£317
Inspection / Adoption Fee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single sewer leg up to 300m. • Multiple sewers within a development (cost of construction calculated using a schedule of rates prepared by NIW based on current sewer contract rates) 	£265 2.5% of construction cost. (£735 min)
Legal fee for the provision of agreement and transfer of land	£115 min.
Aborted visit charge	£96

8.12 Sewer inspection / adoption requests made for the adoption of sewerage systems previously approved under article 17 of the Water and Sewerage Services (Northern Ireland) Order 1973 that are deemed to apply under the Water and Sewerage Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 will be set at the minimum inspection / adoption fee where inspection / adoption fees have not previously been charged by DfI Roads prior to 1st April 2007.

8.13 Preliminary / Final Certificate of Completion Adoption applications for mature Article 17 / 19 development sites that pre-existed 1st April 2007 has a one off fee of £317.

Building over or near a sewer

8.14 Proposals to carry out any building work over the top of, or within 3 metres of, a public sewer should be forwarded to NIW for assessment. This assessment process is in two stages, with each stage having separate charges:

- Stage one appraisal considers if a build-over is necessary or is there an alternative. The size, depth, material, gradient and condition of the sewer and position and construction / location of the proposed building is taken into account. If there is an alternative, the build-over application may be refused. If a build-over application is refused, NIW will advise if there is potential for the realignment of the public sewer.
- In Stage two the build-over application is approved and may have conditions attached about the construction, inspection and approval / sign-off of the on-site construction.

8.15 The stage one application / assessment fee is £204 payable at the time of application and includes a technical assessment of the condition of the existing public sewer. Multiple applications in the same location and on the same sewer leg will attract a discount for third and subsequent applications. Charges are shown in the table below.

Table 8.2 – Application / assessment fee

Number of properties	Fee per property	Discount
1 – 2	£204	0%
3 – 5	£184	10%
6 – 10	£163	20%
11 or more	£153	25%

Table 8.3 – Building over or near a sewer – Inspection and sign-off

	Charge
Inspection and sign-off	£281
Inspection and sign-off - (non-routine e.g. large diameter sewers, pumping mains, large single curtilage development)	At cost (Minimum £281)

Sewer realignment

8.16 NIW will appraise submitted proposals for the realignment of public sewers and advise of the initial recommendations, which may have conditions attached, such as route, level and material. It should be noted that realignment of public sewers may be expensive and NIW may not agree to the realignment of critical sewers. Assessment, inspection and approval charges in connection with the realignment of the sewer by the applicant are as follows:

Table 8.4 – Sewer Realignment

	Charge
Assessment and Appraisal - All sewer diameters (including pumped sewers)	£214
Inspection and sign-off	£214
Inspection and sign-off - (non-routine e.g. large diameter sewers, pumping mains, large single curtilage development)	At cost (Minimum £214)

Diversion of water main

8.17 Building over a public water main is not permitted. If an existing water main crosses a new development / redevelopment site, it is preferable for the layout

to be designed to avoid the main and provide an agreed clearance. If this is not possible the main must be diverted before any building works start. The applicant can propose a scheme and ask NIW to consider whether such a diversion is technically possible. A technical assessment fee will be payable.

8.18 Where a large or multi-element project has multi interfaces that will affect NIW’s water and sewer infrastructure, and requires additional support or site visits from NIW technical assessors, this can be provided at an hourly rate of £36.

8.19 When the initial realignment scheme is agreed, a deposit of £2,000 is required for preparation of detailed design. NIW requires all preparation, excavation and restoration work to be carried out by the applicant, subject to compliance with the Street Works (Northern Ireland) Order 2005. NIW will complete the works associated with the mains diversion on a fully rechargeable basis and recover all costs from the applicant. The applicant will be advised of the full cost. If they wish to proceed they will be asked to pay in advance. A 100% security bond may be required to cover the cost of the works in the event the applicant defaults.

Where the applicant is unable to obtain a valid Street Works Licence, NIW will undertake all works associated with the diversion on an “at cost” rechargeable basis.

