ST Classification: UNMARKED

Severn Trent

Code of Practice
Your water supply

January 2024

WONDERFUL ON TAP

SEVERN TRENT

1. Our codes of practice

We operate under a licence which was granted by the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. This means that there are many laws and regulations which govern what we do and the rights you have as a customer. Independent regulators monitor our business to ensure that we operate fairly. In addition to this we have introduced our own policies and services which go beyond our regulatory obligations.

This document sets out our Codes of Practice. It describes the services we provide, what your rights are as a household customer and what to do if things go wrong. The Codes have been produced in consultation with the Consumer Council for Water (CCW). From time to time we'll revise the Codes and update them to include our improvements in services to you. Nothing in our Codes of Practice affects your rights under the Law, nor is it a contract between the Company and you.

1.2 The Retail Market

On 1st April 2017 the retail market opened for commercial customers in the UK.

Severn Trent no longer provide billing services to commercial customers and you should contact your retailer directly if you have a billing query, even if your query relates to previous contact you've had with Severn Trent. We will be contacted directly by your retailer if they require any assistance from us.

If you have an emergency water or waste issue, you can contact us using Web Messenger, WhatsApp and our Social Media channels, or you can call our emergency contact centre on 0800 783 4444. However, if you have an ongoing water or waste issue and wish to write in about this, you should contact your retailer directly – again, we'll be contacted directly by your retailer if they require any assistance from us.

If you do not know who your retailer is, you can visit the Open Water website where you'll be able to find all the information about the retail market - **www.open-water.org.uk.**

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2. Your water supply

2.1 Our region

Severn Trent, part of Severn Trent Plc, is the world's fourth largest privately owned water company. We serve over eight million people across the heart of the UK, from the Bristol Channel to the Humber, and from mid-Wales to the East Midlands. Maps of our region are available to view for free at our head office.

