



South Staffs Water



# Helping you with your leak repairs



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If you think you have a leak on your property, you'll want to get it fixed as quickly as possible.

If your supply is metered, any leak may increase the cost of your water bill. Leaks can also cause damage and affect your water pressure.

The water pipe which runs from the boundary of your property to your home is usually your responsibility. However, we're here to help you find the right solution to getting any leaks fixed as quickly and effectively as possible.

**TOP TIP: Remember to check your home insurance policy; it might cover you for leaks on your supply pipe. You may also have a separate policy with another provider, for example Homeserve. If so, give them a call.**

## How to get your leak fixed

If you have a leak on your property and don't have insurance to cover you, you should get it fixed within 30 days.

Our assisted leak repair service is designed to help you find the right solution to get the leak fixed as quickly as possible.

## Get in touch

Please get in touch as soon as you are aware of a possible leak on your property. We'll visit your property, identify if there's a leak and talk through it with you if you are there.

If you're not there we'll get back in touch to let you know who's responsible for the repair.

If your supply pipe is over 30 years old we recommend you consider having it replaced. See later in the document for more details.

## Agree a plan of action

As part of our assisted leak repair service we can work with you through the next steps of getting your leak resolved. For example, we may be able to assist with:

- Finding where the leak is on your property, particularly if it's not visible
- If your insurance doesn't cover leaks and you're responsible for the repair we can help you find the right solution which could be a water industry approved contractor, normally a groundworker for external work or plumbers for both internal and external plumbing. They'll be able to talk through the job with you, and provide quotes. In some cases our own highly experienced teams carry out some external work.

**Our assisted leak repair service is free of charge. However, we need you to know this is not an emergency service and is based on the availability of our teams during normal working hours.**

You can also choose to fix the leak yourself, however, it's important all work carried out on your property complies with the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations. Visit [www.wras.co.uk](http://www.wras.co.uk) for more details.

If you are arranging for an approved contractor to complete the work please contact us with details of your chosen contractor and repair date.

When the work is complete please let us know. We may come and inspect it to make sure everything complies with the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations.

### Who's responsible?

Once we've identified there is a leak we'll work with you to identify who is responsible for fixing it.

### We're usually responsible for

- The outside stop tap usually found in the road or footpath
- Any pipes up to the boundary of the property - normally where it meets the footpath
- The water meter, where fitted

### You, or the property owner, are usually responsible for

- All stop taps located either in your garden or inside your house
- The supply pipe from the boundary to your property
- All of the plumbing inside the house



\* Homeowners are usually responsible for the water supply pipe up to the property boundary.

## If you're responsible for supplying water to me, why am I responsible for fixing the leak?

We're responsible for supplying the water, but the owner is legally responsible for the supply pipe and any fittings that supply the property.

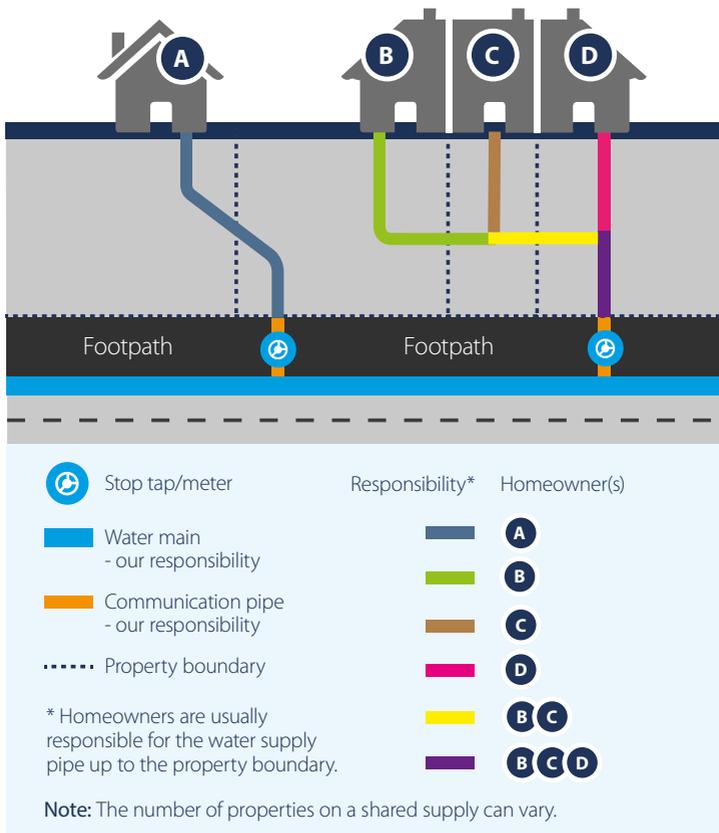
Leaks on the supply pipe which runs to your property are your responsibility to get fixed regardless of whether the pipe runs in the highway, on your land or even on land owned by someone else.

