



Caring For Our Customers: Water Pressure

WONDERFUL ON TAP

SEVERN
TRENT

Our customer guide to our water pressure policy

We have created this guide to provide you with support and guidance should you have any queries about your water pressure, flow of water or supply interruptions. It will provide an overview around what you should do when you become aware of issues affecting your day to day water use. It will also guide you on who is responsible to fix the issue.

Understanding supply interruptions

A water supply interruption is when there has been a break in service for a period of time.

This could mean that you don't have a water supply coming into your home or that your water pressure is very low and you are unable to have a steady stream of water.

What water pressure you should expect

The water pressure from your taps should be powerful enough to fill a 1 litre jug within 7 seconds. This is called your flow rate.

This pressure is measured at the point of connection to our network rather than the tap. We are responsible for the pressure at the point of supply, where your home connects to our network, this is where the external stop tap is located.

We are legally obliged to provide you with 1 bar of water pressure or 10 metres of static head. Bar is the unit for pressure and 1 bar of pressure is enough to push water upwards, known as static head, to 10 metres.

We aim to provide water at a pressure of 1.5 bar or 15 metres of static head, which should be ideal for day-to-day use.

The difference between water flow and water pressure

Water pressure is the force behind the water and flow is the volume of water.

Why you might experience a supply interruption, flow or pressure issues

The most common cause for supply interruptions and pressure issues are home plumbing problems, bursts or work we're carrying out on the water supply network in your area.

Other reasons include:

- an unseen, internal or external leak
- an air lock or blockage in the pipework
- faulty plumbing work

Your pressure can also be affected by:

- high demand in the morning and early evening
- the size of your service pipe
- the condition of your service pipe
- the height of your building
- a change in pressure that we have made to improve our water network or protect the network from leaks or damage

Different pressure in a new home

If you've recently moved to a new home, you may notice the water pressure is different to the pressure you had at your previous home.

This could be due to slight changes in the range of pressure available across our region, or it could be that your new home is on a shared supply. It is also worth checking the external and internal stop taps for the property are opened fully.

Shared supply

Being on a shared supply pipe can reduce the pressure you get through your tap as your supply pipe is shared with neighbouring properties.

Check with your neighbours to see if they're experiencing similar supply or pressure problems. If you're on a shared supply, it could help you to change to separate, single supplies.

Our shared supply separation scheme could help you: www.stwater.co.uk/building-and-developing/house-developments/replacing-an-existing-supply/shared-separation-scheme.

Check for pressure problems at home before you contact us

There are some simple tests and checks you can do yourself to help identify if there are any problems with your water pressure before you get in touch with us.

These checks help diagnose what could be causing the issue:

Check if there is a problem in the area and with your neighbours

- If you have no water or low pressure, there may be a problem in your area. Visit stwater.co.uk/checkmyarea to check if something has already been reported. If your neighbours have the same issue as you, we recommend that you check whether anyone has been doing any plumbing work on their homes. Often, one pipe can supply more than one home but neighbours may not realise they've affected other homes.

Check your internal stop tap is fully open

- To make sure that you're receiving the maximum water flow possible, we advise that you check your internal stop tap is fully open. You can usually find your internal stop tap hidden under the kitchen sink.

If the stop tap isn't fully open, turn it gently to see if that improves the pressure.

Have you had any recent plumbing work done?

- If you've had some plumbing work done in the last 48 hours, a change in pressure could be related to this.

Contact whoever carried out the work, or find a plumber who can investigate at stwater.co.uk/findaplumber

Check if the pipes are in good condition

- If your pipes are in poor condition changes in pressure can strain the pipework and cause it to burst, so it's important that you protect your pipes during cold weather and contact a plumber if you spot any damaged pipework. Visit stwater.co.uk/my-supply/tap-water/my-water-pipes/protecting-your-pipes to find out how you can protect your pipes from freezing temperatures.

Check household appliances for any hidden leaks

- We also recommend that you take a careful look at all of your household appliances for any hidden leaks which can contribute to low pressure.

You can find advice and guidance on how to check for a leak at stwater.co.uk/my-supply/leakage/how-to-check-for-a-leak

Check if the issue is private

- If your cold water taps are working, but the water coming from the hot water is not heating up, this indicates an internal problem, possibly with the boiler.

A plumber should be able to help you with this issue. You can find an approved plumber in your area at stwater.co.uk/findaplumber

Check if there are air locks or blockages

- Pressure issues could be related to an air lock or blockage in a pipe. Try to clear the it by turning the cold tap nearest to your internal stop tap fully on, and then turn your internal stop tap off and on again 7 to 8 times in succession. If the problem continues, you can find an approved plumber in your area at stwater.co.uk/findaplumber. They will be able to investigate the problem for you.

