



Household Customer Side Leakage (CSL) Code of Practice

By 2050, we'll need an **extra 250 million litres of water** every day to support our growing population. That's why reducing leaks and fixing them faster is a crucial part of that challenge. By making **every drop count**, we can safeguard our water supply and our environment for generations to come.



This guide is for individuals or organisations who own a domestic-use property. We'll explain:

- Who's responsible for the water pipes in and around your property
- Ways you can spot leaks for yourself
- Action to take if you think you've found a leak
- Ways we may be able to help you
- The leakage allowance we'll offer if you have a metered water supply

Contents

1 Responsibility for water pipes

Our water mains and pipes

We're responsible for the mains that carry water around the region, and for the 'communication pipe' – the one linking your water supply pipe to our water main.

It's our responsibility to maintain and repair our water mains and communication pipes.

Your water supply pipe and internal plumbing

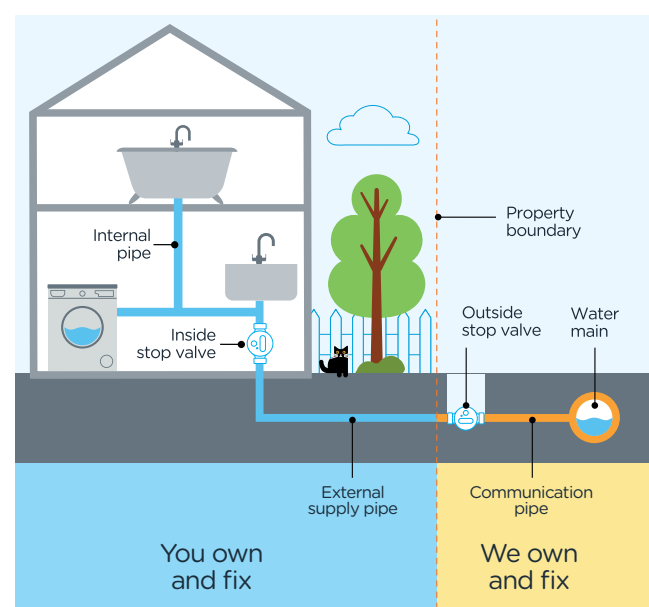
The diagram below shows the usual water main and pipe set-up for a property.

Generally, the water supply pipe that runs from the boundary of your property into your home is your responsibility, along with any internal pipes and fittings.

External stoptaps or stopcocks are apparatus belonging to us which are installed on each service pipe to control the water flow using a valve mechanism. Stoptaps are usually installed on the service pipe in the footpath, however they may be installed in private premises, such as a garden or driveway. The stoptap must be positioned as near as reasonably practicable to the boundary of the street. We have a legal power to fit a stoptap to any service pipe (including a supply pipe) at our expense.

Meters are also a type of apparatus belonging to us and are usually (but not always) fitted in the same location as the external stoptap. The position of the meter does not determine pipe ownership or responsibility.

