

Press Release

Good news for customers as water company drops its prices



SEMBCORP Bournemouth Water (SBW) published its annual water prices today, which sees customer bills falling significantly.

While bill decreases will be slightly larger or smaller for some customers, the average household water bill is set to fall by £18 (over 11 per cent) for the period April 2015 to March 2016.

This means that on a like for like basis, customers will pay less for their water than they did last year.

Publication of its prices follows the regulator's final determination of the company's prices, and the finalisation of SBW's business plan for the next five years.

The price drop is set against last year's price freeze and an average decrease of three per cent across the industry this year, making SBW's average household bill of £135 more than 25 per cent less than the average across the country for water supply.

The company is keen to emphasise that smaller bills will not mean a decline in service, or large bill increases in the future. The quality of the water supplied will remain very high and SBW aims to maintain its position as one of the best performers in the industry for customer service.

The company will deliver improvements in areas customers have identified as priority, while ensuring that following this price cut, the average bill increase will be kept below inflation up to 2020.

Among the improvements is a promise to fix visible leaks quickly, and to reduce leakage from the network of water mains, the amount of energy used in its operation and the risk of large-scale supply interruption. In addition, SBW has extended the range of support it offers customers who have difficulty paying their bills, and plans to consult on a potential social tariff during 2015.

Roger Harrington, SBW's Managing Director, said: "We've listened to our customers and are committed to making the improvements to our service that our customers value. Our programme of improvement, although gradual, has quantifiable targets against which we'll be measured, and penalties for failure to meet them. Therefore we believe that our interests and our customers' interests are aligned. We are also committed to publishing our performance and being subject to challenge by an independent customer panel."