Table 8.5 – Diversion of a water main

	Charge
Application / Assessment	£175
Design of diverted main, supply pipes and fittings, lay joint test, disinfect and commission, including all associated stakeholder liaison etc.	At cost (Minimum £2,000)

Self-lay water mains

8.20 NIW has a self-lay policy whereby a developer may enter into an agreement with NIW to adopt a water main, and as much of the service pipe as NIW would have been otherwise required to lay, upon satisfactory completion of the work, provided the water main or service pipe is constructed in accordance with the terms of the agreement. Certain works are deemed non-contestable e.g. connection to a laid main, which NIW will undertake in all circumstances. Indicative charges for self-lay are as follows:

Table 8.6 – Self-lay water mains

NIW design		Charge
Preparation by NIW of on-site water mains design layout	First 30 properties / units within development	£259
	For each additional 30 properties / units or part thereof	£20
Developers design		
Review / approve water main design layout submitted by approved contractor	First 50 m of water main	£126
	For each additional 50m of water main or part thereof	£20
Re-submitted design		
Review / approve water main design Layout re-submitted by approved contractor	First 50m of water main	£78
	For each additional 50m of water main or part thereof	£20
Approve design, inspect sign-off and adopt		
Review / approve water main design layout submitted by approved contractor, inspect, sign off and adopt	First 50m of water main	£508
	For each additional 50m of water main or part thereof	£65
Inspect sign-off and adopt		
Inspect, sign off and adopt	For first 50m of water main	£380
	For each additional 50m of water main or part thereof	£83
Disinfect self-laid mains		
Disinfection of self-lay water mains	For first 300m or part thereof	£171
	For each additional 300m on same job	£41
Swabbing of self-lay mains		
Swabbing new water main before commissioning	For first 300m or part thereof	£138
	For each additional 300m on same job	£41

8.21 Bond Security (Cash or Guarantee Bond)

- Bonding arrangements shall be provided by way of security to the value of 40% of the total estimated cost of installation of the self-lay water main based on a schedule of rates prepared by NIW to cover the discharge of any obligation on the part of the applicant (minimum of £500).
- Legal / Administration Fee for provision of a self-lay water main agreement £105.

Pressure testing water mains

8.22 For pressure testing mains up to and including 300 metres in length the fee payable in advance is £238. Each additional 300m or part thereof per single application is £30.

Fire hydrant installation

8.23 Fire Hydrant Installation - includes construction of chamber on existing main up to and including 250mm diameter pipes:

Table 8.7 – Fire hydrant installation

	Charge
Unmade ground, footpaths and roads	£929

Standpipe hire charges

8.24 It is an offence to take water from a hydrant by any means other than a licensed approved standpipe obtained from NIW. Using water from a fire hydrant by any other means could lead to prosecution and a maximum financial penalty of £1,000 per occasion. Those who have a legitimate need may obtain a portable standpipe for drawing water on a temporary basis from a fire hydrant on a public water main system. A portable standpipe may be obtained by submitting a completed application form that can be requested from NIW through the Waterline number (03457 440088), from the Standpipe Rental Desk (03458 770002), or downloaded from the NIW website.

8.25 Rental of standard 25mm diameter standpipes - the charge is shown in table 8.8. It is the customers responsibility to collect and return the standpipes. In addition to the charges shown, a refundable deposit of £100 must also be paid for each standpipe. The deposit will be returned when the standpipe is returned to NIW without damage. All charges are payable in advance.

Table 8.8 - Rental charges 25mm diameter standpipe

Hire period	Charge
Upto 1 month (minimum hire period)	£77
Upto 3 months	£151
Upto 6 months	£263
Upto 12 months (maximum hire period)	£487

8.26 Rental of 65mm diameter standpipe - the charge is shown in table 8.9. It is the customers responsibility to collect and return the standpipes. In addition to the charges shown, a refundable deposit of £100 must also be paid. The deposit will be returned when the standpipe is returned to NIW without damage. All charges will be payable in advance.

Table 8.9 - Standpipe rental charges 65mm diameter

Hire period	Charge
Upto 1 week (minimum hire period)	£75
Upto 1 month	£138
Upto 3 months	£301
Upto 6 months	£546
Upto 12 months (maximum hire period)	£1,036

- 8.27 Where water consumption is required for a specified use which can be detailed, calculated and verified, an assessed rental charge may be applied at the discretion of NIW. This will be based on administration charges and the estimated cost of water consumed using the current rate per volumetric charge. All charges will be payable in advance. Where a water connection is provided for a new build property or unit, a fixed charge of £21 is payable for water used in the construction process.
- 8.28 Two weeks before the licence is due to expire, NIW will send out a reminder letter and application form for the customer to renew their licence. If the customer does not renew the licence or does not return the standpipe on the due date, the customer will be invoiced for a full year's rental.

9 How to Pay Your Bill

9.1 Payments by non-domestic customers may be made in the following ways:

- Direct Debit;
- NIW website at on <https://www.niwater.com/paying-your-bill/>;
- Debit / credit card payments by phoning the Billing line on 03458 770030; BACS;
- At any bank or building society or via their bank or building society internet or telebanking facilities. Free in all branches of Danske Bank, charges may be applied by other banks or building societies;
- Postal payments by cheque.