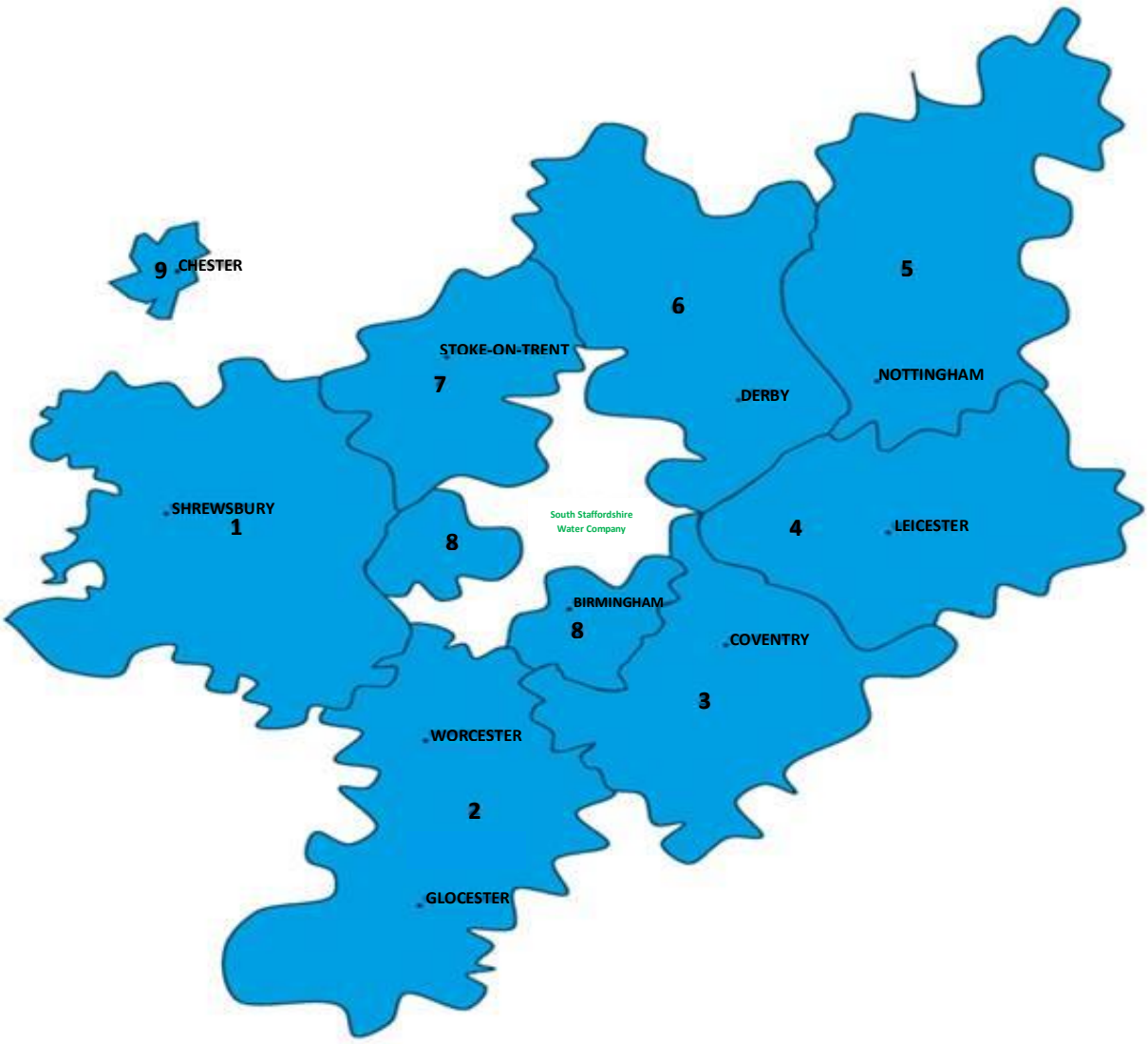


2.2 Your water bill

As there are differences in the average levels of rateable value throughout our area, we vary our charges according to the area (or zone) you live in. There are ten geographical zones in our region. This map provides a guide to the area covered by each zone. The zone marked 'S' is where the water supply is provided by South Staffs Water Plc. Zone 10 (not shown on the map) is a small area on the border of England and Wales just below Zone 9.

Used water charge, as with the water supply charge, is based on the volume of water (using an actual or estimated meter reading) that your household uses. Please note that we usually do not provide sewerage (used water) services for customers in Zones 9 and 10 as Dwr Cymru (Welsh Water) and United Utilities provide sewerage services in these areas. It's possible that your sewerage services could be provided by another company if you are on the border of one of our other zones. Where this happens, we usually bill this service on behalf of the sewerage company, but their charges will differ from the ones in this document. Your bill will say who your wastewater company is.

If you have an enquiry about a bill that's been issued by another company, you should contact them directly.



If you only receive sewerage services from Severn Trent, your water may be supplied by South Staffs Water Plc, if you have any queries about your sewerage service, you should contact us, and if you have a query about your bill or water supply you should contact South Staffs Water.

2.3 Water Quality

The quality of water for domestic purposes is controlled by Regulations issued by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). Standards are set for the chemical and bacterial quality of the water and also its acceptability – colour, clarity, smell and taste. Our supplies meet the requirements of the Regulations and we aim to maintain and further improve on this, where necessary. The Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI) is responsible for making sure we comply with drinking water quality regulations.

In line with the Regulations, we must sample and test the water at regular intervals. Our Quality Technicians visit on average in a typical year 20,000 properties at random and we are required to maintain records of those tests. Whenever we take a sample of your water following a complaint, we will give you details of our analysis and our interpretation of the results. If you want to know about the water in your area or if you have a complaint about the quality of your drinking water, you can contact us using Web Messenger, WhatsApp and our Social Media channels, alternatively, you can contact us by phone, our contact details can be found on the last page or go to **stwater.co.uk**.

Sometimes the quality and appearance of the water can be temporally affected by activities on the water distribution network such as emergency fire service use or repair and maintenance work such the water may be discoloured or murky with a brown, black or orange colour. A quick fix to resolve discolouration would be run a pencil thin stream of water from the tap nearest your stop tap for 20 minutes (normally your kitchen tap). You can find lots of helpful hints and tips on our website in our Water Quality Guide **stwater.co.uk/help-and-contact/legal/water-quality-guide.** However, if you are concerned in any way and think there is a serious problem, please contact us straight away.

On very rare occasions, as a precaution it may be necessary to advise you to boil your water or even not to use it at all for drinking and cooking. We'll tell you as soon as possible using the most appropriate method. In these circumstances, we'll work closely with public health and medical experts and appropriate authorities. In the unlikely event of us having to issue an official 'boil water' or 'do not drink' notice in writing, we'll consider making a payment of £25 to household customers and £50 to commercial customers, where we are at fault.

