

## A message from Trade Unions Against Water Charges:

Dear Householder

You will be aware of the Government's intensive advertising campaign to persuade you to pay new water and sewerage charges from 1 April 2007.

The trade unions in Northern Ireland have consistently opposed these unfair charges. We are against the privatisation of our water and sewerage services. **We are therefore calling on every householder to join our campaign of non-payment of water charges.**

Government Ministers have refused to listen to the people. They have paid no heed to elected representatives calling for charges to be deferred until a new devolved Assembly can make its own decisions.

Instead Ministers try to justify imposing these charges on the grounds that their constituents in Britain have to pay charges to privatised water companies. But you have already been paying for water and sewerage services through the regional rates. Imposing charges makes us pay twice.

### Government Spin

Don't be fooled by the Government's spin that average bills will be about £100, or about 'Reduced Tariffs' and phasing resulting in bills as low as £30.

The phasing is just for two years. After that, everybody will have to pay in full, irrespective of hardship caused. Once they get us used to paying, charges will go through the roof. The way to stop this happening is through mass non-payment.

### No to Metering

Nor should anyone be taken in by Government misinformation about metering. Two years ago Direct Rule Ministers insisted meters would be too costly to install.

Now they are offering metering to pensioners – suggesting that people can cut their charges by not using water. This is cynical propaganda, playing on the fears of pensioners and putting public health at risk.

Ministers say our Water Service must be completely "self-financing." But their real purpose is to provide a revenue flow for a privatised company. The result will be that the consumer pays again for years of Government neglect - while the Treasury walks away.

In Britain, even with Treasury millions pumped in to smooth the path to privatisation, consumers have seen charges rocket, with massive profits going to the private shareholders. Here, Ministers with no electoral mandate whatsoever, plan to privatise our water and leave ordinary people to pick up the bill.

Opposition to water charges has created unprecedented unity across communities.

The way to put our unity into practice is through a united refusal to pay. We urge you to get involved in your local non-payment campaign.

Already, tens of thousands of people are pledging to refuse to pay. The legal position is clear -

- Non-payment of water charges is **NOT** a criminal offence;
- The water company **CANNOT** turn off your domestic supply

The Government says the Water Company will have the same powers as other utilities to recover debt through civil proceedings. They are also now threatening debt recovery action via Magistrates Courts and the Enforcement of Judgements Office (EJO). They should not be let away with it.

We stand united with the trade unions and community organisations. Don't pay water charges. Don't sign up for direct debits or other payment mechanisms. Trade unions will be providing further advice on non-payment.

Government Ministers will **not** be able to ignore a mass campaign of non-payment.

### We can win this campaign

**Together we can defeat this arrogant Government's plans.**

**Use the poster overleaf to show you are backing non-payment.**

**STOP WATER SERVICE PRIVATISATION!**



**DON'T  
PAY  
WATER  
CHARGES!**

[www.waterchargesnonpayment.com](http://www.waterchargesnonpayment.com)