



We are independent. Our complaint resolution service is free, fair and easy to use. If we can't help you, we will tell you about someone who can.

What is a backbill?

A backbill is a catch-up bill that charges you for any energy or water you have used but not yet been charged for in your other bills.

You may get a backbill because:

- your provider had a problem with your billing or meter reading when they billed you
- your last bill or bills were estimates and you ended up using more than the estimate
- your last bill or bills were wrong or were based on a wrong meter reading.

Time limits for backbilling

If your provider needs to send you a backbill, it must keep to these time limits:

Water

Your water provider can only backbill you for the amount undercharged in the last 9 months from the meter read date on your last bill.

The rules are different for smaller providers. They can backbill you for 12 months.

Energy

Your energy provider can backbill you for the unpaid energy you used in the last 9 months.

Your energy and water providers can also backbill you more than 9 months if this was your fault. This could happen if you did not let your provider read your meter.

Other rules for backbilling

If your water or energy provider backbills you it must:

- write the backbill amount in a special bill or as a separate amount on your next bill
- explain the backbill amount
- not charge you interest on the backbill amount
- give equal time to pay it up to 12 months for energy and 9 or 12 months for water depending on your provider.

Equal time means that if the backbill amount is for water or energy you used over 6 months, your provider must give you 6 months to pay.

Payment help

If you can't pay your bill, contact your provider straight away.

All providers must offer help for customers who are having trouble paying their bill.

Your provider can help you make a payment plan so your energy won't be disconnected or your water won't be restricted.

More help

For more help, see our fact sheets about:

- payment help
- energy disconnections
- water restrictions
- making a complaint.