How to test the flow of your water

You can easily test the flow of your water at home, using a one litre jug and a timer.

You need to:

1. Make sure all the taps are turned off completely, and any appliances such as a washing machine or dish washer are not in use
2. Turn the kitchen cold tap all the way on and time how long it takes to and fill the one litre jug with water.

It should take around seven seconds to fill the container. If it takes much longer than this, then you possibly have a pressure or flow problem.

You can report a pressure problem to us online at stwater.co.uk/reportaproblem.

When to contact us about your pressure issue

If you have carried out all the tests you still might need to get in touch with us if you have:

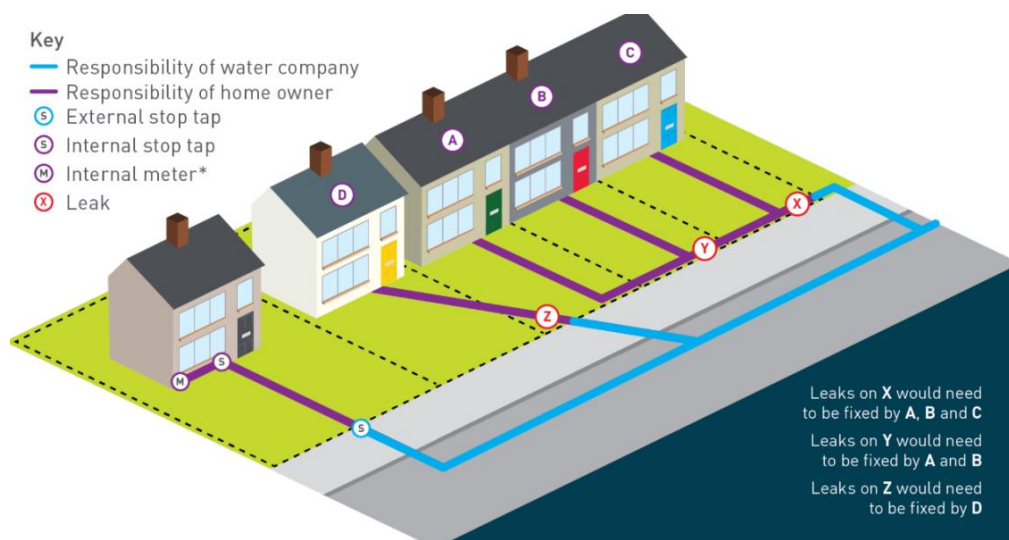
- poor pressure, but your neighbours' pressure is ok
- low pressure and your neighbours do too
- pressure issues following a recent visit by us to carry out work at your home or in the area
- high pressure
- persistent poor pressure

How pipe responsibility is split between us and the homeowner

The responsibility for water pipes and fittings depends on where the infrastructure is.

Pipes within your property's boundary are your responsibility. Water meters, and infrastructure on public land, are our responsibility.

When the problem is our responsibility, we will fix it as quickly as possible. When we need to repair our network, we aim to ensure your service is restored in less than 3 hours. However larger jobs can sometimes take longer.



If the issue is your responsibility, we will provide you with the advice you need to get the issue fixed.

If you have poor pressure, but your neighbours don't



What happens next

Step 1: Contact and Guidance

- Please contact us using web messenger, social media or get in touch by calling us on 0800 783 4444, we will check if there is a known issue in the area. If there is a known issue, we'll let you know when we estimate it will be resolved. You can get in touch with our team at stwater.co.uk/contact-us
- If there is no known issue, our team will guide you through the checks in case you haven't already carried them out.
- We will also check if you have already carried out a pressure test and ask for the details of the check. Depending on the issues you are having and the outcome of the tests that you do with the agent, they will decide the next step.
- If it is clear from the conversation with you that the issue is private, we will provide you with information to help you fix the issue.
- If we cannot determine the cause on the phone, we will call you back by the end of the next working day.

Step 2: We will contact you to understand more

One of our teams will call you back to discuss your issue by the end of the next working day.

If you can't answer our call, we'll leave a voicemail for you and send you a text message to ask when a more convenient time would be to call you back.

If you only have a landline number on your account, we will leave a voicemail providing you with the relevant information.

If we don't manage to get in contact with you by phone, we'll send you a letter to provide you with further advice on how your pressure could be improved.

Step 3: Engineer visit, if required

Our teams will determine if a visit from an engineer is required.

If we need to visit you at home, we will book an appointment with you.

You'll receive the appointment confirmation by text, so check your account online to make sure we have up to date contact details for you. You can update your contact information at stwater.co.uk/my-account.