9.2 NIW will not accept cash payments that are equal to or greater than £5,000 for any one transaction or lower amounts from the same person or company in relation to that same transaction that adds up to £5,000 or above. Any payments that are equal to or above £5,000 should be transacted by cheque or other secure payment method. Cash payments should not be sent by post.

Payment of measured water, sewerage and trade effluent charges

9.3 Measured charges are billed in arrears and unless a customer has agreed a different payment arrangement with NIW, they are payable on receipt of the bill. Payments received will be allocated against the oldest outstanding debt unless a remittance advice is received.

9.4 Measured bills are usually sent every six months, while larger metered water customers are billed monthly. NIW aims to base each bill on a meter reading but may issue a bill based on an estimate. Details of when an individual meter is due to be read are issued to customers when they have a meter installed or move to a metered property.

9.5 NIW reserves the right to read meters and issue bills on a more frequent basis. In such circumstances written notice will be sent to customers at least one month in advance.

9.6 A Meter Payment Plan for measured customers is available. Under the plan customers agree to pay a fixed amount each month by Direct Debit. At the end of each year NIW will review the account and make any adjustments to the

required monthly payment if water use has changed and the amount being paid is too high or too low. Customers can contact NIW on 03458 770050 to review their plan.

- 9.7 If the account is in credit, customers can choose to have the over-payment refunded or carried forward to reduce the next year's payments. If not enough has been paid, the customer can choose to clear the outstanding amount or have the debt added to the following year's bill and monthly payments re-set to repay the outstanding balance over the next 12 months.
- 9.8 For repayment of arrears NIW will work with customers to agree a sustainable repayment plan according to their individual circumstances. For further information please contact the Collection Helpline on 03458 770050.
- 9.9 Customers should also call the Collections Helpline to agree a payment plan. NIW will always require a payment plan to be set at a level which clears the current periods charges by the end of the billing period. However, if there are arrears on the account or retrospective billing has been applied to your account NIW may be able to agree a longer period of time to make instalments more manageable.

Payment of unmeasured water and sewerage charges

- 9.10 Unless a customer has agreed a different payment arrangement with NIW, unmeasured charges are payable in full 28 days from the date of the bill. Payments received will be allocated against the oldest outstanding debt unless a remittance advice is received.
- 9.11 NIW offers a range of payment plans for unmeasured customers:
- Payment by two instalments on 1 May and 1 October;
 - Payment by a maximum of 10 instalments between April and January (if a customer asks to use this option after April, the charges due will be spread equally on a monthly basis so that they are settled by the end of the annual billing period). Payment is due on the first of the month; and
 - Payment by 12 instalments is available on request.
 - Further details of payment methods can be found on the 'Paying your bill' section of our website.

- 9.12 For frequent payment plans customers should call the Collections helpline on 03458 770050 to discuss their requirements and to agree suitable plans.
- 9.13 Where a customer has agreed a plan to pay a full year's unmeasured charges by a number of instalments and subsequently fails to pay one or more instalments, the balance of annual charges will become payable immediately. NIW reserves the right to take recovery action in respect of all unpaid charges unless an alternative payment plan is agreed with NIW.

Failure to pay charges when they are due

- 9.14 NIW will ensure that every attempt is made to engage the customer to secure a reasonable and sustainable payment arrangement. Customers experiencing payment difficulties can contact NIW to discuss alternative arrangements such as smaller more frequent payments.
- 9.15 If the bill has not been paid, a reminder notice is sent advising the customer that recovery action will follow. This recovery action, which would be initiated if payment is not made or if the customer has not contacted NIW to agree a payment plan, could either be legal action, disconnection of the supply (including action to separate shared supply pipes or mixed use supplies) or a combination of both.
- 9.16 If accounts are not settled within the agreed payment schedule, NIW reserves the right to claim statutory interest at 8% above the Bank of England reference rate in force on the date the debt becomes overdue and at any subsequent rate where the reference rate changes and the debt remains unpaid. This interest levied is in addition to a fixed sum, dependent on the level of debt but not less than £40. These charges are in accordance with the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998 as amended and supplemented by the Late Payment of Commercial Debts Regulations 2002.
- 9.17 If a supply is disconnected for non-payment of charges due, then full payment of the arrears and a reconnection fee (see table 3.6) will have to be made before the supply is reconnected. If a shared or mixed use supply has been separated to allow a disconnection to be made, the costs of the separation will be added to the arrears. In some circumstances, payment of a significant proportion of the outstanding debt and an agreed plan to clear the remaining

arrears, in addition to the reconnection fee, will be accepted to reconnect the supply. Where our representative or agent visits premises to disconnect the supply and the disconnection is averted by late payment, a charge for the visit will be payable (see table 3.7).