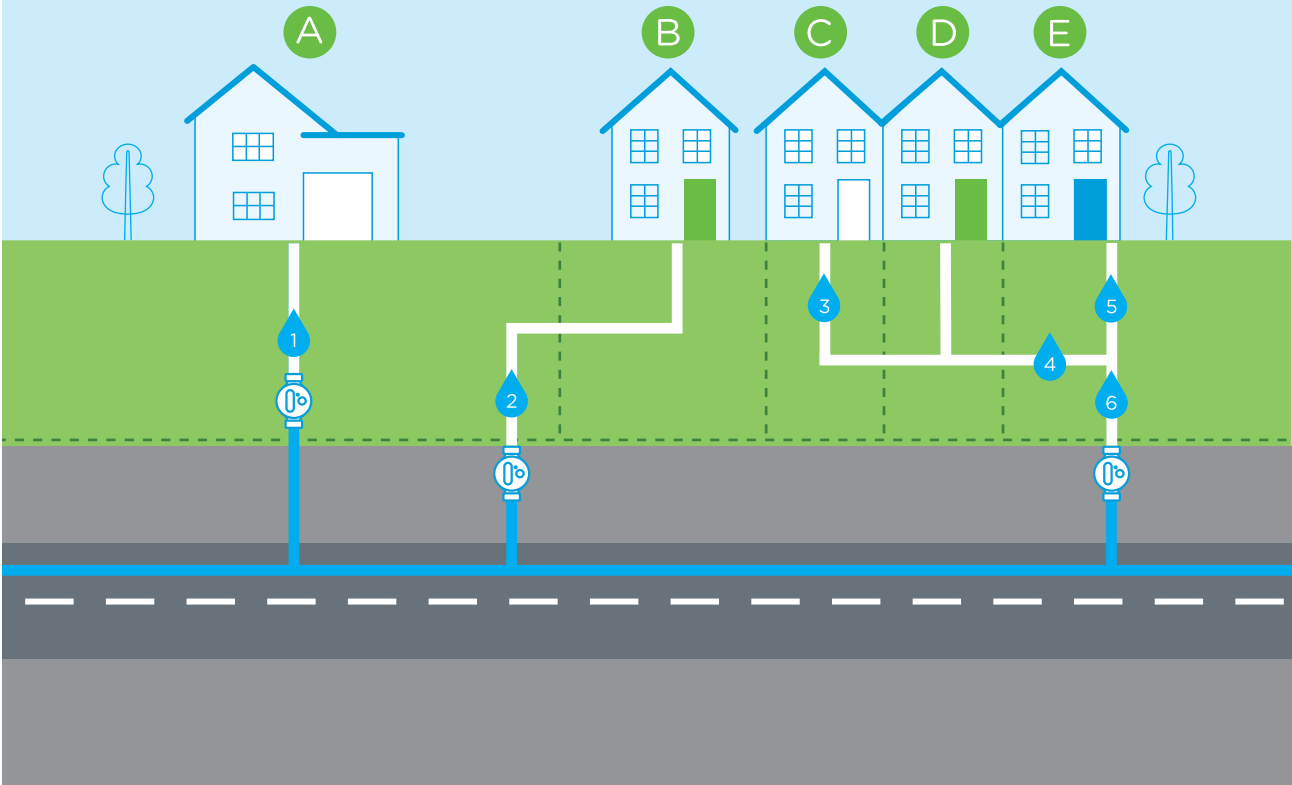
If your supply pipe crosses land belonging to someone else (scenario B in the diagram), you're responsible for the pipe up to the point that it connects to our communication pipe.



The diagram below shows the usual water pipe set-up supplying multiple properties on a shared supply.

Sometimes a single supply pipe serves two or more properties – a ‘shared supply’ (scenario C/D/E in the diagram above). This is more common when buildings are close together, in a side-by-side layout, such as on a terraced street. It means you are responsible for maintaining the part of the pipe which supplies only your property, and you and your neighbours have joint responsibility for maintaining the shared part of the pipe.

Key		
Customer's responsibility	Where the leak is	Who's responsible
Thames Water's responsibility	1	A
Water leak	2	B
Stop tap	3	C
Property boundary	4	C D
	5	E
	6	C D E



2 Finding Leaks

Leaks on our water mains and pipes

If you think you've seen one on a road or pavement, getting in touch can make a huge difference in reducing wasted water. Please let us know at thameswater.co.uk/leak

Leaks on your water supply pipe, internal plumbing, and fittings

If we're carrying out leak detection work in the local area and find one at your property, we'll let you know right away. We'll then help you through the next steps and repair process to minimise water wastage. But the sooner leaks can be found, the better. So, to stop water from being wasted and damage occurring to your property, here's a few things to watch out for.

Spotting a leak

Some tell-tale signs you have a leak include:

- Reduced water flow or pressure at your cold kitchen tap
- Waterlogged or damp areas in your garden, even during dry weather
- Noisy pipes
- An unusually high metered bill

If you have a meter

Regular meter readings may show you if there's a leak at your property. Watch out for significant or unexpected increases in your water use. With a smart meter and an online account, you can track your water use

monthly or even daily, so it's quick and easy to spot sudden changes in your water use.

If you have a non-smart meter (one that doesn't provide automated reads) standard meter (not a smart meter) and want to test for a leak, follow these steps:

- Turn off your internal stop valve (usually under your kitchen sink) and make sure toilet cisterns aren't filling and taps are off
- Read your water meter
- Leave the stop valve shut for half an hour then take another meter reading

To find out how to read your meter and submit your meter reading online, head to [Thameswater.co.uk/how-can-i-read-my-meter](https://thameswater.co.uk/how-can-i-read-my-meter)

The reading should be the same both times. If it's gone up, you may have a leak between on your supply pipe.

