

CODE OF PRACTICE

# Our complaints procedure



## **We are committed to giving you, our customer, the best possible service - all day, every day.**

We work hard to ensure that all our customers receive a consistently high level of service and we monitor our performance very carefully. We want to hear from you if you are dissatisfied with any of our services. In this Code of Practice we explain:

- How you can make a complaint
- How we will handle your complaint
- What you can do if you remain unhappy.

## **Learn about the services we provide**

Essential information about the services we provide can be found in our Codes of Practice. These have been approved by the Utility Regulator and include the following:

- Water Supply services
- Sewerage Services
- Dealing with Leaks
- Complaints Procedure
- Metering and Billing for Non-Domestic Customers.

## **All of our information leaflets and letters can be requested in the following formats:**

- In Braille
- In large print
- On CD and audio tape.

**All information leaflets can be downloaded from our website.**

## Our Complaints Procedure

We strive to provide the best possible service but sometimes things can go wrong and mistakes can be made. When this happens and it affects you, please let us know so that we can resolve it as quickly as possible. This section describes how we will handle your complaint.

### How do you make a complaint?

If you want to make a complaint about your water or sewerage services, please contact us by telephone on Waterline:

 **Phone: Waterline 03457 440088**

 **Text Relay Service: 03457 440088**

You can also submit a complaint via the 'Contact Us' section on our Self-Service website or by email:

### Self-Service:

 **<https://selfservice.niwater.com/ContactForm#Complaint>**

 **Email: [waterline@niwater.com](mailto:waterline@niwater.com)**

If you want to send a letter, our postal address is below:



**Northern Ireland Water**

PO Box 1026  
Belfast  
BT1 9DJ

If you contact us by post or email, please include a contact telephone number in case we need get in touch to clarify any information relating to your complaint.

If you contact us through social media channels such as Facebook or Twitter, we may ask you to contact us by telephone or by email.

Our Waterline service is staffed 24 hours a day, every day of the year - other customer communication channels are monitored between 8am and 4pm, Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays).

If you wish to make a complaint about your bill or account, please contact us by telephone on **Billing Enquiries 03458 770030**, through our Self-Service website, or in writing by email or by post using the details on pages 3 & 4. Our Billing Enquiries telephone line is open from:

- 8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday
- 8am to 6pm on Saturdays; and 12 noon to 6pm on Sundays.

We will record details of who has contacted us and the reason for the complaint. This information is used to help us improve our services, the handling of our complaints, and to report our performance annually to the Utility Regulator.

If you ask somebody else to contact us on your behalf we will follow the same procedure but you will be responsible for the costs of any solicitors/agents you have instructed.

Anonymous complaints will not be recorded by us for reporting purposes, but will be considered carefully and acted upon where possible.



## How do we handle your complaint?

### Telephone

We always aim to resolve telephone complaints the first time you call us. Our call centre advisors will be able to explain what has happened and what will be done to resolve the matter. If the matter requires further investigation we will explain what we need to do and we will advise you when you can expect us to contact you.

### Letters and emails

We will respond to written complaints (letters and emails) within 10 working days of the date received, or earlier if possible. In the case of complex complaints, or those requiring discussions and negotiations with other parties, we will keep you informed as our investigations progress.

## Taking it Further

### Internal review

If you are unhappy with how we responded to your complaint, you can let us know and we will review our handling of your initial complaint. This review will fall under the responsibility of a manager who has the authority to override or support the original response. You will receive a response within 10 working days.

### Free independent help and advice

If you remain unhappy with how we initially dealt with your complaint or would like free, independent advice, you can contact the Consumer Council. The Consumer Council has the power to act on your behalf and investigate your complaint about our services; they can provide assistance if you need help when making a complaint.



