

ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL

Roscommon Non-Domestic Water Metering Project

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why will some consumers receive a water bill when they never paid for water or waste water services previously?

- A. Under the Government's Water Pricing Policy Framework, Local Authorities are required to achieve universal metering of the water supplied to the non-domestic sector by the end of 2006 and to recover costs of water and waste water services delivered to the non domestic sector from that sector. *Veolia Water Ireland* have been appointed by *Roscommon County Council* to operate and maintain a billing service. Those consumers who already have a meter installed will continue to be billed based on metered consumption.

2. What is the legal basis of the relationship between *Roscommon County Council* and *Veolia Water Ireland*?

- A. *Veolia Water Ireland* has been appointed by *Roscommon County Council* to implement and manage the water metering, reading and billing service on its behalf.

3. Who is responsible for deciding what each consumer should pay?

- A. The water charges are made each year by *Roscommon County Council* and provided to *Veolia Water Ireland*, who will apply the charges to each consumer's account on the basis of consumption. Currently there are only 30 large consumers of water who area metered and they are charged 87c per cubic meter for water consumption.

Each bill will consist of two parts – a fixed charge to cover the cost of installing, maintaining and reading the meter and a variable charge based on consumption.

4. How can consumers benefit from installing a meter?

- A. It gives the consumer the opportunity to monitor their water use and to use their water more economically which will be reflected on the bill charge.

5. When will the consumer's water meter be installed?
 - A. *Veolia Water Ireland* will be contacting all consumers throughout 2005/2006 to arrange a pre installation survey and installation of meter(s)

6. What does a pre-installation survey involve?
 - A. A member of the *Veolia Water Ireland's* team will call and survey your premises, collate information concerning water connection details and complete a questionnaire to determine a suitable location for the water meter(s).

7. What happens after the pre-installation survey?
 - A. Following the pre-installation survey, *Veolia Water Ireland* will determine the size of water meter(s) required. *Veolia Water Ireland* will then organise a date when the water meter(s) can be installed.

8. Where will the meter be installed?
 - A. The meter and meter box will be installed externally where possible and as close to the property boundary in the public road as practicable.

9. Who is responsible, if there is a leak in the pipe?
 - A. Whether a consumer has a meter or not, they are responsible for any leakage of water on their property or if the leak occurs on the consumer's side of the meter. *Roscommon County Council* is responsible for finding and repairing any leak the public side of the meter.

10. What happens if the same connection is used for my house and my land/commercial building?
 - A. Where this is not possible to separate land/commercial building from a domestic supply, a domestic allowance will be made in the bill and the consumer will only pay for the amount of water above that allowance.

11. What if I have more than one connection to my lands?
 - A. Each connection from the main supply will be metered.

12. How can the consumers pay their bill?

- A. Once the new billing service is in operation, the bills will indicate the methods for payment which will include cash, cheque, credit or debit card. Alternatively the consumer will be able to call into *Veolia Water Ireland's* office at the address on the bill. *Veolia Water Ireland* will not have the facility to receive payment for any services other than water/waste water.

13. How many bills will the consumer receive?

- A. Once the new billing system is in operation, *Veolia Water Ireland* will issue bills to consumers every three months.

14. Will the consumer qualify for tax relief on the bill?

- A. Tax relief may be available in certain circumstances. The consumer should contact their local tax office for details.

15. What happens if the consumer does not pay the amount owed or does not keep to the arrangement?

- A. The steps *Veolia Water Ireland* takes on behalf of Roscommon County Council to recover the debt are;

14 Days after bill issue a reminder letter is sent

21 Days after bill issue a further reminder will be sent advising customers that interest charges will be payable if the balance is still unpaid after 28 days from date of bill issue

28 Days after bill issue a third reminder letter is sent advising customers that interest charges are being applied from the date of bill issue

56 Days after bill issue *Veolia* declares in writing to Roscommon County Council that the customer is in final default

After a further 7 days the *Veolia* will disconnect the supply providing it is independent of a domestic connection.

16. What if the consumer has a dispute with the bill?

- A. If the consumer thinks they are not liable for the bill or dispute the amount, they must initially contact *Veolia Water Ireland* at their *Customer Service Centre*.

17. Who will deal with the consumer's complaints?

- A. All written complaints are dealt with by a member of *Veolia Water Ireland's* team who will carry out an investigation, check progress and ensure a satisfactory response is made to the consumer. This notification will be made by letter or phone call.

18. How long will it take *Veolia Water Ireland* to respond to complaints?

- A. *Veolia Water Ireland* must answer all complaints within a reasonable timeframe. If the matter is complex and requires additional investigation *Veolia Water Ireland* will write to the consumer with details and an expected conclusion time.