On the day of your appointment you will receive a call from our engineer to let you know that they are on their way.

When they arrive, the engineer will carry out a pressure test.

If you're not home, but the engineer is able to carry out the test, they will do. They'll post the results through your letterbox.

The calling card will have:

- The results of the test
- The reference number you can quote
- The phone number for our operations team
- A leaflet about how you can improve your pressure (if we have done everything we can, and the issue is considered private).

If you're not home and the engineer is unable to carry out the pressure test, the engineer will request another appointment for you. You will receive a phone call from us to re-book the appointment.

The engineer will let you know they have requested a re-booked appointment by leaving a calling card in your letterbox.

Step 4: Results of the pressure test

If you're at home, the engineer will tell you the results of the pressure test:

- They will confirm if the issue is private. If it is, they will provide you with a leaflet of options to improve your pressure.
- The engineer will confirm if the pressure is above our legal obligation, and if it is also above our aim for pressure.

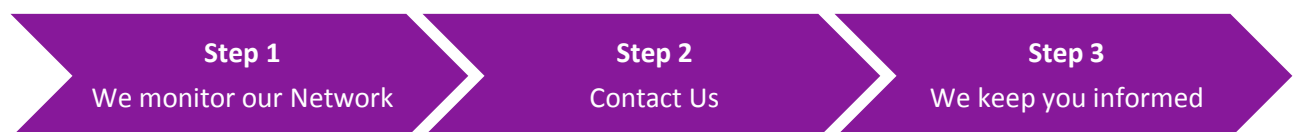
If the issue is due to something we're responsible for, the engineer will book another visit for you for the problem to be fixed.

This second visit might be need two people or more people if we need to do any digging to get to affected pipes.

Step 5: Job closure and feedback

Once the engineer has finished, you may receive a text from us requesting feedback on the service we provided.

If you and your neighbours have poor pressure



What happens next

Step 1: We monitor our network

We continuously monitor our network for pressure issues that may take place.

Once we become aware of an issue, we update our interactive map at stwater.co.uk/checkmyarea. This map shows the issues in the area.

You can search for your postcode and see if there is an issue near you and understand what the estimated resolution time is.

We aim to fix all issues on our network within 3 hours.

Step 2: Let us know about the issue

If you're experiencing an issue, and your neighbours are too, please contact us at stwater.co.uk/contact-us using web messenger, social media, or get in touch by calling us on 0800 783 4444.

We will send an engineer out to investigate and fix the issue.

Step 3: We keep you informed

When an issue arises, or we're doing work on the network that is likely to impact your pressure, we proactively notify you via text message (as long as we have your mobile number).

Update your details on your online account at stwater.co.uk/my-account.

We'll let you know when we think service will resume to normal. You can also check our interactive map at stwater.co.uk/checkmyarea for this information.

What to do if pressure issues develop after we've been working at your home or in the area

We take steps to ensure that we test the pressure before we leave the site.

When you contact us at stwater.co.uk/contact-us to let us know about your pressure issue, we will then send an engineer to you.

They will aim to fix the issue and we will keep you informed. We will let you know when we've fixed the issue.

What to do if you have high pressure

We have very few reported cases of water pressure being too high.

High water pressure typically presents as:

- Banging sounds in pipes
- Leaking fixtures
- Failing appliances, such as showers, washing machines or spitting taps.

The most common causes for high pressure are:

- Trapped air being stuck in the pipework. This restricts the flow of water and can force it to spray out with higher pressure, like squeezing the end of a hose.
- You live in a region where the pressure in our network is high, such as areas with many high buildings or hills, or you are fed from the town's main supply.

To resolve this, run your cold water at the tap closest to your internal stop tap, then turn the internal stop tap off and on consecutively about 6 times.

If you find that the pressure for your pressure is too high, you can close the internal stop tap slightly to reduce the flow of the water to a satisfactory level, or install a pressure reducing valve on your private pipework to help control the pressure of the water to your property.

If you experience high pressure, please contact us at stwater.co.uk/contact-us to let us know.

We will carry out the same steps that we do in cases of low pressure.

How we can support you and your family

We understand that sometimes you or your family may need long term support.

We are able to provide tailored support for you and your household if you join our Priority Services Register at stwater.co.uk/priority.

This is a free service and means we can learn a bit more about you and help us understand your specific needs.

Our Priority Service Register is here to support everyone, whether you or a family member are facing ill-health, financial worries, language barriers or physical/psychological ill-health.

We are here to try and provide some support to you and your family during that period.

Get in touch with us if you have any questions

If you have further questions about the above guide, please contact us stwater.co.uk/contact-us using web messenger, social media or get in touch by calling us on 0800 783 4444 and someone will be able to support you with your query.