

Upper Rissington Frequently Asked Questions April 2014

I'm moving house soon. What do I have to do?

It's important to let us know you're moving so we can calculate your final bill. We will need your final meter reading - complete our moving away form or moving within area form and let us take care of the rest.

What should I do if I have a leak?

We have lots of advice about leaks, water pressure and blockages in our Report a Problem section.

Where do I find information about the Water Quality in my area?

Albion Water adopted the network which supplies Upper Rissington from the Rissington Management Company in two phases:

- The new development area known as 'Victory Fields' was adopted on 1st January 2014
- The former camp area was adopted on 1st April 2014.

Prior to these dates the Upper Rissington area was supplied via a private distribution network and the Local Authority was responsible for monitoring the quality of water supplied.

From the above dates Albion became responsible for monitoring the quality of water supplied at Upper Rissington and commenced regulatory sampling. From the 1st April 2014 this includes the former camp.

Once sufficient monitoring data is available a statistical analysis of the water quality supplied to the area where this property is located will be undertaken. The summary of this analysis will be made available on Albion Water's website.

If you have any queries or concerns regarding your water quality then please contact our Customer Services Team.

Low pressure?

We have lots of advice about water pressure, leaks and blockages in our Report a Problem section.

Can you recommend a plumber?

Unfortunately, we can't recommend a plumber. We would recommend that you source a plumber that is approved under WIAPS scheme (Water Industry Approved Plumbing Scheme) at www.wras.co.uk/wiaps/.

Do I have to fix a leak?

If the leak is within your property boundary, then it is your responsibility to fix it. You can find out more information on leaks within our Report a Problem section.

What if I spot a leak in the street?

If you spot a leak in your street, then call our emergency number 0800 917 5819 straight away.

How can I pay my bill?

You can pay your bill in a number of ways, either by direct debit, cheque, internet/telephone banking, PayPoint or by debit/credit card. Further details can be found within our Pay Your Bill section.

What if I'm having difficulty paying?

Should you find yourself in financial difficulty, requiring assistance to cover sewerage bills, Albion recommends that you contact our customer helpline to notify us without delay. Temporary arrangements could possibly be made to spread payments. We will check that you are on the most appropriate plan for your circumstances and we will recommend other organisations that may be able to offer you debt counselling services. Customer Services Team on 0845 604 2355 (8.30am-5.30pm Mon-Fri).

What is the Direct Debit Guarantee?

This Guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that accept instructions to pay Direct Debits, if there are any changes to the amount, date or frequency of your Direct Debit, Albion Water Limited will notify you 10 working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed. If you request Albion Water Limited to collect a payment, confirmation of the amount and date will be given to you at the time of the request. If an error is made in the payment of your Direct Debit, by Albion Water Limited or your bank or building society, you are entitled to a full and immediate refund of the amount paid from your bank or building society. If you receive a refund you are not entitled to, you must pay it back when Albion Water Limited asks you to. Link to BACS FAQ about the DDG?

<http://www.directdebit.co.uk/DirectDebitExplained/Pages/DirectDebitGuarantee.aspx>

Can I cancel my Direct Debit?

Yes you can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by simply contacting your bank or building society. Written confirmation may be required. We would also ask that you also notify us.

What are private drains and sewers?

A private drain is a pipe which carries foul and/or surface water from one property to a sewer. A private sewer is a pipe that collects and conveys foul and/or surface water from several properties and which has not been adopted by Albion Water. In an emergency, Albion Water is able to arrange clearance of blockages from both private drains/sewers and public sewers.

If the blockage occurred in a private drain/sewer then those customers discharging to that drain or sewer will be financially liable for clearance costs.

What does the Standing Charge cover?

Our standing charge covers a fixed fee for surface water management; the costs that we incur for customer billing, account maintenance, payment collection and answering enquiries.

What is the rateable value (RV)?

The rateable value only applies to properties of a certain age. Each property was assessed by the local authority and given a rateable value under the 1973 Valuation Act; these were updated in March 1990. This value was based on a number of factors including the size of the property, its general condition and the availability of local services. It is not the same figure as your property's council tax band. If your property has a rateable value (and no meter), your bill from Albion will be calculated on this basis and you will see 'rateable value (RV)' identified on your bill. If you believe that we should be charging you by rateable value then please contact the Customer Services Team on 0845 604 2355 (8.30am-5.30pm Mon-Fri).

I have a soak away/surface water from my property runs directly into a river, can I claim back surface water drainage charges?

A fixed fee to pay for surface water management is included within your standing charge. If you are able to prove to Albion's satisfaction (e.g. a surveyor's report) that your property does not have any surface water discharge connected to the sewerage system then a lower standing charge will be payable. Please check your bill to identify whether surface drainage has been charged prior to claiming a rebate - properties without surface drainage managed by Albion Water should already benefit from a reduced standing charge. In the event that grounds for a rebate are proven, Albion will reduce the standing charge in line with the fixed surface water element for the current and future charging years.

How much will I be charged for the water or sewerage provision to the property that I occupy?

This will depend upon a number of factors, for example: whether or not your property has a meter, if your property has a rateable value, or if you qualify for special assistance. Please refer to our Scheme of Charges for further information. Alternatively contact our Customer Service Team on 0845 604 2355 or email us at customerservices@albionwater.co.uk

Have I been charged VAT?

Water and sewerage charges to both domestic and commercial customers do not normally attract VAT. VAT is charged at standard rate on the maintenance, cleaning, unblocking etc of sewers and drains. Where we charge VAT we will indicate clearly on your bill which elements attract VAT and the amount of VAT payable. If VAT is included on your account and you feel you should not be charged, please contact us. We are bound by 'Notice 701/16 Water and sewerage services' available from HMRC.

I receive benefits and I understand that I may be eligible for assistance with my water and sewerage charges, is this correct? - Answer

You may qualify for our WaterSure tariff or Special Assistance Fund, to apply please complete and send our SAF form, depending upon your circumstances and account type, please contact our Customer Service Team and we will talk through the options with you.

What is a water meter?

A meter is a device used to measure the flow of water to your property. It can be traditionally found in chambers either in the highway or in your front garden. Albion Water's preferred location is under the kitchen sink as our meters are automated allowing our meters to be read remotely.

I would like to have a water meter installed at my property, what do I need to do?

If we are able to fit a free meter in unmetered properties so that our charges are based on actual water used in addition to your fixed charge. If, however, you opt for a free meter and then decide you want to return to an unmetered charge you must request this within your first year of having a meter or within one month of receiving your second bill (whichever is later). Subsequent occupiers will not have the option to revert to an assessed charge and will be charged on a metered basis.

If you are renting a property you may still be able to arrange for a meter to be fitted, however it is recommended that you seek your landlord's permission prior to the request. If you have fixed tenure of less than six months you **MUST** ask the landlord's permission; if you have a fixed tenancy of longer than six months your landlord cannot stop you from having a meter. The terms of your tenancy agreement should be taken into consideration as you may need consent to alter or improve the property.

Unfortunately, it is not possible to fit meters to individual properties that are on shared supplies.

I think that a mistake has been made on my bill, what should I do?

Please contact our Customer Service Team and we will look into the matter and try to resolve it with you.

What do you use my personal information for?

We may use information about you to:

- i) Provide you with water and sewerage services and give you information about your provision and related products.
- ii) Manage your account including collection and recovery of charges.

I have a complaint?

If you have a complaint, please complete our complaint form.