

# GET SWITCH FIT



Our step-by-step guide will help you prepare for the opening of the English retail water market. Are you ready to enjoy all the benefits?

## Your switching checklist

- Understand your current water use – find out your water usage/wastewater production and how much it is costing.
- Plan ahead and consider how changes to your organisation may impact your water use.
- Make sure you're aware of your trade effluent arrangements and consents, if applicable.
- Consider what you want from a supplier and plan your purchasing process.
- Get in touch with Business Stream if you require further advice or support on 0330 123 2000 or at [BusinessDevelopment@business-stream.co.uk](mailto:BusinessDevelopment@business-stream.co.uk)**

# SWITCH FIT GUIDE

## It's time to turn on the savings

In April 2017, the English retail water market will open, allowing every non-household customer in England to choose their water and waste supplier.

In Scotland, the water market has been open to competition since 2008. In that time, Business Stream's customers have saved around **£133 million** in discounts and efficiencies. They have also saved more than **24 billion litres of water** and **42,000 tonnes of carbon** whilst receiving improved customer service.

The English market provides an opportunity for businesses and organisations to receive similar benefits once it opens in 2017. **Will yours be one of them?**

This guide outlines the potential benefits and the steps that your organisation can be taking now to make sure that you will reap all the rewards of this exciting change.

**It's time to get Switch Fit.**

## **Are you ready to enjoy all the benefits?**

Competition will encourage water suppliers to offer more benefits to customers. Reduced costs will be one very important benefit, but there will be more, including:

- Lower management overheads.
- Improved service levels.
- Smarter ways to meet regulatory compliance.
- New solutions to water management challenges.
- Greater understanding of water as a valuable resource.
- Improved corporate social and environmental responsibility.

**If you want to enjoy all these benefits in 2017,  
there are several steps you should take now.**



## Step 1: Understand your current water use

This should be your first step – and can be done by looking over your bills. Ideally, the data you gather should cover a full year and up to three years if possible. If you operate multiple sites, you should audit each individual site as well as your sum business total. You essentially want to build your core data set covering each of your sites. For each site the key questions to answer are:

1. How much water do you use / waste water do you produce?
2. How much are you spending on water or waste water?
3. How much trade effluent do you produce and what does it cost?

Get all your data in one place – this will form the basis of your purchasing process and pricing. Business Stream can review all your bills and help you get your data in order.



## Step 2: Plan ahead

Every business faces a unique water and waste water management challenge. The opening of the market will affect this further so it's worth planning ahead and considering any known changes – good or bad – that could impact your water use and needs. These could include:

1. Cutting energy usage from treatment processes
2. Lowering your water usage or waste water production for environmental reasons
3. Expanding, investing in or closing sites
4. Upgrading and maintaining equipment
5. Meeting production challenges, such as peaks or troughs of activity
6. Maintaining production quality, especially problems relating to waste water and trade effluent
7. Complying with all regulations
8. Protecting your valuable reputation

Make sure you consider these changes as part of your requirements and purchasing process. If you're not sure what the impact of these changes will be speak to someone who really understands water – like Business Stream.



## Step 3: Understand your trade effluent arrangements

Do you have a trade effluent consent in place, or do you need one? If so, there are two key issues to consider:

1. Know your consent level. This defines how much and what concentration of trade effluent you can release into the public sewer.
2. Learn about what you're producing – if you know exactly what concentration and volume of effluent your organisation produces not only are you more likely to avoid a fine but you'll be able to manage your output much more efficiently.

If you have the slightest doubt about whether or not you should have a trade effluent consent in place, we'd be very happy to advise you. The cost and reputational penalties for not complying with regulations can be severe, even if the breach was unintentional. Make sure you include your trade effluent requirements when considering which supplier(s) to use.



## Step 4: Consider what you want from a supplier and plan your purchasing process

The relationship you have with your supplier is crucial to successful water and waste water management. The opening of the market is an excellent opportunity to revisit this and see what works and what doesn't.

It's worth asking those who deal with your supplier for their opinions on the relationship. Is your supplier transparent and helpful in their dealings with you? Do you want a transactional supplier or do you want to work with a company that offers an improved level of customer service? Is there efficient two-way communication? Do they offer a wide range of value-added services that help you meet your water needs?

The answers to these questions will help you shape your needs and identify the right supplier for you.

Start speaking to suppliers early to better understand what they each offer, as this will help you make an informed choice of which suppliers to consider. We're regularly talking to English based companies to understand their water needs and outline what we can offer.

It's also worth considering your purchasing process and how you will ensure you're considering like for like when choosing your supplier or suppliers – this particularly applies to pricing. The process, whether that be informal conversations with potential suppliers or a more formal approach, if required, should help you find the right fit for your business.



## Step 5: Contact us

Don't miss out on your opportunity to benefit from the opening of the water market in 2017. Switching doesn't need to be complicated and you could reap benefits straight away. Follow our simple steps to get Switch Fit now!

## We can help

Contact Business Stream today on [BusinessDevelopment](#)  
[@business-stream.co.uk](#) or at [0330 123 2000](#)