If you think you have a leak on your supply pipe, call us on **0800 316 9800** (open 24 hours, 7 days a week).

It's important all leaks are repaired as quickly as possible. The next section explains what to do if you find one and how we can help.

3 Fixing leaks

Your water supply pipe

If we suspect a leak on your supply pipe or you find one yourself, it's your responsibility to get it fixed as quickly as you can.

Supply pipe leaks can cause serious damage to your and/or your neighbour's property. If you have a meter, you are liable for all water recorded by the meter, including water which is lost because of a leak on your supply pipe. So, it's vital you act as soon as a leak is found at your property. Here are a few ways to get it repaired:

- 1 If you have a specific home emergency insurance policy, the repair of your leak might be covered.
- 2 Check your home insurance – some policies may include support for the repair of leaks on your supply pipe.
- 3 Independent plumbers - we would recommend that you obtain several quotes from independent plumbers. Websites are available that provide recommended plumbers based on customer feedback. If you need a hand finding a plumber that comes well recommended, we have a list of them at thameswater.co.uk/approvedplumbers

If a leak is found, we'll be in touch to advise you on how to fix it. If you discover a new leak, let us know straight away so we can support you and discuss the best options for repair. You need to get your leak fixed within four weeks of us confirming it. Minimising water wastage is crucial to protect our supply and the environment – so it's essential you act quickly once you've confirmed a leak.

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If you need help fixing your leak

Although your water supply pipe is your responsibility to maintain, we want to do all we can to avoid water wastage and will help in fixing the leak – at our discretion. This applies to categories within our Priority Services Register or anyone on our WaterHelp or WaterSure schemes. We'll also step in to fix a leak if there's a risk to life or to our supply network.

We'll repair your supply pipe up to where it enters your building, but we won't fix pipework underneath a building. For example, if you live in a flat, we'll fix the supply pipe to the point it enters the main building, but not all the way to your individual flat. We'll make every effort to replace your supply pipe, but if this is impractical, for example it would be too expensive or the rest of the pipe is in good condition, we'll carry out a comprehensive repair instead.

Where possible, we'll use trenchless technology known as 'moling' to insert new pipe. If we can't avoid digging on your footpath or driveway, we'll restore the surface to make sure it's safe for you to use. Unfortunately, we can't undertake specialist work, such as relaying block or crazy paving. In such cases, we'll make the area safe to use, but you might want to arrange for a specialist to relay your surface to its original condition. If you decide to make your own arrangements, you'll be responsible for all costs.

Guarantees

- i. The water supply pipe remains the customer's responsibility throughout, even if we repaired or replaced the pipe on any occasion.
- ii. Repairs/replacements of the supply pipe, and the associated connections will be guaranteed for normal conditions of use for two years.
- .iii. We can't guarantee the quality or the condition of the existing pipe either side of the repaired pipe and/or connections.

4 Your leakage allowance

If you have a water meter, it's important to remember that it records all water passing through it, including any water lost through leaking pipes. So, your bills will show this wasted water and water you've used. To make sure you're not left out of pocket, we offer a leak allowance to cover the cost of the water lost during the leak.

Where you may not be eligible for a leakage allowance

- If we have previously advised you or the former occupiers of your property that the supply pipe needs replacing but this has not been carried out.
- We don't usually make allowances for leaks from pipework or fittings beyond your internal stopcock, except where, in our opinion, you could not reasonably have known about it.
- No allowance will be made if a leak has been caused by your negligence or where you knew, or should have known, there was a leak and failed to repair it.

Where we agree to make an allowance, your charges will be re-assessed based on your past normal water use. Where there's no record of previous water use, the adjustment will be based on the typical usage for a household of

a similar type to your own and further adjusted if your actual water use turns out to be very different. The adjustment will only apply for the period of abnormal use up to a maximum of 12 months. Where we have identified that our faulty apparatus (such as If approved, we'll credit your account with any money that would have been added to your bill as a result of your leak. If you don't meet the above criteria, but feel you have exceptional circumstances, please let us know. We consider all leak allowance claims individually. If you qualify, you can get a leak allowance for leaks on any internal pipework on one occasion. But for leaks on your water supply pipe, you can claim as many times as you need. To apply for an allowance, please go to thameswater.co.uk/leakallowance Please remember to enclose proof of repair if a third party has fixed the leak for you (e.g. a plumber's invoice or insurance documents).

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