

# Important legal changes to the ownership of your sewers

Please read

This leaflet contains essential information for the property owner. If you are not that person, please pass it on to them.



**LEGAL NOTICE**  
**THAMES WATER UTILITIES LIMITED**  
**Notice of proposal to adopt private sewers and lateral drains**

To: The owner(s) of private sewers and lateral drains

Thames Water Utilities Limited (a company registered in England and Wales under number 02366661, with its registered office at Clearwater Court, Vastern Road, Reading, RG1 8DB) ("Thames Water") gives notice under Sections 102 and 105A of the Water Industry Act 1991 ("the Act") that in accordance with a scheme or schemes made by the Secretary of State under the Water Industry (Schemes for Adoption of Private Sewers) Regulations 2011 ("the Transfer Regulations"):

1) on 1 October 2011:

a. any private sewer (excluding pumping stations and highway drains or sewers) situated within Thames Water's sewerage area and which, immediately before 1 July 2011, communicates with a public sewer; and

b. any private lateral drain (excluding pumping stations) which, immediately before 1 July 2011, communicates with a public sewer vested in Thames Water; and

2) on 1 October 2016, any pumping station which forms part of such a sewer or lateral drain and has not been transferred to Thames Water before that date;

will transfer to Thames Water and become a public sewer or public lateral drain belonging to Thames Water unless that private sewer or private lateral drain is subject to an outstanding appeal under Section 105B of the Act.

This notice does not apply to private sewers or private lateral drains which:

1. are owned by a railway undertaker; or
2. are situated on or under Crown land and Thames Water has received notice in writing before 1 July 2011 from the appropriate authority that the private sewer or private lateral drain should be exempt.

Any owner of a private sewer, private lateral drain or pumping station or any other person affected by the proposal to adopt a private sewer, private lateral drain or pumping station, or the failure to do so, may appeal to the Water Services Regulation Authority (Ofwat) within two months of service or publication of this notice, whichever is the later. The grounds on which you can appeal are set out in Section 105B(3) of the Act. Ofwat can be contacted at Centre City Tower, 7 Hill Street, Birmingham, B5 4UA or by email to: [appealpstransfer@ofwat.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:appealpstransfer@ofwat.gsi.gov.uk)

Any terms used in the Transfer Regulations have the same meaning when used in this notice.



Martin Baggs, Chief Executive Officer

# Dear property owner

We are writing to the owners of all properties in our area that may be connected to our sewer network. We need to update you on the forthcoming change in law regarding the ownership and responsibility for privately-owned sewers and lateral drains.

**Please read this document. There is nothing to be concerned about and you won't need to do anything else.**

## **What are private sewers and lateral drains?**

Private sewers and lateral drains are the sections of sewer pipe or drain that are shared with another person's property, or run through another person's land. It's estimated that up to half of properties in England and Wales are connected to, and the owner is responsible for, a private sewer.

## **How will you benefit from this change?**

This is good news for you as the change in law means the ownership and maintenance for private sewers and lateral drains will be transferred to us. This will bring peace of mind to customers and clarity regarding ownership. The change will take place from 1 October 2011.

You will still be responsible for the sections of pipe between your property / building and the transferred private sewer or lateral drain.

Included with this leaflet are some useful diagrams which show the change.

## **How much will it cost?**

Little is known about the extent and condition of private sewers and drains. This makes it very hard to calculate an exact cost for our new responsibilities. The Government estimates that the transfer could increase customers' bills by between £3 and £14 per year. We will have a better idea of costs once we take over the pipes.

This small increase in your bill will protect you against the much larger one-off costs of clearing blockages and making repairs.

**If a problem occurs, we'll be here to help you understand which pipes have transferred, and which pipes are still your responsibility. This will help avoid unnecessary call-outs, that we may charge for.**

**Included in this leaflet is a legal notice which we are required to give you by law. We have also included useful information about this change and what to do if you have a problem with your sewers or drains.**