9.18 NIW also reserves the right to require non-domestic customers to provide a security deposit in cash or some other form of secured funds. The security deposit will be equivalent to average charges over 1 billing cycle. Average charges will be based on consumption history.

9.19 If a customer fails to honour an agreed reasonable payment arrangement, in accordance with normal commercial practice, NIW may, if appropriate, initiate action to disconnect the service to protect the company and other customers from further unrecoverable losses.

Recovery of legal expenses

9.20 All costs and fees incurred by NIW or its agents in the collection of outstanding charges, such as solicitor's costs, court fees and warrant costs will be recovered from the customer. Customers will be advised of the fees likely to be added to their arrears before that cost is incurred by NIW. In cases referred to the Small Claims Court, a minimum court fee of £50 will be added to the amount outstanding.

Billing adjustments

9.21 Every effort is made to ensure that charges are billed correctly based on the information held on accounts and in accordance with this Scheme of Charges.

9.22 In circumstances where a customer has been overcharged incorrectly, a retrospective credit adjustment will be made and a refund offered to the customer.

9.23 In circumstances where a customer has been undercharged incorrectly, a retrospective debit adjustment will be made. A maximum of 18 months back billing period will apply from the "date of discovery" regardless of fault, except where a customer knowingly withholds information which prevents the company from billing correctly, or avails of water and sewerage services fraudulently.

9.24 NIW reserves the right to make retrospective adjustment to a maximum of 6 years from the date of notification of the error in accordance with The Limitations (Northern Ireland) Order 1989.

Other payment matters

9.25 Bills are issued and paid in £ Sterling. Non-domestic customers whose trade is based in the Republic of Ireland will be billed in Sterling and be expected to pay in Sterling. If a customer pays in any other currency, it will be converted into Sterling with any bank charges and currency fluctuation adjustments being made to the customer's account. NIW is unable to facilitate Direct Debits in any currency other than Sterling.

9.26 Customers can view their bills online using our self serve platform (see appendix 1 for details).

9.27 NIW reserve the right to recover any invoice processing charges imposed on NIW by customers or their agents.

10 Liability to Pay Charges

10.1 Water charges are payable for a property if a supply of water is available for use in connection with that property. Sewerage charges are payable for a property where the property drains either directly or indirectly to a public sewer for which NIW is responsible.

10.2 Unless there is an agreement between NIW and somebody else to pay charges for a property, the occupier of the property is liable to pay the charges..

Who is the “occupier of a property”?

10.3 The term ‘occupier of a property’ means, in addition to any person in actual occupation of a property or to whom NIW provides services to in relation to a property, any person who:

- Maintains an existing or newly constructed property in a condition such that it can be more readily put to use for its intended purpose;
- Maintains for residential accommodation a property which does not include exclusive occupation of one or more facilities for cooking, washing or sanitation (such as bed-sits, holiday or student hostels, or other accommodation for short term accommodation or letting);
- Has sufficient control over the property to owe a duty of care towards those who come lawfully onto any part of that property; or
- Is the occupier for the purpose of holding a licence to sell alcoholic drinks. Where premises are let for periods of less than 12 months, or are in multiple occupation, the owner may be regarded as the occupier.

Liability for charges for unoccupied properties

10.4 Where a customer is liable to pay unmeasured water and sewerage charges, the charges are payable where a furnished property is connected to water and sewerage services regardless of whether or not services are actually used.

10.5 Where a property for which unmeasured charges are payable is both unoccupied and unfurnished and no refurbishment work is being undertaken on the property, NIW will not charge water and sewerage charges on the property from date of notification subject to agreement by NIW. A small amount of furnishings may be left in the property for security purposes but furnishings

which make the property habitable will lead to the property being deemed to be furnished and full charges will be payable.

10.6 Properties which are declared to be unoccupied and unfurnished and on which no refurbishment work is being undertaken may be checked at least twice a year.

10.7 A customer wishing to leave an unoccupied property furnished for which unmeasured charges are payable, or the owner of such a property under-going refurbishment, may opt to have the water supply temporarily disconnected by NIW. Customer's wishing to request a temporary or permanent disconnection of the water supply must complete the 'Customer Requested Disconnection' application form that can be downloaded from the NIW website at <https://www.niwater.com/customer-requested-disconnection/>. Following disconnection there will be no charges for the provision of water but there will be a charge for reconnection. Reconnection charges are detailed in section 11.

10.8 Where a metered property is unoccupied and unfurnished or furnished and no water is being recorded by the meter, only the measured water and sewerage standing charges will be payable. Customer's wishing to request a temporary or permanent disconnection of the water supply must complete the 'Customer Requested Disconnection' application form that can be downloaded from the 'Your bill and our charges' section of the NIW web site. Following temporary disconnection there will be no charges for the provision of water but there will be a charge for reconnection. Reconnection charges are detailed in section xx.