If the supply pipe serves more than one property, it's the shared responsibility of all the owners of those properties affected to fix the leak.

### Other supply arrangements

It's often the case, particularly with older semi-detached or terraced properties, that several neighbours share a water supply pipe rather than each having their own.

This diagram shows a typical shared supply pipe arrangement and explains how responsibility is split between each of the properties.



## **What happens if my supply pipe is shared with neighbouring properties?**

The repair and costs will need to be agreed between yourself, your neighbours and your chosen contractor depending on who's affected by the leak. It's always worth talking to your neighbours about replacing the supply pipe to save on future repair bills.

We'll assist as best we can to find out who's on the shared supply pipe and who needs to share responsibility.

## **What happens if my supply pipe runs across the gardens of neighbouring properties?**

Your chosen contractor will need the assistance of any property owners connected with the repair. In most cases they'll speak with your neighbours about the repair and any access they need, but it may also be helpful if you make initial contact to let them know.

This could also be an ideal opportunity to look at the suitability of putting in a new supply pipe to directly connect the front of your property with our water main. If you're interested in this option, this may involve additional costs, as the road will need to be dug up. For more information about new connections please refer to the developer services section of our website.

## **Reinstatement Policy**

If we do need to dig on your property, any affected areas will normally be filled back in with the ground that has been removed, or made safe usually by leaving a board or barriers across the hole. You'll need to permanently restore any affected areas at your own cost within 15 working days of the repair to allow us to collect the board or barriers.

## **Helpful information**

### **Why it's better to replace the whole supply pipe**

As pipework gets older it becomes weaker and can be prone to developing further leaks. If this is the case it may be cheaper and easier to replace the whole pipe, rather than fix the leak – giving you an average of another 30 years trouble free.

Your chosen contractor will be happy to talk through the options and associated costs with you.

As part of our assisted leak repair service, we may be able to contribute up to £300 towards the cost of replacing the whole supply pipe, if work has been completed in line with the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations. Visit [www.wras.co.uk](http://www.wras.co.uk) for details.

You will need to send us invoices along with details of who a cheque should be made payable to.

## What happens if I ignore the leak?

It's in your best interests to get the leak fixed. If your property is metered a small leak – which takes up to 20 minutes to fill a 10 litre bucket\* - could add up to £500 a year to the cost of your water bill. Leaks can also damage the foundations of your property, and may affect the pressure of the water supply.

We will always try and work with you to get the leak fixed. In cases where a leak is not fixed within 30 days we may have to serve a Defective Fittings Notice, to bring the leak to your attention.

This is a legal notice which gives you 30 days to repair the leak. If you don't repair the leak or replace the pipework within 30 days, we will repair the leak for you but you'll need to pay for the work.

\*based on a leak of 0.7 cubic metres a day (m<sup>3</sup>/d).

## Leakage allowance

If you have a water meter and you have a leak you may be entitled to an allowance for the water that's been lost. Please see Our Code of Practice for Leakage for more information.