More details can be found in our Guaranteed Standards Scheme Code of Practice.

2.4 Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999

These Regulations are national requirements for the design, installation and maintenance of plumbing systems, water fittings and water-using appliances. Their purpose is to prevent the misuse, waste, undue consumption, erroneous measurement and/or contamination of drinking water.

The Government requires water suppliers to enforce the Regulations, therefore we'll proactively undertake inspections of new and existing installations to check that the Regulations are being met. We will also attend to reactive situations where breaches of the regulations may be suspected. Where breaches of the Regulations are found, we'll require them to be remedied as soon as practicable. Where breaches pose a risk to health, the water supply to the premises may be disconnected immediately to protect the health of occupants or others fed from the same public supply. It's a criminal offence to breach. the Regulations and offenders may face prosecution. Plumbing systems must be designed, installed and maintained to meet the Regulations' requirements. Plumbing must be properly installed and maintained to protect water quality, maintain safety, ease of access for maintenance, detection of leakage, protection against damage or freezing etc. If you are doing your own installation, make sure you know what requirements you must meet. If you're employing someone else, consider using an approved contractor who will guarantee compliance of the new installation. You can find an approved contractor by visiting **www.watersafe.org.uk.**

The Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999 and their Schedules and Statutory Instruments (1999 No. 1148 and No. 1506) are available from HMSO and via the internet (**legislation.gov.uk**).

2.5 Rights of entry

We have statutory rights of entry to customers' premises to investigate compliance with Regulations, to take samples, and carry out surveys and work. Except in an emergency, we'll call at a reasonable time. When exercising our rights of entry, we'll give you 24 hours' notice for investigating Regulations compliance and monitoring water quality and seven days' notice in all other cases. If we haven't given you notice you have the right to refuse entry.

2.6 Quantity

We must provide you with enough water for normal domestic purposes - that is drinking, washing, cooking, central heating and sanitation, as well as watering the garden and washing the car, provided a hosepipe is not used. However, we aim to make sure that in normal conditions you can use a hosepipe if you wish.

The weather is becoming increasingly unpredictable and in recent years we have experienced lower than average rainfall for our region, at a time when the demand for water has been rising. We have a duty to promote water efficiency and we have responded to this by putting together a water efficiency plan. This is to make sure that we have enough water to meet your requirements without having to impose restrictions.

Our plans include:

- Investing heavily in new water mains to make sure that our network is strengthened.
- Finding and using new sources of water to supplement our existing resources.
- Reducing the amount of leakage from our pipes and customer's pipes.
- Promoting water savings and efficiency to reduce demand.
- Metering customers who wish to use a garden sprinkler or who have a swimming pool.
- Carrying out of water efficiency audits

More advice on how you can save water can be found on our website at **stwater.co.uk**.

Although we don't anticipate having to do so, we may have to impose temporary restrictions on non-essential uses, such as hosepipes, in extreme conditions. If these persist, we may have to resort to the use of standpipes to replace water supply [on a temporary basis], but we'll make sure that customers affected will receive compensation.

2.7 Water Pressure

The water industry regulations say that we must make sure we provide you with 1 bar of water pressure or 10 metres of static head. 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. If pressure falls below seven metres static head (0.7 bar) in the communication pipe on two occasions, each occasion lasting more than one hour, within a 28-day period, the company must automatically make a Guaranteed Standards Scheme payment.

Pressure and flow rates in your home can be adversely affected by a number of factors:

- The height of the property above the water main and its height relative to the reservoir.
- The condition and size of the customer's service pipe.
- Whether the property shares a service pipe with other properties.
- Peak demand conditions.
- a change in pressure that we have made to improve our water network or protect the network from leaks or damage.

If you think that your water pressure is too low, we'll investigate the cause free of charge. If the cause is our responsibility, we'll take appropriate action. If it's not, we'll tell you what you need to do. For further information please contact us, you can find our contact details on the last page of this document. You can also visit our guide for Caring for our customers water pressure here **stwater.co.uk/help-and-contact/legal/customer-guide-to-our-water-pressure-policy.**

If your pressure falls below seven metres head in our service pipe for longer than one hour on two occasions in any 28-day period, you'll be entitled to a £30 payment. This applies in normal operating conditions and is limited to one payment per year. More details can be found in our Guaranteed Standards Scheme Code of Practice.

