**South West Water Support**

August 2022

**Tel: 0344 346 2020 Web: https://www.southwestwater.co.uk/**

Pre covid, SWW would normally carry out the service during a home visit to the customer, but we have had to adapt to the situation. Now we are providing the service over the phone and the documents won’t need to be sent in this time round, at renewal we may ask to see them.

If there is a vulnerable customer that does require a visit for any South West Water/Bournemouth water matter, we can of course do this.

**WaterCare Tariff.**

This is a reduction tariff. We work out whether more than 5% of the customers income is spent on their water bill leaving them to be in water poverty. The discounts available are 15%, 25%, 50%, 75% and 85%. The discount given is based on their bill to income ratio which we calculate.

This is currently only available for people claiming means tested benefits.

They must be on a water meter or assessed charge (a meter survey can be carried out if they are currently unmeasured on rateable value charges).

**WaterSure Tariff**

They must be on a water meter or assessed charge.

This is a set tariff which works out at £8.50 per week/£3 per week for Bournemouth water customers.

This is for people on means tested benefits.

This tariff is ideal for big families with 3 or more children under the age of 19 which they are claiming child benefit for, OR a medical condition which means they use more water, a valid doctors note or repeat prescription for the medical condition must be available.

**WaterCare Plus**

This is an additional service we provide.

1. Benefit Entitlement Check - to make sure that the customer is receiving all the benefits they are entitled to, which can then open the door to a tariff if they aren’t currently claiming.

2. Home Water Audit - We will provide a home visit to install water saving devices and check their home is water efficient.

Debt Help

**ReStart**

For those who have been in debt for more than 1 year qualify for our ReStart Plan as long as they can pay their ongoing charges (which if they qualify for our WaterCare or WaterSure tariff, this is going to be low in comparison to their normal ongoing charges).

This isn't available to homeowners.

This is done over 4 stages – each 13 weeks.

1st stage - SWW match the customers payment

2nd stage - SWW pay 1.5 x customers payment

3rd stage - SWW pay 2 x customers payment

4th stage - SWW pay 2.5 x customers payment

They will stay on ReStart until the debt is cleared, if the customer stops paying, they will be taken off the plan.

As this is to help the customer, there is no need to pay excess amounts just to get the debt wiped faster, they just need to keep paying their ongoings and the debt is slowly cleared.

**FreshStart Grant**

If someone has been through extenuating circumstances (a death, loss of job etc) and have got into debt because of this, a case can be made and this debt wiped. The debt has to be less than two years old.

**Waterdirect**

A customer can choose to pay via waterdirect if they are in debt with South West Water. Their ongoing charges + £3.85 towards their debt is taken straight from their benefits. If the customer is paying via waterdirect, we will automatically put them on our WaterCare Tariff Band 3 15% without the need to contact us. These customers will have been sent a letter to advise of this with the message that they could be entitled to more discount but they would need to contact us to go through the assessment. This is in the hope that we will reach those customers that are too worried to contact us, but to show we are here to help.

**Priority Services**

Anyone can sign up to our priority services.

This includes extra help such as large print bills, bills in braille, bills sent to another family member if the customer doesn’t cope very well, help with reading their meter, and water being delivered to them if there is ever a disruption with the water supply. In the case of Beast from the East where water was disrupted, or SWW was doing planned works on the supply, if someone is in need of constant water or wouldn't be able to get out and buy some, this will be delivered to them.

In cold months, SWW also offer pipe lagging and outside tap covers.

This service is free of charge.

**Leaks**

Not many people are aware that if you do have a leak at your property and you are on a meter, a leak allowance can be applied to the account by looking at the usage prior to the leak and refunding the difference. This needs to be applied for within 2 years and the leak must be fixed.

**Water Saving Devices**

All devices are free on South West Waters website or through a water audit.

Water butts aren't free but are subsidised.