

Your 2025-26 Invoice Explained and FAQs

## April 2025

To help you understand why SEPA has invoiced you and provide you with answers to frequently asked questions regarding invoices.

## How do I pay my invoice?

We can take payments by:

* BACS, to the bank account details provided on your invoice or
* [Online by card](https://webpayments.sepa.org.uk/) or via the ‘Pay my Account’ link on the [SEPA website](https://www.sepa.org.uk/).

In all cases the invoice number, customer account number, and /or permit number must be referenced so that we can ensure your payment is matched to your account correctly.

To arrange a payment plan please read ‘[Spreading the cost’](#_Spreading_the_cost) response below then contact SEPA at invoices@sepa.org.uk.

## What is best way to contact SEPA if I have any questions?

The best way to contact us is by email. We have identified the best email to use under each section so that you get the quickest response. We will, if requested in your email, call you back. Please note due to the number of annual invoices we issue at this time we will experience a high volume of enquiries, please be patient while we work through these.

## Why have I received an invoice?

As part of our statutory duty SEPA raises invoices to recover the costs it incurs regulating, monitoring, and reporting the environmental impact of operators' activities. These costs are referred to as subsistence costs and we are required to recover these costs from authorisation holders. This invoice is for annual subsistence charges related to your authorisation.

## Spreading the cost of the invoice, who do I contact?

If you would like to pay your invoice by instalments using a monthly standing order, please email invoices@sepa.org.uk to arrange a Payment Plan. These are usually agreed to pay the invoice over a period of 9 months from the invoice date.

You must have prior agreement from SEPA for payment by standing order.

Standing orders should be set up to the bank account details provided on your invoice and must include the invoice number or customer account number as reference.

## Why have my charges changed from last year?

We have applied an inflationary increase of 2.7% to the 2024/25 charges to arrive at the 2025/26 charges. This increase is included in both the regulatory and environmental component of the charge. Your charges may also be impacted by applications for temporary cessation, or if you only started operations part way through a year. If you have a query, please contact charging@sepa.org.uk.

## Which site does it relate to?

Your invoice should contain the site detail. This is in the ‘**Your reference**’ section on the invoice. Please contact SEPA at charging@sepa.org.uk if the description does not have enough detail to clearly identify the site, or if this information is incorrect.

## Material Recycling Facility (MRF) changes explained.

We are no longer charging the additional recovery cost to authorised waste site operations which are not regulated under the New Code from 1 April 2025. Therefore activity 12600 ‘WMA: Additional recovery costs’ will have been removed from your invoice.

The annual subsistence charge for activity 12610 ‘Storage and Treatment of waste which includes the operation of a MF subject to the statutory Code of Practice’ has increased to £12,877 from 1 April 2025. If you require further information, please contact SEPA MFCode@sepa.org.uk.

## No one told me about SEPA charges when I bought the site/farm/premises, and the previous owner is no longer here.

It is the purchaser’s responsibility to check for any authorisation(s) that are held or should be held. Some authorisations (licences) apply to premises while others are to an individual or company. Non-payment of charges may mean you are operating illegally. Information on how to [transfer an authorisation](https://www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/authorisations-and-permits/transfer-an-authorisation/) is available on the SEPA website

## I am not carrying out the activity so why do I need to pay charges?

If you have stopped the authorised activity and do not intend to undertake the activity in future, information on how to [surrender an authorisation](https://www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/authorisations-and-permits/surrendering-an-authorisation/) is available on the SEPA website. Charges will cease from the date the surrender process is completed. If you need to discuss your surrender, please contact the relevant Permitting team:

* Water (CAR Controlled Activities Regulations), Waste (Waste Management Licence) & PPC (Pollution Prevention and Control) - charging@sepa.org.uk
* Reservoirs - reservoirs@sepa.org.uk
* Radioactive Substances - radioactivesubstance@sepa.org.uk
* Emissions Trading Scheme - emission.trading@sepa.org.uk.

## I need to make a change to the activities I have been billed for.

If you have changed the authorised activity, you have been billed for, you should apply to vary your authorisation. Information on how to [vary an authorisation](https://www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/authorisations-and-permits/vary-an-authorisation/) is available on the SEPA website. Charges will change from the date the variation process is completed.

## My licence has been surrendered or revoked. Why do I still need to pay?

If you have applied for a surrender or revocation and have still received an invoice, please contact registry@sepa.org.uk to ensure that the application has been received and processed through our systems.

## I was expecting to be notified in advance of invoicing so I could apply for temporary cessation reduction of charges

Applications for temporary cessation should have been made already. The criteria can be found under section 6.11 of the [Charging Scheme Guidance](https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/348734/guidance-environmental-regulation-scotland-charging-scheme-2018.pdf). If you have any queries on this area, then they should be sent to charging@sepa.org.uk.

## Why have I received an invoice when I have applied for a Mothballed/Fallow (non-operational) Exemption?

If you have applied for a mothballed/fallow exemption, you will have received an invoice for 15% of the annual activity charge for the period. If the reduction is not shown, then please contact charging@sepa.org.uk.

There are many permits that cover activities that go through periods when they do not operate (for example fallow fish farms and irrigation permits) although ongoing work is still required for these licences.

There is a minimum of 6 months (12 months for irrigation or other seasonal licences\*) and a maximum of 2 years that can be mothballed at a time, although a further application to mothball a site can be made prior to the expiry of the previous one. The information on how to apply for a [fee waiver](https://www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/authorisations-and-permits/application-forms/#fee_waiver) is available on our webpage (bottom of the webpage).

\*A seasonal licence is where the permit restricts which months that the activity is permitted. For example, many irrigation licences are only allowed to abstract from April through to October.

## I require a purchase order for this invoice, who do I contact?

The invoice is described as a statutory debt, this is any debt, other than debts relating to taxes that may be owed to a statutory body such as a government department, local authority, or court. We are issuing the invoice for this type of debt. We are NOT providing a service, we are undertaking our statutory duties and recovering our costs therefore **no** purchase order is required.

## The information on my invoice is incorrect, who do I contact?

If you have recently applied for a change (within the last few months) this may not have been reflected in this invoice since it was generated earlier in the year. We will be running an update so you may get a corrected invoice in the next few weeks reflecting any changes.

However, if you want to check, or you think that any of the information on the invoice is incorrect, in the first instance please contact SEPA at invoices@sepa.org.uk. They will record the issue and pass on to the appropriate SEPA contact.

## Non-payment of an invoice

If an invoice is not paid within 30 days of the invoice date, or a payment plan has not been agreed by the payment date, you may be charged a late payment fee of £50. To arrange a [payment plan](#_Spreading_the_cost) please contact SEPA at invoices@sepa.org.uk.

## Where can I find out more information on Charging Schemes?

The [Charging Scheme and Summary Charging Booklet](https://www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/authorisations-and-permits/charging-schemes/charging-schemes-and-summary-charging-booklets/) section in the [Charging Schemes](https://www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/authorisations-and-permits/charging-schemes/) pages on the [SEPA website](https://www.sepa.org.uk/) details how we interpret and apply charges.

<Report date here (month, year)>

If you would like this document in an accessible format, such as large print, audio recording or braille, please contact SEPA by emailing equalities@sepa.org.uk