



Priority Services Register

Our services for customers
with additional needs

Vision:

Delivering excellence for our customers, our people and our environment

Our service

At Portsmouth Water we aim to provide a high level of service to all our customers.

We want to ensure that wherever possible customers with additional needs are catered for.

This includes not only those with mobility restrictions, but also customers who are deaf, blind or partially sighted, those suffering from long term sickness or illness, and our elderly customers.

Services, such as help in the event of a supply interruption, are not just available to the bill payer, but anyone who is resident at the address.

What we need to know

We need to know your name and address and which services you would like to use.

We would also like to know about your particular situation in order to give you the best possible service. However, we appreciate that some people may not wish us to know certain details so we are requesting additional information on a purely voluntary basis to enable us to help wherever we can.

All the information given to us will be held on computer and will be treated as strictly confidential. It will only be released to those within the Company who need to know.

How to register

There are several ways to register and to let us know if you wish to use any of our services:

- telephone our Customer Services Department on the number below
- complete the application form in the centre of this booklet and return in the pre-paid envelope
- complete the application form online at www.portsmouthwater.co.uk
- write to us at the address shown below
- ask someone else to register for you
- fax your application to 023 9245 3632

The address and telephone number to contact is:

Customer Services Department
Portsmouth Water Ltd
PO Box 99
HAVANT
Hants
PO9 1XX

Telephone: **023 9249 9666**

You can, of course, ask someone else to do this for you, someone you trust such as a relative, friend, neighbour, carer or social worker.

Sending your bill

Talking Bills We can provide a talking bill service. When your bill is produced we will telephone you to tell you how much it is before we send it. If you require this service please complete Section 3 of the Registration Form.

If it would be helpful, you can nominate someone else for us to send your bill to (perhaps a relative or friend). Your nominee would not be liable for your bill but could let you know the amount and date of the payment(s) required and possibly send the payment for you. Should the bill remain unpaid, any reminders would also be sent to your nominee. Please complete Section 4 of the Registration Form. This may be useful if you find it difficult to read or understand your bill. You must have this persons agreement to do this.

Circumstances beyond your control may prevent you from paying your bill - for example, a stay in hospital. Even if you do not wish a nominee to regularly receive your bill, you may like to give us the name of someone we could contact if your bill has not been paid. See Section 4 of the Registration Form.

Everybody should be able to understand their water bill for themselves. Customers can choose to receive their water bills in large print if our standard style of billing is difficult to read.

Useful information

We produce information for customers which describe:

- how to make a complaint about our service
- the standards we guarantee and the compensation which may be payable if we fail to meet those standards
- our charges scheme (including the different ways you can pay your bill)

All these leaflets and booklets are available free of charge by phoning or writing to our Customer Services Department or by completing Section 5 on the Registration Form.

Leaflets can be provided in large print or in audio format upon request.

Emergencies and interruptions to your water supply

Occasionally we have to interrupt water supplies to carry out essential repairs. We will warn you of these interruptions by delivering a card to you if your household will be affected.

Sometimes interruptions are caused by emergencies such as burst pipes. We cannot forewarn you of these, however, we will let you know what the problem is, what action you should take and when normal supplies will be restored.

We have developed an integrated computer system which ensures that the information on customers with additional needs is only available to employees that need to know (e.g. those dealing with an emergency).

If you have registered as a customer with additional needs (e.g. kidney dialysis patient) we will, wherever possible, take these needs into consideration during an interruption or emergency. We will ensure, wherever we can, that customers who have hearing or sight problems are individually notified about the problem.

Vulnerable customers

Some customers receiving a measured supply of water may be entitled to assistance with their water charges, although certain customers with swimming pools or using sprinkler systems do not qualify. If any individual, whether the customer or not, meets the required criteria and is part of the same water bill paying household as the customer, then that customer can claim the assistance. Assistance will be available where customers are in receipt of one of the following benefits or tax credits:

- Income Support
- Income Based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Working Tax Credit
- Child Tax Credit (not just the family part)
- Pension Credit
- Housing Benefit
- Council Tax Reduction (not just single person discount)
- Employment Support Allowance

and have either three or more children under the age of 19 resident in the household OR have been diagnosed, or any occupier has been diagnosed as suffering from and are receiving treatment for, one of the following medical conditions, which causes them to use a significant additional volume of water:

- Desquamation
- Weeping Skin Disease
- Incontinence
- Abdominal Stomas
- Kidney Failure requiring Home Dialysis (unless the Health Authority contributes to the cost of water consumed)
- Crohn's Disease
- Ulcerative Colitis

Customers who believe that they qualify for assistance should contact us to obtain an Application Form or download one at www.portsmouthwater.co.uk.

Identification of company personnel

All company personnel who may have a need to call on customers carry Portsmouth Water identity cards, including a large print version. These cards include a photograph of the holder.

You should always check the identity of any caller. If, after seeing the identity card you are still unsure, then shut the door and either ring the police or our operations centre, 023 9247 7999. Our staff will understand your concern and be happy to wait.

As an added measure of security you can, if you wish, choose a password known only to you and those who need to know at Portsmouth Water. The password can be spoken or written down and can be a word or number of up to six characters. Passwords can be changed by writing to us at anytime. If you forget it, you can request a copy, which we will send to you through the post. To use this service you should tick Section 7 of the Registration Form if you are registering by post.

Checking your meter reading

If you have a meter and have difficulty in checking it, we will arrange to read it for you and to let you know the reading.

Access to our Head Office at Havant

A clearly visible ramp is available at our Head Office which leads straight into the Reception Area adjacent to the Customer Services Department.

Toilet facilities for the disabled are also available.

Home visits

At your request, we can arrange a convenient time for a member of staff to visit your home. Our staff are trained to answer questions about your water supply, provide advice on water efficiency and assist with queries about your bill.

Advice and information on aids and adaptations for water fittings in bathrooms and kitchens

There is a range of adaptations and equipment that may make water using appliances and apparatus easier for you to use.

For information and advice on what is available, possibly free of charge, you should contact your Local Authority Social Services Department and ask for the occupational therapist.

Any comments or suggestions

We have developed this range of services in the hope that they meet the needs of our older and disabled customers and those with additional needs. If you have any comments on the services, whether good or bad, or any suggestions for improvements we would like to hear them.

Please telephone or write to the address below, or add your comments in Section 8 of the form when registering.

Customer Services Department
Portsmouth Water Ltd
PO Box 99
HAVANT
Hants
PO9 1XX

Telephone: **023 9249 9666**