Liability for charges on change of occupancy

10.9 The occupier is responsible for notifying NIW of any change in occupation status.

10.10 If a customer fails to provide at least two working days' notice that they are vacating the property, that customer will continue to be liable for charges until the date of whichever of the following occurs first:

- Where the customer informs NIW of their vacating the property less than two working days before, or at any time after they cease to occupy it, the 28th day after NIW is informed;

- The day on which the meter would normally have been read in order for the amount of the charges to be determined; or
- The day on which any other person informs NIW that they have become the new occupier of the property.

10.11 Where a measured customer telephones NIW to notify it on the day of their vacating, NIW will close a meter account on the basis of a meter reading provided by the customer. If the customer is unable to provide a reading and is agreeable to closing and settling their account on the basis of an estimated closing bill provided by NIW, the account will be closed using that estimate.

10.12 Where an occupier of a property who is liable to pay measured charges vacates the property without notifying NIW and a new occupier takes up residence also without notifying NIW, once NIW becomes aware of the new occupier it will take meter readings to establish average daily use. This average daily use will then be used to calculate charges due from the new occupier between the date they occupied the property and the date of the first meter reading taken by NIW.

Other matters regarding liability to pay charges

10.13 Where a property/ site, consisting of separate occupiable units, has a single supply pipe, and a meter can be installed, responsibility for charges will need to be agreed by the occupants. Usually the landlord or management agent will accept liability and manage on behalf of all customers within the property/sites

10.14 NIW will not provide further meters to enable cost allocation within the property. NIW expect that representative to pay the bill and recoup from the occupiers as they see fit.

10.15 Liability for charges for conjoined buildings – If a person occupies more than one separately rated building or part of a building and has access between them other than by a highway (road), NIW will agree to add the relevant capital values together and bill the property on a single value basis (so that the occupier pays only one set of standing charges). This cannot apply if there are two separate supplies.

- 10.16 Shared supply - For both measured and unmeasured water charges, the fact that a property might receive its water through a shared private service pipe does not affect liability to pay the standing charge in full and no reduction will be made to the standing charge.
- 10.17 Private sewers – for both unmeasured and measured sewerage charges, the fact that a property might drain to a public sewer via an intermediary private sewer for which the occupier is wholly or jointly responsible does not entitle the occupier to any reduction in the standard sewerage charges.
- 10.18 Single meter supplying multiple premises or customers – when a metered property is sub-divided, the owner or developer should provide separate water supplies to each new separately occupiable part. If this hasn't happened and no particular person has accepted, in writing, responsibility for the charges, we will bill the person considered to be the occupier (see section 8.4) and have the principal responsibility.
- 10.19 Liability for water and sewerage charges when the person responsible for payment applies for bankruptcy.
- 10.20 Where an Order for Bankruptcy has been made in respect of a person liable to pay water and sewerage charges and that person remains resident in the property for which a debt for water and sewerage charges was subject to the Order for Bankruptcy, that debt will be limited to charges outstanding up to the date of the Order for Bankruptcy. Any charges outstanding in respect of the current financial year will be apportioned on a daily basis up to, and including, the date of the Order for Bankruptcy. Any charges for services provided after the Order for Bankruptcy shall become due on the next day of occupation after the Order for Bankruptcy and will be payable by the person responsible for the payment of water and sewerage charges in respect of the property in question on the same terms as to payment as would apply had the property been newly occupied on that day.

NIW rights

- 10.21 NIW has powers under the Water and Sewerage Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 to require certain categories of property to be metered. Once a

meter has been installed in a non-domestic property, measured charges will be payable for the property. There is no right to revert to unmeasured charges.

Appendix 1 - How to contact us.

Customers can contact NIW by telephone, letter, e-mail and web using the contact details provided below.

Operational and general enquiries (e.g. on water quality, pressure, supply, sewerage or leaks)	
Telephone number	Waterline 03457 440088 (24 hours) Leakline 0800 028 2011 (24 hours)
Text Relay	Available through Waterline 03457 440088
Email	waterline@niwater.com
Address	PO Box 1026, Belfast BT1 9DJ
Lines Open	24 Hours
Website	www.niwater.com
Billing enquiries	
Billing line	03458 770030
Collections helpline	03458 770050
Email	customer.billing@niwater.com
Address	Written correspondence: PO Box 1026 Belfast BT1 9DJ Payments: PO Box 1025, Belfast BT1 9DH Direct debit requests: PO Box 1023, Belfast BT1 9DG
Lines Open	Monday – Friday: 8am to 8pm Saturday: 8am to 6pm Sunday: 12noon to 6pm
Developers services	
Developers Services	0345 8770002
Business Line	9.00am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday

Calls to 0345 numbers will cost no more than calls to geographic numbers (i.e. numbers starting 02) and must be included in inclusive minutes and discount schemes in the same way. Calls from landlines are typically charged between 2p and 10p per minute; calls from mobiles typically cost between 10p and 40p per minute. Calls from landlines and mobiles are included in free call packages.

