



are you  
**planning**  
to switch?

All business customers and public sector, charitable and not-for-profit organisations can choose their water and sewerage supplier.

This leaflet explains how you could save water and money.

## How your business could benefit

If you buy water and sewerage services on behalf of any of Scotland's 130,000 business customers and public sector, charitable and not-for-profit organisations you are now able to choose the supplier that best suits your needs – however big or small your business and wherever your location.

This is because since April 2008 the water and sewerage market in Scotland has been opened up to competition. The new market brings an end to the 'one size fits all' approach. The benefits suppliers bring include:

- a higher standard of service;
- services that are more closely tailored to your business needs;

- better value for money; and
- advice about how to use water more efficiently.

Many thousands of customers are already enjoying the direct benefits of the new arrangements.

**Suppliers are offering a range of new and expanded services to customers, including easier billing, water saving measures, ways to identify and reduce leaks, and quicker responses to customer enquiries.**

## It is easy to switch

Switching is simple. You will just need to contact the licensed supplier you have chosen. It will then work with an independent body (the Central Market Agency) to coordinate the switch.

Your new supplier may ask you for your supply point identification number, which may be on your current bill or is available from your existing supplier.



**Customers are being given advice about how to reduce their water consumption. This is leading to other initiatives to recycle waste and drainage water and is bringing environmental benefits in both lower abstraction and through lower energy use.**

Many customers in Scotland have already chosen to switch supplier in search of a better deal, or have renegotiated the terms of their supplies.

**Customers are able to switch online and carry out price comparisons immediately.**

## **How the market works**

The market operates in much the same way as in other utility services where a range of suppliers compete for customers by offering them the best deal.

Suppliers buy wholesale services – the physical supply of water and removal of sewage – from Scottish Water (the former monopoly supplier). They then package them with other value-adding services for their customers at competitive prices.

Scottish Water retains control of Scotland's publicly owned network of pipes and treatment works. It also continues to serve all household customers.

**New initiatives are helping customers keep a close eye on their bills. Services include online account management, online payment and meter reading, and e-billing. For those who operate a number of different sites, switching to one consolidated e-bill can save literally thousands of pounds a year.**

## **Self-supply**

Competition also offers the opportunity for business customers and public sector, charitable and not-for-profit organisations to apply for a 'self-supply' licence. As a self-supplier, you would receive services direct from Scottish Water and pay only the appropriate wholesale charges. You would not, however, receive any retail services (such as meter reading or assistance from a retailer in the event of an incident on the network).

## Your charges and the service you receive are protected

Although they may offer different customer packages, all suppliers are required to offer a standard 'default' level of service, for a 'default' tariff. This acts as a safety net to protect all customers. The default tariff is no more than the maximum charge that customers would have paid to Scottish Water had competition not been introduced.

## Find out more

To find the best deal for your business or organisation you should first of all contact any or all of the water and sewerage suppliers to discuss your requirements.

For the contact details of all of the current suppliers and the latest information on competition in the Scottish water industry, look on [www.scotlandontap.gov.uk](http://www.scotlandontap.gov.uk)



If you have a general enquiry about how the market is regulated, please contact us:

**By email:**

[enquiries@watercommission.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@watercommission.co.uk)

**By phone:** +44 (0)1786 430200

**In writing:** Water Industry Commission for Scotland, First Floor, Moray House, Forthside Way, Stirling, FK8 1QZ.



April 2011

The Water Industry Commission for Scotland is the economic regulator of the Scottish water industry, ensuring that all customers in Scotland receive value for money.

