

Irish Water application guide



This publication is available in Braille, on CD and in large text format on request by calling 1890 448 448.

If you would like to know more, please contact us:

Web:	www.water.ie	Irish Water
Twitter:	@IrishWater	PO Box 448
Telephone:	LoCall 1890 448 448 +353 1 707 2824 8am-8pm, 7 days a week	South City Delivery Office Cork City
Minicom:	1890 378 378 (for hearing impaired customers with their own minicom equipment)	

Please note that the rates charged for 1890 (LoCall) numbers may vary across different service providers. Calls made using mobiles may be more expensive.

Important reference details

Make sure you write your Application Number and PIN in the boxes below, as you will need these when you contact us about your application.

Application Number

PIN

You can find this on the form that we sent you.

Apply by Friday 31 October 2014

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Who are we?

Irish Water is the new national water utility, which is responsible for providing and managing public water services throughout Ireland. Irish Water is a State-owned company, established under the Water Services Acts 2007–2013, and is bringing the water services of the 31 Local Authorities together under one national service provider.

The purpose of Irish Water is to safeguard water as a precious natural resource and to deliver water services in a way that protects the environment and meets the needs of all citizens and industry now and in the future.

Clean water is expensive to both produce and manage.

It seems simple, but there is a complex and expensive process to provide water services, to treat raw water and transform it into clean drinking water, and to treat your wastewater so that it can be safely reintroduced to our rivers, lakes and the sea.

Our pipes, sewers, treatment plants and reservoirs are badly in need of investment to keep pace with increasing demands and to ensure high quality water continues to be supplied throughout the country.

Increasing investment will lead to improved and safer water services.

Despite the good work of the Local Authorities, much greater investment is needed nationally to address weaknesses in the water system.

These weaknesses include:

- > high levels of water leakage;
- > varying standards in water quality;
- > disruptions to supply;
- > environmental compliance.

The new funding model, based on revenue collection and reinvestment, will ensure that the public water system can meet the challenges of the future and deliver standards of which we can all be proud.

We are at the start of the journey together.

We have been given responsibility for this vital communal resource and, as its custodians, we want to work with you to safeguard it. **For both metered and unmetered homes domestic water charges will apply from 1 October 2014, with the first bills being issued from January 2015.**

What do I need to do?

We are contacting every home in Ireland and have developed this booklet to explain why, and to help you understand what you need to do. Please read this booklet carefully. If you need more information please contact us:

Web: **www.water.ie**

Telephone: **LoCall 1890 448 448**

or **+353 1 707 2824**

Lines are open from 8am - 8pm, 7 days a week.

**Every household should apply by the closing date
Friday 31 October 2014.**

By completing the application process it will help us to clarify if you are a customer, apply any water services allowances to which you may be entitled and to provide you with an accurate bill when billing starts in January 2015.

You should apply if:

- > you are the owner and live in the property; or
- > you are the occupier and live in the property; or
- > you are the owner of the property and there is no occupier in the property (for example a holiday home); or
- > you do not have public water services connected to your property (you need to tell us that you are not a customer).

What if I am not a customer of Irish Water?

If you are not supplied by the public water main and are not connected to a public sewer, then you are not a customer of Irish Water. To ensure that we do not contact you again, we ask that you complete the application process.

What if I am a landlord?

We are sending an application pack to every household in Ireland requesting that the occupier reply to us. If you are a landlord then you will receive a letter from us with a list of all the residential properties we believe you own. This is to allow you, as the owner, to respond if the property is unoccupied.

What if I am a tenant?

If you are a tenant, and therefore the occupier of the property, you need to confirm your details and apply for your water services allowances. We will then set you up as a customer of Irish Water.

What if I am moving out of my home soon?

If you are moving out of your home before 1 October 2014 please call us. If you are planning to move out of your home after 1 October 2014 please complete the application process and call us before you move out.

What if I use water for household and business purposes at the same property?

If you use water services for both household and business purposes at the same property, then you are obliged to pay for household water services. Water charges apply for your household usage from 1 October 2014, therefore you should return the completed form to us to confirm you are a customer using household water services. The household portion of your use will be assessed based on the responses provided in your application.

Business use will continue to be charged as it is currently. There is no change to the unit rates or standing charges and no VAT is applicable.

What information do I need to fill in the form?

Before you start, you will need:

- > your Application Number and PIN. These are printed in the box on the top right corner of the form.

You may also need:

- > your PPS Number;
- > the PPS Numbers of all children (17 years old or under) living with you who are in receipt of Child Benefit.

What happens if I don't return a completed form?