Self Service

NIW have an internet based self-service facility. This enables customers to access their NIW account online at a time that is convenient to them. After registering, customers can use the self-service facility to:-

- View the account balance;
- View their bill and payment history;
- Pay a bill;
- Manage account details; and
- Request the septic tank desludging service (online registration is not required)
- To register, use the following address <http://selfservice.niwater.com>, click on 'Create an account' and follow the steps.

Appendix 2 – Customer complaints procedure.

NIW has a formal complaints procedure to deal with complaints about any aspects of the service provided. This procedure has been agreed with the Northern Ireland Authority for Utility Regulation (NIAUR). A copy of the Complaints Procedure can be downloaded from our website (www.niwater.com/complaints/). Details of the Complaints Procedure are also available on request, free of charge.

If you are not happy with how we have dealt with your complaint or would like free independent advice, you should contact the Consumer Council. The Consumer Council is an independent body that promotes and protects the interests of all consumers in Northern Ireland. The Consumer Council has the legal power to investigate a complaint on behalf of a consumer. However, generally it will not begin investigations unless it is satisfied that you have used our own complaints procedure first.

Consumer Council contact details

Address: Consumer Council for Northern Ireland,
Floor 3, Seatem House,
28-32 Alfred Street,
Belfast,
BT2 8EN

Telephone: 0800 121 6022

Web: www.consumercouncil.org.uk

E-mail: contact@consumercouncil.org.uk

Appendix 3 - Value Added Tax

All charges shown in this Scheme of Charges exclude VAT.

The supply of water is zero rated unless it is supplied to a customer whose main non-domestic activity is listed within divisions 1-5 of the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) 1980. NIW will ask customers to provide the three-digit SIC code that applies to their main business activity, and we use this to determine whether we need to apply VAT to water services. If a customer does not provide us with sufficient details to determine their SIC when they register with us, they will be charged at the standard rate of VAT until such details are provided. More information regarding these classifications can be obtained at: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/classifications/archived-standard-classifications/>

For customers whose main non-domestic activity is listed within divisions 1-5 of the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) 1980, charges for building water are subject to VAT at the standard rate. Building water charges are zero rated for all other non-domestic classifications.

Charges for the reception, disposal and treatment of foul water, sewerage and trade effluent are zero-rated. Charges for the emptying of cesspools and septic tanks are standard rated when supplied to industrial users as defined above.

Charges for the cleaning, maintenance and unblocking of sewers and drains are standard rated.

Water and sewerage infrastructure charges are outside the scope of VAT.

First time new connection charges are standard rated unless for a new build domestic property, relevant residential or relevant charitable properties which are zero rated. Relevant residential purpose means use as:

- (a) a home or other institution providing residential accommodation for children;
- (b) a home or other institution providing residential accommodation with personal care for persons in need of personal care by reason of old age, disablement, past or present dependence on alcohol or drugs or past or present mental disorder;
- (c) a hospice;
- (d) residential accommodation for students or school pupils;

- (e) residential accommodation for members of any of the armed forces;
- (f) a monastery, nunnery or similar establishment; or
- (g) an institution which is the sole or main residence of at least 90 per cent of its residents, except use as a hospital or similar institution, prison or similar institution or an hotel, inn or similar establishment.

Relevant charitable purpose means use by a charity in either or both the following ways, namely:

- (a) otherwise than in the course or furtherance of a business; or
- (b) as a village hall or similarly in providing social or recreational facilities for a local community.

A reduced rate of 5% will apply in the following two circumstances (work must be performed within the immediate site of the property):

- 1) Converting premises to a different type of residential use e.g. to:
 - a 'single household dwelling';
 - a different number of 'single household dwellings'; or
 - a 'multiple occupancy dwelling' such as bedsits.
 - premises intended for use solely for a 'relevant residential purpose'.
- 2) The renovation or alteration of empty residential premises, which must have been empty for the two years immediately before work starts.

Zero rating can also apply if the supply of the water and the first time connection are both made by NIW to a customer who applies for the connection and is also the end user of the water and their SIC code is not listed within divisions 1-5 of the SIC. However, if the customer is involved in a relevant industrial activity and has a SIC code 1-5 the supply of the water and any connection will be standard rated.