2.8 Supply Interruptions

While we work to provide a constant supply of water, some events will inevitably interrupt the flow. For example, bursts in the water mains and the failures of pumps or their electricity supply. If there's a problem please contact us, you can find our contact details on the last page of this document, and we'll investigate immediately. If the mains supply fails, we must restore it as soon as possible. Our target is to do so in less than 12 hours but the larger mains are more difficult to repair and can take longer. If the interruption lasts longer than 24 hours, we must provide you with an emergency supply. In the event of a loss of supply greater than 24 hours Severn Trent operate a Priority Service Register for vulnerable customers. For more information on how to join our Priority service Register, visit **stwater.co.uk/priority.** For more information on the support we offer, refer to our Help when you need it Code of Practice.

Alternative supplies will only be provided to commercial customers who are classed as sensitive under our sensitive customer guidance or Public Health related site-specific arrangements. If we plan to interrupt your supply for more than four hours to do planned maintenance work, we must give you reasonable written notice (normally 48 hours). We'll also inform you of the duration of the interruption. If we fail to give you notice or fail to restore the supply by the time stated, you'll be entitled to a service guarantee payment. More details can be found in our Guaranteed Standards Scheme Code of Practice.

As part of our programme for checking leaks, we sometimes turn off sections of mains pipe at night in a programmed way to identify the leaks. We usually do this between midnight and 6:00am. These interruptions normally last less than two hours and because the disruption is slight, we won't tell you in advance. If you think that this is likely to cause you a problem, please contact us, you can find our contact details on the last page of this document.

2.9 Responsibility for pipes – our pipes

The water mains in the public highway are generally ours. Some water mains cross private land and we have powers to lay and maintain those mains. Please see **our Code of Practice for pipe-laying in private land** for information. Normally the service pipe is ours until it reaches the boundary of the highway. Most properties have an underground stop tap at the boundary which is our responsibility.

2.10 Responsibility for pipes – your pipes

The service pipe from the stop tap which takes the water into your house is normally yours (or your landlord's). This part of the service pipe is usually referred to as the customer service pipe. It's your responsibility to maintain your pipe in good order just as you would maintain the plumbing in your house, even when, as in some cases, it runs under other properties before reaching your house. If you have any problems on your pipework, contact us and we may be able to help.

2.11 Shared customer service pipe

You may share a service pipe with one or more of your neighbours and the flow of water at your tap may be unacceptably low when your neighbours are using water. If the pipe is in a poor condition, we can require you and your neighbours to share the cost of replacing it with separate pipes. This would improve both the flow and the quality of water at your tap. We can also require separation of a shared pipe if:

- One of the households on the shared pipe falls into payment arrears.
- The houses are converted into a larger number of flats or homes.
- The shared pipe has been tampered with.

If any dispute arises about the circumstances outlined above, it may be referred to our regulator, Ofwat to decide the outcome. You can find details of how to contact Ofwat in our Guaranteed Standards Scheme Code of practice.

2.12 Leaks

The legal position is that where there is a leak on your service pipe it is your responsibility to repair it. If your bill seems abnormally high, it may mean that there is a leak on your service pipe or it may be due to high consumption; for example, if a garden hose was used during the period covered by your bill. If you suspect that there is a leak on your pipe, you can check this yourself by:

- Turning off all the taps in the house and making sure that there is no water being used.
- Read the meter and take a note of the reading. Your meter may be internal or external in a boundary box. You should read all of the digits on the meter from left to right, making a note of where the decimal place is.
- Take a second reading after a few hours, ensuring that no water is used in the property during this time.
- If the second reading is higher, there may be a leak.
- For more information on leakage please refer to **section 3.**
- You can also check for other signs of a leak such as areas of lush vegetation during dry periods and other obvious damp patches or a constant noise coming from the pipes in your home that sounds like water is being used. Checking for any faults with water flowing through your toilet overflow (particularly for new bathroom fittings where the overflow is diverted back down the toilet flow) can be useful.