#### **Consumer Council**

Floor 3, Seatem House  
28-32 Alfred Street  
Belfast, BT2 8EN



**Fax: 028 9025 1663**



**Email: [contact@consumercouncil.org.uk](mailto:contact@consumercouncil.org.uk)**



**Website: [www.consumercouncil.org.uk](http://www.consumercouncil.org.uk)**



**Phone: 0800 121 6022**



**Text Relay Service: 028 9025 1600**

## Our Promises

- When you call we will answer the phone within 30 seconds.
- If you phone us we will try to deal with your questions during your call.
- If we need to investigate, we will explain what we need to do and we will tell you when we will contact you.
- If you make a complaint in writing or by email we will undertake a thorough investigation and reply to you within 10 working days.
- We will make contact with you, where necessary, to discuss your complaint.
- If your complaint relates to a mistake we have made, we will apologise and you will receive a full, fair and courteous response.
- If we have to resolve a problem we will explain what action will be taken and give a timescale for resolution.
- If we are unable to meet your expectations, we will explain why.
- If we are not responsible for the cause of the complaint, we will try to assist by pointing you in the right direction.

## The Utility Regulator

If your complaint is about our standards of service, non-compliance with our licence conditions or statutory obligations and we haven't resolved it, you may wish to contact the Utility Regulator. This is the independent non-ministerial government department responsible for regulating Northern Ireland Water.



### The Utility Regulator

Queens House  
14 Queen Street  
Belfast BT1 6ED



**Phone: 028 9031 1575**



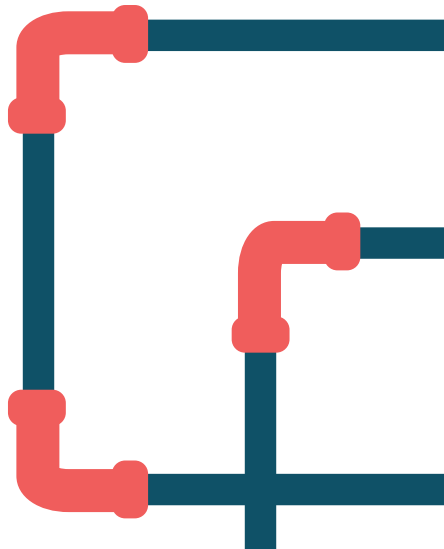
**Fax: 028 9031 1740**



**Email: [info@uregni.gov.uk](mailto:info@uregni.gov.uk)**



**Website: [www.uregni.gov.uk](http://www.uregni.gov.uk)**



## Drinking Water Inspectorate

If you have complained to us about the quality of the water you receive and you are not happy with our response or feel we have not fully solved the problem, you can contact the Drinking Water Inspectorate, which will carry out a further investigation.



### Drinking Water Inspectorate for Northern Ireland

Klondyke Building  
Cromac Avenue  
Gasworks Business Park  
Lower Ormeau Road  
Belfast BT7 2JA



**Phone: 028 9056 9282**



**Fax: 028 9031 1740**



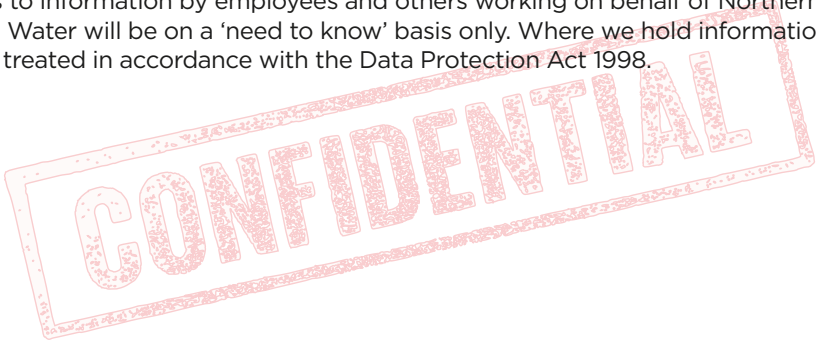
**Email: [dwi@daera-ni.gov.uk](mailto:dwi@daera-ni.gov.uk)**



**Website: [www.daera-ni.gov.uk](http://www.daera-ni.gov.uk)**

## Confidentiality

We will treat, and hold, in strict confidence all personal information you give us. Access to information by employees and others working on behalf of Northern Ireland Water will be on a 'need to know' basis only. Where we hold information, it will be treated in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.





**Northern Ireland Water**

PO Box 1026

Belfast

BT1 9DJ



**Delivering what matters**



**Waterline: 03457 440088**



**Text Relay Service: 03457 440088**



**Self-Service: <https://selfservice.niwater.com>**



**Email: [waterline@niwater.com](mailto:waterline@niwater.com)**



**Website: [www.niwater.com](http://www.niwater.com)**