This section is not a definitive description of the liability to VAT of charges and is subject to changes in VAT legislation.

Appendix 4 – Domestic Charges

Description of charge.	Full charge	2020-21 discount
<u>Unmeasured water tariff</u>		
Variable charge (£/£000 capital value)	1.494	100%
Charge cap (standing charge + variable charge) (£)	597.61	100%
Charge for lock-up garages (£)	2.85	100%
<u>Affordability Tariff (water):</u>		
Capital value up to and including £70,000 (£)	45.66	100%
Capital value over £70,000 up to and including £100,000 (£)	68.49	100%
Capital value over £100,000 (£)	91.30	100%
<u>Unmeasured sewerage tariff</u>		
Variable charge (£/£000 capital value)	2.329	100%
Charge cap (standing charge + variable charge) (£)	931.47	100%
Charge for lock-up garages (£)	4.08	100%
<u>Affordability Tariff (sewerage):</u>		
Capital value up to and including £70,000 (£)	57.46	100%
Capital value over £70,000 up to and including £100,000 (£)	86.21	100%
Capital value over £100,000 (£)	114.94	100%

Note: NIW will not issue bills to domestic customers in 2020-21. The Department for Infrastructure will pay for these services on domestic customers' behalf.

Appendix 5 - Charging for EIR/FOI Requests

NIW may charge for providing photocopied information as follows:

Photocopying charges

Colour	Size	Price
black & white	A4	£0.25/ sheet
	A3	£0.50/ sheet
colour	A3 or A4	£1.00/ sheet

Where more than 40 sheets are provided, time will also be charged at £25 per hour or part hour with a minimum charge of £5. Postage will be charged at cost.

Payment will be required in advance. In cases where significant amounts of information are being requested, NIW will estimate the cost of provision. Where the actual cost varies significantly from the estimate, NIW reserves the right to charge or refund this difference.

NIW is committed to openness and aims to release as much information as possible both routinely and in response to requests under information access legislation. NI Water will determine the appropriate legislative framework under which the request should be responded to, i.e. Freedom of Information (FOI), Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) or Data Protection (DPA) based on the context of the request.

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 states that fees can be charged for requests above the appropriate limit of £450. The Act does not oblige NIW to comply with a request for information if it is estimated that the cost of compliance would exceed this limit. (Note: for the purpose of estimating the cost, staff costs will be charged at £25 per hour regardless of the seniority of the staff involved).

If the cost of complying with the request exceeds the appropriate limit NIW can:

- Comply with the request and waive the fee;
- Issue a fees notice based on the estimated cost of complying with the request;
- Decline the request on the basis that it exceeds the appropriate limit; or
- Ask the requestor to refine their request to a more manageable level.

NIW will not decline to provide information based on charge alone, or apply a charge for information released under the disclosure provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, unless it exceeds an assessed cost of £450.

NIW have the discretion to charge a reasonable fee for providing environmental information from the Environmental Information Regulations 2004. The charge for staff time is £25 per hour spent locating, retrieving and extracting the information requested. NIW will notify the customer upon receipt of an information request if a fee will be charged and the amount. No fees will be charged for existing publications, or for information that is on the NIW website, on the public register, or can be examined at a NIW office.

Under the General Data Protection Regulations, NI Water must provide a copy of personal information free of charge. However, the Company have a discretion to levy a 'reasonable fee' when a request is manifestly unfounded or excessive, particularly if it is repetitive. NI Water may also charge a reasonable fee to comply with requests for further copies of the same information, although this does not mean that NIW can charge for all subsequent access requests. Any such fee will be based on the administrative cost of providing the information.

Whilst printing or copying the requested information and sending it to the applicant will be charged at a rate of £0.10 per page, any charge less than £5 will be waived by NIW. Postage fees over £5 will also be charged at cost. All documents will be sent 2nd Class Post.

Appendix 6 – Glossary of terms.

At cost - where the price of requested work is being calculated, this will include company costs for administration, technical assessment, on site surveys, pipes fittings and materials as appropriate, capital costs for work under taken by our contractors, charges levied by statutory agencies and other bodies, land costs and company on-costs.

Catchment area – The surface area in square metres from which rainfall will be gathered to a central storage container for the purpose of non-potable water use within the premises.

Capital contribution - An agreed payment for the capital cost of constructing, improving or extending any sewers, pumping systems and / or waste water treatment works which is necessary to facilitate the discharge from a proposed development to the public sewerage system. Capital contributions do not include infrastructure charges or connection charges.

Communication pipe - A water service pipe between the public water main and the boundary of the property, in public areas, for which NIW has responsibility.