If you don't contact us or we don't receive a completed form from you, we are obliged to bill you based on the details we have about your household. If you are metered, we will charge you for water services based on the meter readings. If you do not have an Irish Water installed water meter, we will charge you the default assessed charge as outlined in the Water Charges Plan (see page 8). Furthermore you will not receive any water services allowances.

Will Irish Water call to my home, telephone or email me?

No, we will not call to your home and we will only telephone or email you if you have been in contact with us first and we need to clarify something with you.

You can provide your information in one of three ways:

1. Web: **www.water.ie**
it's easy to apply any time of day by completing the form online;
2. Telephone: **LoCall 1890 448 448** or **+353 1 707 2824**
lines are open from 8am-8pm, 7 days a week;
3. Post: complete the application form and return it in the prepaid envelope provided.

Water services charges

The Commission for Energy Regulation (CER) has been appointed the economic regulator of Irish Water. It will approve the charges for water services in the Water Charges Plan following the conclusion of a public consultation. The Water Charges Plan, as approved by the CER, is a document which sets out the charges that apply to customers for the provision of water services.

When the decision is published, Irish Water will inform the public of the charges through press advertisements and on our website www.water.ie. We will also produce a booklet advising you of the prices and terms and conditions and send it to you.

In the meantime if you want to know more about the water services charges proposals put forward by Irish Water then please visit www.water.ie.

It has been determined that there will be no standing charge, VAT is not applicable and bills will normally be issued quarterly.

Guide to completing the application form

Section A | Account holder information

The form is to be completed by the customer (or the person making the declaration if you are not a customer of Irish Water).

Question 1: This question asks you to confirm the name of the person or organisation who is to be the account holder for water services or who is making the declaration that they are not a customer. If you wish to add more than one name to the account then please call us on LoCall 1890 448 448.

Question 2: This is the address of the property where water services are provided and for which this application is being made. If you want to use a different address for correspondence and billing, you can supply this at question 15.

Question 3: Please tell us if you are the tenant of the property. We need to know this so that we can change the account to the owner of the property if you move out.

Section B | Water services

This part of the form tells us what kind of water services your property has. This helps us to determine if you are a customer of Irish Water. This is important so we can bill you accurately or record that you are not a customer of Irish Water.

Are you a customer of Irish Water?	Public sewer	Septic tank	Other wastewater treatment system
Public water main	Customer 		
Group Water Scheme			
Private well			
Rainwater harvesting system			

Question 4: Please tell us what type of piped water supply your property has. If you are connected to the public water main, you are a customer of Irish Water and you will be charged for water supply. Please tick all types of water supply that apply to your property.

Most households in urban areas in Ireland are connected to the public water main*.

*Source: 2011 Census

Question 5: Please tell us what type of wastewater or sewerage facility your property has. If you are connected to the public sewer you are a customer of Irish Water and you will be charged for wastewater. Please tick all types of wastewater facilities that apply to your property.

Most households in urban areas in Ireland are connected to the public sewer*.

If you are not supplied by the public water main and are not connected to a public sewer, then you are not a customer of Irish Water. Please continue to Section F of the form and leave blank the sections you don't need to fill in.

Question 6: Please tell us if you currently receive a bill for water services from your Local Authority.

Question 7: Please tell us if your property is used as a private residence. A private residence is a dwelling occupied by one or more people.

Section C | Water services allowances and charges

This section helps us to apply the water services allowances for which you may be eligible. It is important that you fill out this section if you wish to apply for any allowances and to make sure you receive a bill that is accurate. If you wish to apply you will need your PPS Number and the PPS Numbers of children

*Source: 2011 Census

in receipt of Child Benefit living with you. If you do not fill out this section and apply by 31 October 2014, you may not receive water services allowances from 1 October 2014 (subject to the Water Charges Plan).

PPS Number: a PPS Number is always seven numbers followed by either one or two letters. Your PPS Number can be found on your payslip, tax documents and correspondence from a social welfare office. It is a unique number for use in any transactions you may have with public bodies.

Question 8: Please tell us how many people live in this property. This is the number of adults and children who have their primary home at this address. This question allows us to calculate the charge that applies to your property if you are unmetered.

If this question is not completed you will not receive the household water services allowance. We will bill you for water services based on your meter reads, or, if you do not have an Irish Water installed water meter, we will charge you based on the default assessed charge as outlined in the Water Charges Plan.

If you tick zero for this question, you are stating that nobody lives at the property. Therefore you must also apply for the unoccupied dwelling charge so please go to Question 11 next.

Question 9: If you are applying for the household water services allowance we require your PPS Number.

Each household (a residential property with at least one resident) is eligible for a free allowance of 30,000 litres of water supplied and 30,000 litres for wastewater every year. Only one household water services allowance is available per occupied property.