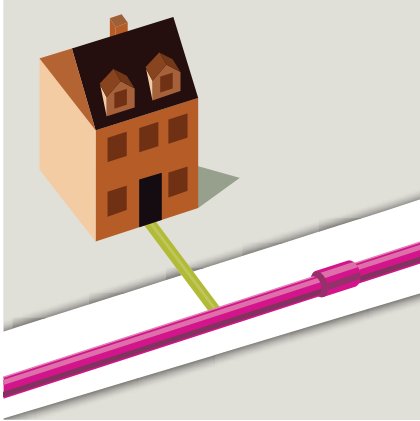
**Martin Baggs,**

Chief Executive Officer, Thames Water

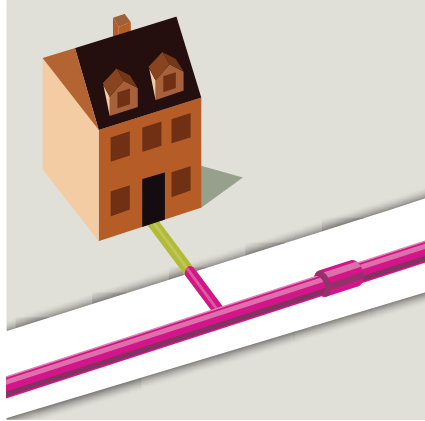
July 2011

# How will the changes affect you?




## Detached



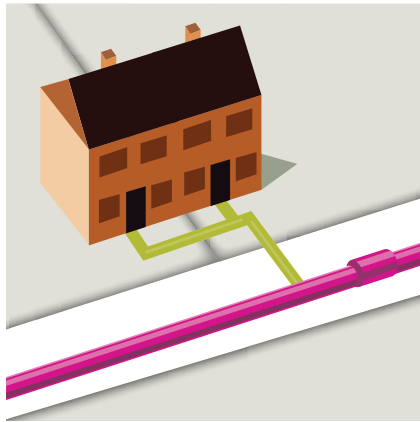
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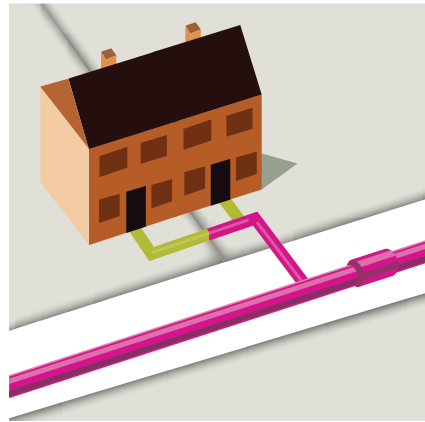
After 1 October 2011

-  Public sewer/drain - responsibility of the water and sewerage company
-  Privately owned - responsibility of property owner
-  Property boundary




## Semi-detached



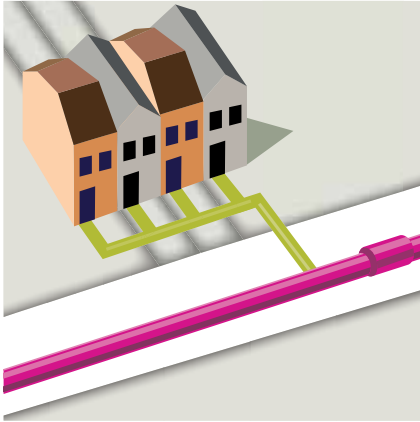
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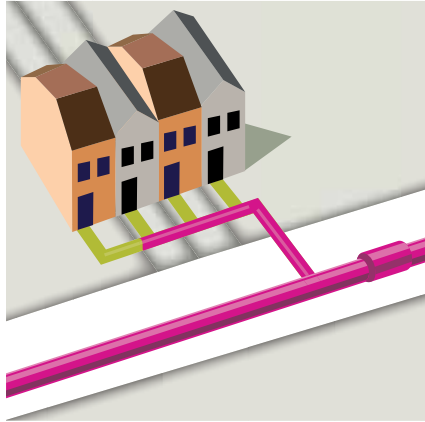
After 1 October 2011

-  Public sewer/drain - responsibility of the water and sewerage company
-  Privately owned - responsibility of property owner
-  Property boundary




## Terraced



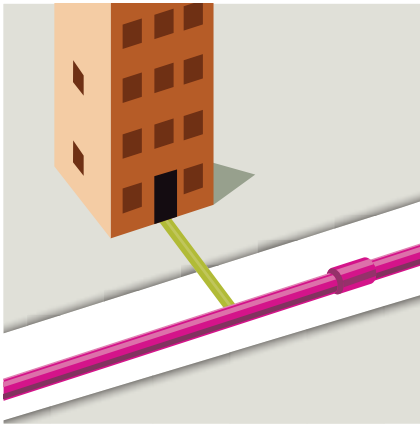
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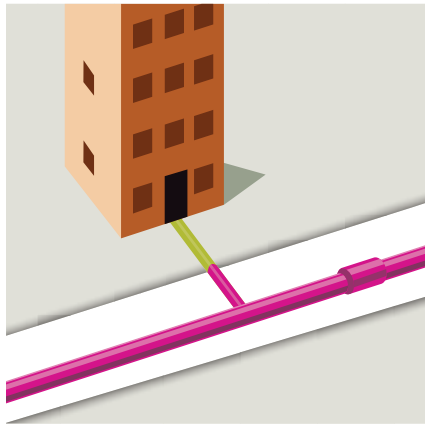
After 1 October 2011

