

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS) ABOUT SEPA CHARGES

We often receive questions about our invoices and authorisations. The most common questions (and our answers) are below, but please get in touch if you have a question not covered here.

- For billing related queries please call our Customer Billing department on 01738 448419.
- For queries about the details of your authorisation, please call your local SEPA office – their number can be found on your invoice.
- for information and help with the online payment of invoices please visit our website at <https://webpayments.sepa.org.uk/>

FAQs

What is this invoice for?

SEPA is funded by both government grant and income from charges. We are required to charge authorisation* holders to recover our costs of regulating, monitoring and reporting the environmental impact of their activities. This invoice is for annual subsistence charges related to your authorisation to recover these costs.

Which site does it relate to?

The description on the invoice should contain the site details. Please contact your local SEPA office if the description does not have enough detail to clearly identify the site.

I cannot pay the invoice because it does not contain a purchase order number

This invoice is for your subsistence charges for a statutory licence and as such we are not required to use purchase order numbers. Non payment of the invoice is an offence and can result in your authorisation being suspended or revoked.

Why do I have to pay for an authorisation when I own the land?

Environmental regulations define which activities must have an authorisation to operate regardless of who owns the land. SEPA must authorise and monitor waste output and ensure there are no negative effects on the surrounding area or damage caused to land, water or air.

No one told me about a SEPA charge 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 inherited liabilities. Some licences apply to premises while others are to an individual or company. Non payment of charges may mean you are operating illegally.

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

The two most common reasons are:

- The surrender was completed part way through the year and you have an outstanding balance to pay. Please note some licences are not subject to retrospective credits.

* Authorisation" is a general term for the licences, permits, registrations, exemptions and authorisations we issue.

- The correct procedures for surrender were not followed or completed. Please check with your local SEPA office.

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

If you have stopped the authorised activity or do not intend to operate for a long period you should contact your local office to discuss the authorisation surrender process. Charges will cease from the date the surrender process is completed.

You can in some cases apply for a temporary exemption from charges for limited periods. It is essential that you apply to your local office **in advance** and secure agreement to the exemption, otherwise an exemption will not apply. You will need to tell us which activity you will not be operating and when it will not be operating.

For more information on how and when you can apply please contact your local office.

Further information

The charging scheme section of the website also contains information on how we interpret and apply some charges, along with simplified charges booklets and a calculator for our water charges.

Our NetRegs website provides free environmental guidance for small and medium-sized businesses, and can help you understand what you need to do to protect the environment and comply with environmental law:

www.sepa.org.uk/customer_information/netregs.aspx

Get in touch

Please email scc@sepa.org.uk if you have any comments or suggestions on how we might improve the presentation, content or access to our information.