You should apply for the 'household water services allowance' for the property that you live in. You should apply for the 'unoccupied dwelling charge' if you own another property that is not permanently occupied such as a holiday home. This must be done on two separate applications.

Question 10: If you are applying for the children's water services allowance we need you to tell us the PPS Numbers of the children living with you. Each household is eligible for an allowance for every child 17 years old or under who lives in the property and is in receipt of Child Benefit. This allowance is to cover a child's normal use of water and wastewater. You can list up to six children's PPS Numbers on the form. **You will need to visit www.water.ie or call us on LoCall 1890 448 448 if you wish to apply for more than six children.**

Child Benefit (previously known as Children's Allowance) is payable to the parents or guardians of children under 16 years of age, or 17 years old or under if the child is in full-time education, Youthreach training or if they have a disability.

Question 11: If there are no people living in the property you should apply for the unoccupied dwelling charge. This applies, for example, if the property is a holiday home. This is a minimum charge for residential properties that are not permanently occupied and are connected to public water services. To avail of this minimum charge please provide your PPS Number.

PPS Numbers provided by you will be stored securely by Irish Water and will be verified with the Department of Social Protection to ensure your application is correct.

Section D | Contact information

This section provides us with accurate information should we need to contact you about operational issues or if we have questions about your account.

Question 12 and 13: We would like your permission to record your telephone numbers and email address so we can contact you about your account. This may be used if we need to contact you about information on your water services. We will not give your information to any third party except in accordance with the law.

Question 14: Please tell us if you want to receive your bill in English or Irish.

Question 15: If you would like to receive your bill and correspondence at a different address from the address where the water services are supplied, then you will need to give us this address.

Section E | Services for vulnerable customers

Question 16: You can request registration forms for special and priority services. You can also nominate a carer or another person to deal with your bills and your correspondence. If you tick the box indicating you want to request any of these services, we will send you an information booklet and registration forms.

Special services register

Irish Water have developed a confidential special services register for customers who prefer to have some of our services adapted to suit their needs.

You qualify if you:

- > are aged 66 or over and living alone, with minors (under 18) or others aged 66 or over;
- > are blind, visually impaired, deaf, hard of hearing or have mobility difficulties;
- > have an intellectual disability or a mental illness.

Please note that we may ask for proof of eligibility for inclusion on the register and this may involve requesting medical information.

Reading difficulties

If you have difficulty reading your bill you can ask to receive your bill in one of the following formats:

- > Braille bill;
- > talking bill;
- > view your bill online in a format compatible with assistive reading technology.

With a 'talking' bill a member of staff will phone you with details of your latest bill. This gives you the opportunity to ask any questions that you may have. We will still send you your bill in the normal way.

For customers who are blind or visually impaired we can send you copies of our water services Terms and Conditions, Customer Charter and Codes of Practice on CD by request when they are available.

Hearing difficulties

- > If you have hearing difficulties and you have minicom equipment you can contact us using the following number: 1890 378 378.
- > Alternatively you can email us by filling out the web form online at www.water.ie.

Priority services register

Irish Water has developed a confidential priority services register for residential customers who have a critical medical dependency on water.

You qualify if you have a critical medical dependency on water.

Please note that we may ask for proof of eligibility for inclusion on the register and this may involve requesting medical information.

Provision is also being made for customers with higher usage due to medical needs. Please contact us to request an information booklet and registration form.

Section F | Declaration

You are not asked to provide a signature on the form but, by completing and returning the form, you declare that all of the information provided is to your knowledge true. We ask that you tick the box to confirm you have read and understood the declaration.