-  Public sewer/drain - responsibility of the water and sewerage company
-  Privately owned - responsibility of property owner
-  Property boundary




## Flat or multiple dwelling



Today



After 1 October 2011

-  Public sewer/drain - responsibility of the water and sewerage company
-  Privately owned - responsibility of property owner
-  Property boundary

## **What to do if you have a problem with your sewers**

It's important that you try and identify where the problem is as it may be your responsibility. You will still be responsible for any internal plumbing and the section of pipe leading to the private sewer.

If you have a shared sewer, try asking your neighbours if they have a problem. If they don't, it's likely that the problem is on your section of pipe or waste plumbing, meaning you will need to resolve it yourself.

If your neighbours do have a problem, it may be on a shared section of pipe. Until 1 October 2011, you're still responsible for any maintenance. After that, you can contact us.

## **How can you find out more?**

You can find out more on our website [www.thameswater.co.uk/privatesewers](http://www.thameswater.co.uk/privatesewers), which includes a video explaining the change or you can call our dedicated number **0845 0709 150**. Lines are open Monday to Friday, from 8am to 6pm.

## **Are you connected to a private pumping station?**

Some properties are connected to a private pumping station before they connect into our main sewer network. It is likely you will know this already if this is the case. Examples of these situations include small housing developments, remote farms or small business parks.

The Government plans to transfer the ownership of these pumping stations to water companies on 1 October 2016. Until this time, the owner(s) of the pumping station will continue to be responsible for its maintenance and repair.

If you are responsible for a pumping station, please visit our website to complete our online form as we need to find out information about it before we can take over responsibility.

## **Can you appeal against the transfer?**

Yes, however the circumstances in which you can appeal are very narrow. Appeals against the transfer must be made to the water industry regulator, Ofwat.

You can find out more from the Ofwat web site [www.ofwat.gov.uk](http://www.ofwat.gov.uk), or write to them at **Ofwat, Centre City Tower, 7 Hill Street, Birmingham B5 4UA**.

This leaflet can be sent to you in braille,  
large print or audio format upon request.



## Mandarin

了解附上的资料对您是非常重要的。如果英语不是您的母语而需要更多的帮助，请尽快拨打以下电话联络泰晤士水务局，当与我联络时，请告诉我们您的姓名、地址、电话号码和您所用的语言，我们将会立刻安排传译员致电回覆您。

## Polish

Barczo ważne jest, aby Państwo zrozumiełi treść załączonej informacji. Jeśli potrzebują Państwo pomocy, ponieważ j. angielski nie jest Państwa językiem ojczystym prosimy o jak najszybszy kontakt z Thamesem Waterem pod poniższym numerem telefonu. Podczas kontaktowania się z nami prosimy o podanie Państwa nazwiska, adresu, numeru telefonu oraz języka, którym się Państwo posługują. Niezwłocznie skontaktujemy się z Państwem za pośrednictwem tłumacza.

## Portuguese

É muito importante que compreenda a informação em anexo. Se necessita de ajuda, pelo facto de o Inglês não ser a sua primeira língua, queira contactar a Thames Water logo que possível através do número de telefone abaixo indicado. Quando nos contactar, dê-nos o seu nome, morada, número de telefone e o idioma que utiliza. Nós telefonar-lhe-emos imediatamente com um tradutor.

## Punjabi

ਇਹ ਬਹੁਤ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਭੋਜੀ ਜਾਂ ਰਹੀ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਸਮਝ ਆ ਜਾਏ। ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਹੋਰ ਮਦਦ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ, ਜਾਂ ਜੇ ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ੀ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਨਹੀਂ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਟੈਮਜ਼ ਵਾਟਰ (Thames Water) ਨਾਲ ਹੋਰ ਲਿਖੇ ਫੋਨ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਸਿੱਟੀ ਵੀ ਭੇਜੋ ਜੋ ਸਕਦੇ ਗੱਲ ਕਰੇ। ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਗੱਲ ਕਰਨ ਵੇਲੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਆਪਣਾ ਨਾਂ, ਪਤਾ, ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਨੰਬਰ ਅਤੇ ਇਹ ਦੱਸੋ ਕਿ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਕਿਹੜੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਬੋਲਦੇ ਹੋ। ਅਸੀਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਤਰਜਮਾ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਫੋਨ ਨਾਲ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਜਵਾਬੀ ਫੋਨ ਕਰਾਂਗੇ।