Connection charge (Sewer connection) - The cost of making a connection to the public sewer; which includes the provision of the lateral drain and fittings; to make the connection to the public sewer; and provide the connection to the curtilage of the property on the public area. A sewer infrastructure charge may also be included on the letter of quotation.

Connection charge (Water connection) - The cost of making a connection to the public water main, which includes the provision of the communication pipe and fittings to make the connection to the public water main and provide the boundary box at the curtilage of the property on the public area. The connection charge quotation will also include the building water charge, the water infrastructure charge and where applicable the sewer infrastructure charge.

Cubic metres (m³) - This is a standard metric unit of measurement for liquids. 1 cubic metre is equivalent to 1,000 litres.

Curtilage - the enclosed area of land adjacent to a dwelling house.

Domestic allowance – Where a metered water customer pays rates for their metered property, a domestic allowance of 100m³ for water and 95m³ for sewerage per 6 month billing period is available for each individually rated property. The domestic allowance is subtracted from the volume as recorded by the meter, before calculating the volumetric charge and is worked out for the exact number of days covered by the bill. Any unused portion of the allowance cannot be carried forward into a new bill period. The domestic allowance does not affect the standing charge.

Domestic customer/ domestic purposes - the use of water and sewerage services for domestic purposes includes washing, cooking, drinking, central heating and sanitary purposes associated with the occupation of a property as a dwelling together with activities outside the dwelling such as vehicle washing and watering of gardens. The occupant of a property which appears on the domestic property valuation list prepared by Land and Property Services will be considered as a domestic customer unless there is evidence to the contrary.

Drinking water quality register - This is the record of water quality laboratory monitoring tests and the reported compliance against the legal standards contained in The Water Supply (Water Quality) Amendment Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009 which incorporate the requirements of the European Commission's Drinking Water Directive 98/83/EC. These Regulations are enforced by the Drinking Water Inspectorate.

Full service connection - A complete service provided by NIW to provide the pipe work needed to bring drinking water from the water main to the boundary of a property. A full service connection includes tapping the water main, providing and installing the communication pipe in public property up to 10m in length, provision and installation of the stop cock / boundary box and completing all excavation backfill and reinstatement, in accordance with the Street Works Order requirements.

Infrastructure charge - A one-off payment, payable on the point of connection when a property is first connected to the public water main or public sewer either directly or indirectly. Infrastructure charges income is used to pay for the reinforcement or enhancement of the existing public water system and sewer network to cater for the increasing demand and loading on the water main distribution system or sewer network.

Infrastructure charging units - The total infrastructure charge is calculated from the number of infrastructure charging units within a development. One domestic dwelling / unit equates to one infrastructure charging unit. The number of infrastructure charging units assessed within a non-domestic development is based on a calculation of water loading units derived from the number of water using appliances within the development, as provided by the developer / builder.

Lateral drains – Pipes under public land which go from the boundary of the street to the existing public or private sewer.

Non-domestic customer / non-domestic purposes - the use of water and sewerage services for purposes which are not related to the occupation of a property as a dwelling. The occupant of a property which appears on the non-domestic property valuation list prepared by Land and Property Services will be considered as a non-domestic customer. In cases where a property is used for both non-domestic and domestic purposes, the use of water and sewerage services will be considered as non-domestic use.

Reasonable cost allowance - A fixed contribution for each identified property / unit, payable by NIW towards the provision of requisitioned water mains and sewers that are required to service existing, and / or new, development.

Relevant multiplier - Applies to non-domestic development and is the calculated value of the number of infrastructure charging units within a development.

Requisitions - A request for an extension of the public water main or public sewerage system to service a new property / properties, existing property / properties, or a new development.

Septage - waste material contained in or removed from a septic tank.

Sewer adoption - A process where a private sewer that meets specified construction standards is offered to NIW and once vested becomes an NIW asset. The adopted asset is then operated and maintained by NIW from an agreed date.

Sewer connection - Making a connection to the public sewer. The cost of the connection includes, the provision of the lateral drain, fittings to make the connection and provision of the connection to the curtilage of the property on the public area.

Standing charges - This covers the cost of installing, maintaining and reading

meters, billing and collection and enquiries. It is a scaled charge, increasing as the size of the supply pipe increases, reflecting the fact that the cost of making available a supply of water increases with the size of the pipe delivering the supply.

Standpipe - An appliance used for making a temporary connection to a public water main, by connecting to a fire hydrant.

Supply zone - This identifies a geographic area supplied by a water supply source. There may be more than one water supply zone associated with a water supply source.

Water Loading Units Assessment - A system applied to non-domestic development which uses a table of nationally agreed weightings for water using appliances within the development, to calculate the water usage and then convert it into infrastructure charging units.