## Tenants, landlords and leasehold properties

Tenants are responsible for passing on any information that will assist in the leak being repaired without delay to their landlord. It's the landlord's responsibility to repair the supply pipe and carry out property maintenance. If you are a tenant you need to make sure you have permission to sign the form at the back of this booklet.

If you're a leaseholder, it's your responsibility to check the leasehold agreement to determine who has responsibility for repair and maintenance and advise South Staffs Water accordingly. Failure to do so may result in a bill being issued to the property owner for any works undertaken.

## Helpful contacts

You should find everything you need to know on our website  
[www.south-staffs-water.co.uk](http://www.south-staffs-water.co.uk)

If there's something you're looking for that you can't find, give us a call free of charge on **0800 389 1011** and we'll be happy to help.

To find an approved plumber or groundworker visit [www.wras.co.uk](http://www.wras.co.uk) and simply enter your postcode, or [www.watersafe.co.uk](http://www.watersafe.co.uk) to search for a water industry approved plumber.

## Important information about our assisted leak repair service

We want to take away the uncertainty that can be felt when you are faced with a leak on your property. Please read the following important information and complete section 1 below. This will enable us to help you find the right solution to meet your needs as quickly as possible.

### Permission to dig within a one metre boundary of the property

If our initial investigations show the leak is likely to be close to the boundary we may need to dig approximately one metre into your property from where it meets the highway. This is to help us identify who is responsible for fixing the leak. If we need to do this we'll discuss this with you in advance.

### Permission to dig on your property

To help establish the exact location of a leak, and who is responsible for its repair, or if one of our own teams or appointed contractors are carrying out the work, it may be necessary for us to dig on your property. We will normally dig no more than three holes. If we cannot find the leak after digging three holes, or if we find the leak is under a building or a structure, we will assist you in finding an approved groundworker to carry out further investigations on your behalf and advise on the best solution, which in many cases will be to replace the whole supply pipe.

**Tenants should pass this leaflet onto their landlords. If you are a leaseholder, this form should be completed by whoever has responsibility for the property.**

### Section 1: Request for assisted leak repair service

In signing this form you are giving South Staffs Water, or our appointed contractors, permission to do the following work. (Please tick all that apply):

- Permission to dig within a metre boundary of your property**, and if necessary carry out repair work
- Permission to dig on your property**, and if necessary carry out repair work. Terms and conditions apply- refer to our Code of Practice for Leakage on our website for details.
- Permission to pass my details** onto a maximum of three approved plumbers or groundworks contractors able to provide options and costs for getting the repair work done.

#### Declaration

- I confirm I have understood the conditions of the assisted leak repair service
- I confirm I am the registered owner for the property.
- I understand
- South Staffs Water cannot accept any responsibility or liability for work undertaken by your approved plumbers or groundworkers.

- Any damage caused by the leak is the responsibility of the property owner to put right.
- South Staffs Water, or its approved contractors, cannot accept liability for replanting and landscaping garden areas.

Name:.....

Signature:..... Date:.....

Phone no:..... Email:.....

Address:.....

.....

**To be completed by South Staffs Water**

South Staffs Water site contact:.....

**Section 2: Customer repair**

Once you have identified who will be carrying out repair please complete the following information:

Contractor/insurance company name:.....

Phone no:..... Date attending:.....

Your name:.....

Signature:..... Date:.....

Phone No:..... Email:.....

Address:.....

.....

**Once the work has been completed please call us free of charge on 0800 389 10 11 to let us know.**

- Please tick here if you've replaced the whole supply pipe and wish to be considered for up to £300 contribution. You will need to include your invoice and details of who a cheque should be made payable to (excludes claims against insurance policies).

Please either hand this form to the South Staffs Water site contact or return to South Staffs Water, Leakage Administration, Green Lane, Walsall, WS2 7PD.

**Tenants**

If you're a tenant, you'll need to inform your landlord of the leak as it's their responsibility to get it fixed. If you have your landlord's contact details please complete below:

Name:.....

Address:.....

..... Phone No:.....