## Pushtu

دا ډيره مهمه ده چې تاسو په بند کړئ شوی معلوماتو پوهیځئ. که تاسو نور کمک ته اړ تیا لری، ځکه چې انګلیسي ستاسو خپله ژبه نه ده، لطفاً څومره ژر چې کولی شئ په لاندیني تلفون د تېمیز واټر سره اړیکه پیدا کړئ. کله چې څومر سره اړیکه کوئ، لطفاً نوم، پته، د تلفون نومبره او د هغې ژبې حواله راکړئ په کومه کې چې تاسو غږیږئ. مونږ به سملاسي د ترجمان په کمک سره تاسو ته تلفون اوکړو.

## Somali

Waa muhiim inaad garato wararka soo xiga. Haddii Ingiriisiga ahaan ahayn luqaddada koo waad una baahan tahay caawinaad, fadlan la xariir Thames Water lambarka hoos ku qoran si dhaqsi ah. Markaad nala soo xiriirtid, fadlan inoo sheeg magacaga, cinwaanka, lambarka telefoonka iyo luuqadda aad ku hadashid. Si deg-deg ah ayaan telifoon kugu soo celin doona annagoo isticmaalaya turjibaan.

## Spanish

Es muy importante que entienda la información adjunta. Si necesita más ayuda, porque el inglés no sea su idioma natal, rogamos contacte con Thames Water en el número de teléfono de más adelante tan pronto como sea posible. Al ponerse en contacto con nosotros, rogamos proporcione su nombre, dirección, número de teléfono y el idioma que habla. Le llamaremos de vuelta inmediatamente con un intérprete.

## Tamil

இத்துடன் இணைக்கப்பட்டுள்ள தகவலை நீங்கள் புரிந்து கொள்ள வேண்டியது மிகவும் அவசியம். உங்கள் முதன்மையொழி ஆங்கிலம் அல்ல என்பதால் உங்களுக்கு மேலும் உதவி தேவை எனில் தயவுசெய்து தேடும் வட்டடனா பின்வரும் தொலைபேசி எண்ணில் எவ்வளவு விரைவாக இயலுமோ அவ்வளவு விரைவாகத் தொடர்பு கொள்ளவும். எம்மைத் தொடர்பு கொள்ளும்போது தயவுசெய்து உங்கள் பெயர், முகவரி, தொலைபேசி எண், உங்கள் மொழி ஆகியவற்றைத் தெரிவிக்கவும். நாங்கள் உடனடியாக ஒரு மொழிபெயர்ப்பாளருடன் உங்களைத் திரும்பத் தொடர்பு கொள்வோம்.

## Turkish

Ekteki bilgileri anlamamız çok önemlidir. İngilizce ana diliniz olmadığınız için daha fazla yardıma gerek duyuyorsanız lütfen Thames Water ile en kısa zamanda aşağıdaki telefon numarasından irtibat kurunuz. Bizimle irtibat kurduğunuzda lütfen bize isminizi, soy isminizi, adresinizi, telefon numaranızı ve kullandığınız dil'i belirtiniz. Sizi hemen bir çevirmen ile geri arayacağız.

## Urdu

یہ بات بہت اہم ہے کہ آپ مسئلہ معلومات کو سمجھ لیں۔ اگر انگریزی آپ کی بول چال کی زبان نہیں ہے اور اس لیے آپ کو کمزوری مدد کی ضرورت ہو، تو ہمارے سہارا بننا چاہیں، تو ہمارے سہارا بنیں۔ آپ جب ہم سے رابطہ کریں، تو ہمارے سہارا بنیں۔ نام، پتہ، ٹیلیفون نمبر اور اپنی زبان بتائیں۔ ہمارے سہارا بنیں۔ ایک ترجمان کے ساتھ آپ کو دوبارہ فون کریں گے۔

## Vietnamese

Hiểu tài liệu đính kèm là điều quan trọng cho quý vị. Xin liên lạc với công ty cung cấp nước Thames càng sớm càng tốt theo điện thoại dưới đây, chúng tôi có thể giúp quý vị hiểu thêm nếu tiếng Anh không phải là ngôn ngữ quý vị thường nói. Khi gọi xin để lại tên, địa chỉ, số điện thoại, và ngôn ngữ quý vị thường nói. Chúng tôi sẽ gọi lại ngay với sự giúp đỡ của một thông dịch viên.



0845 0709 150

Lines are open Monday to Friday, from 8am to 6pm.