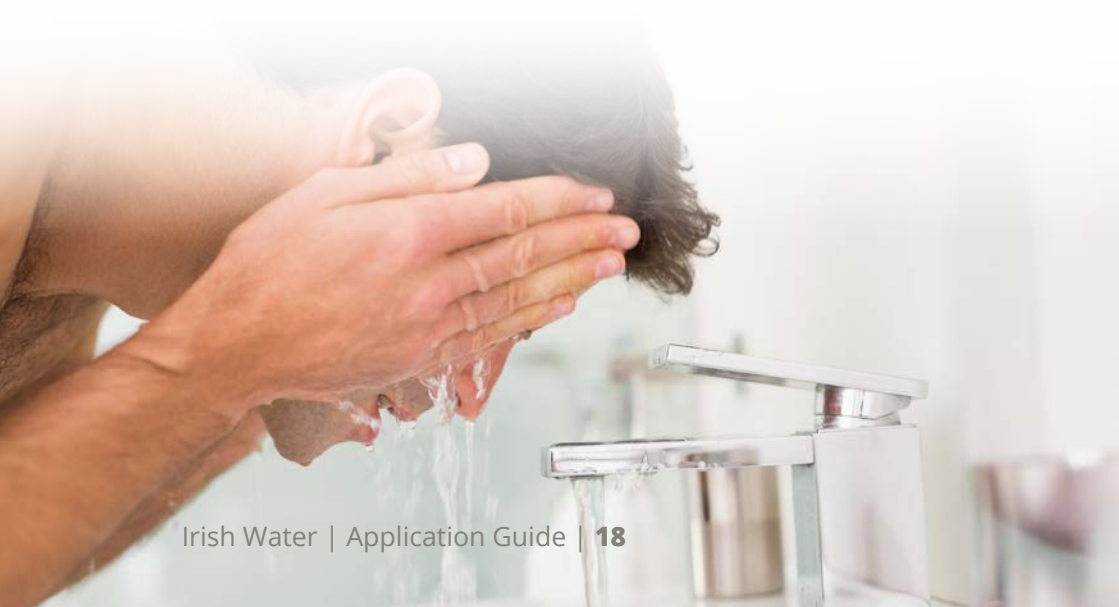
If you have ticked (a) for either Question 4 or 5 you have declared you are a customer of Irish Water and you are confirming that you have the authority to open an account at the premises and that you are liable for water charges at that premises.

If you have not ticked (a) for Question 4 and 5 you have declared that you are not a customer of Irish Water.

Giving information that is not true is an offence under the Water Services Act 2007 (as amended) and if you do, you may be subject to a fine on summary conviction.

Section G | Data protection

This section gives you a choice of whether or not you wish to receive marketing information about water related products or services from Irish Water or agents acting on our behalf. If you do not want to receive this type of information, tick the box in this section. We will comply with the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003.



Section H | Payment options

There are several options available to you to pay your bill.

Direct Debit

You can sign up to Direct Debit by completing the Mandate on the application form or complete the application process online through our website www.water.ie. This gives Irish Water permission to send instructions to your bank to take bill payments from your bank account. Please contact your bank for further information on Direct Debit.

To complete the SEPA Direct Debit Mandate form you will need your International Bank Account Number (IBAN). It contains your bank account number and a new code so that your bank account can be used throughout the EU. This code can be found on your bank statement or can be requested from your bank. You will also need your Bank Identifier Code (BIC). BIC codes are specific to each bank within the EU (replacing sort codes). This 8-11 character code can be found on your bank statement or can be requested from your bank.

Cash

You can pay your bill at any retail outlet where you see the PayPoint, Payzone and PostPoint signs or at any Post Office. You can pay your bill or make a part payment of a minimum value of €10.

Online Banking / Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT)

Payment can be made through your bank's online bill payment option.

Mybills.ie

You can pay through An Post's free online service at www.mybills.ie by using your debit card.

Cheque

You can post a cheque, together with a completed payment slip (attached to the bill), to Customer Services, Irish Water, PO Box 860, South City Delivery Office, Cork City, Ireland.

Please do not send cash by post.

Debit or Credit Card

You can call us on LoCall 1890 278 278 to make card payments. You will need your Irish Water account number to hand.

Please allow up to five days for your payments to appear on your account.

Be water smart

Please be considerate in your use of water and avoid wastage. Here are some ways to be water smart in the home:



Only fill your kettle with as much water as you need – you'll also save on your electricity bill.



Use a basin. Collecting the water you use to rinse fruit and vegetables can then be used for watering plants.



Use a low flow shower head - this can cut your water consumption by up to 12%. Ask your plumber for advice.



Don't keep the tap running, even when brushing your teeth. Running taps can use up to six litres a minute.



Make sure your washing machine and dishwasher are always fully loaded.



Ask your plumber to add a displacement device to your toilet cistern.



Have a shower instead of a bath. Showers use only half the quantity of water required by a bath.



Have shorter showers. One less minute in the shower can save at least seven litres a day.

Managing your account

If you make your application through our website www.water.ie or by calling us you can sign up for online account management. The services listed below will be available to use from January 2015.

Online account management

Online account management allows you to access your account anytime through our website www.water.ie.

Once registered you can:

- > view and pay your bill;
- > view your next bill date;
- > view previous bills and online transactions on your account;
- > sign up for paperless billing;
- > sign up for Direct Debit online.

Paperless billing

Once you register your online account, you can choose the paperless billing option. When your bill is ready to be viewed we will send you an email notification and you can then view your bill online (and print it if required). We will no longer send your paper bill in the post, which will help protect our environment.

Automated telephone service

The automated telephone service is available 365 days a year. Please have your Irish Water account number and your Water Point Reference Number (WPRN) from your bill when you call. With this service you can:

- > make payments;
- > check your balances.