If a leak is discovered on your supply pipe, we all want it repaired quickly. You can repair the leak yourself or use a contractor or plumber of your choice, at your expense. Severn Trent have a list of approved plumbers on our website **www.stwater.co.uk/in-my-area/find-a-plumber**. If leaks are not repaired promptly, we'll serve notice to you and any other customers concerned, requiring the work to be done at your own cost. If the leak is still running after this notice period has expired, we'll do the work and charge you for the full cost of the repairs or a proportion if the supply is shared. If, in extreme cases, the leak endangers people or property, or threatens to contaminate the public water supply, we can cut off the supply until the leak is repaired. If you suspect there is a leak on your service pipe or you spot a leak in the road please contact us, you can find our contact details on the last page of this document, so that we can arrange an appointment to visit. This service is free of charge.

If you have a meter fitted outside at the boundary, you'll be paying for the wasted water (please refer to section 4 Working to Reduce Leakage for more information) however when the meter is installed we'll check for any leaks on the service pipe. If we discover a leak we can repair it under our free repair scheme subject to the terms of the scheme or you can arrange for someone else to do the work for you at your cost.

If there is a leak we'll make an adjustment to the charges provided the leak is repaired promptly and provided that it was not caused by your negligence and was not one you should have known about and could have repaired sooner. This adjustment won't be repeated for subsequent leaks. If we had to enforce the leak to be repaired, you will not be eligible for this adjustment.

Where adjustments are made to water consumption charges a similar adjustment will be made to the sewerage charges. If a leak occurs on your supply, you'll need to complete a leakage claim form on our website **stwater.co.uk/get-in-touch/leakage-allowance-claim-form.** Alternatively, you can contact us, you can find our contact details on the last page of this document, to obtain a form.

2.13 Lead pipes

The water we supply is essentially lead-free but traces can be picked up from the service pipe or your own plumbing, if they are made of lead. High lead levels can be a health risk, particularly to young children, so we treat our water to make sure that lead dissolution is kept to an absolute minimum. We monitor lead levels across our area and can provide advice on typical results for your area.

If you have lead pipes you may decide to replace your service pipe and in this case we'll replace our part of the service pipe at the same time, free of charge. If you have a lead service pipe which is shared and you and your neighbours agree to have it replaced, we may request separate pipes to be laid. If you decide to replace your lead service pipe, you may wish to contact your local council who may be able to provide a grant in some circumstances. Commercial customers are not eligible for the free service.

If you would like further information on the above, please refer to our Customer Guide to Replacing Lead Pipes **stwater.co.uk/my-supply/tap-water/my-water-pipes/lead-replacement-scheme.**

2.14 Our Virtual Field Team

Our specialist team of trained engineers working in our offices and are available (06:00-22:00 Monday – Friday, 08:00-16:00 Saturday and 08:00-15:30 Sunday) providing video calls to our customers to offer advice, support and guidance on queries relating to water leaks, lead replacement and damaged covers. This service is for customers who are having an issue and would like to show our engineers via video call what the issue is, and in most cases, this removes the need for a visit from our field engineers. This is also our dedicated team for our Lead Replacement scheme and are always on hand to answer any questions you may have. To contact our Virtual field team, email them at **vftenquiries@severntrent.co.uk** or call them on **0800 917 2477.**

2.15 Badly rusted service pipe

Old iron service pipes can become badly rusted inside. The rust restricts the flow through the pipe and may discolour the water. If this is the case, then we'll replace our part of the service pipe and suggest you replace your part.

2.16 Electrical earthing – warning

The earthing of the electrical installation in the home is an important safety measure and the householder's own responsibility. The use of metal water pipes as a means of providing electrical earthing for the property was once common practice. However, this method has not been permitted since 1966. It is important you appreciate that the vast majority of new water mains and service pipes (including replacements) are now plastic and therefore totally unsuitable as a means of electrical earthing. Where we identify metal water service pipes that could be used as electrical earthing, we'll leave a card with you to draw your attention to the potentially dangerous practice. In these circumstances, we strongly advise you to contact your electricity supply company or other approved electrical contractor to discuss the matter. They may recommend that you have the earthing arrangements to your property checked and they are entitled to charge for this service.

2.17 Illegal water hydrant use

Water hydrants are critical resources to help the Fire Service in emergencies and help us to manage and maintain the water network. You may not notice them, but most streets in your neighbourhood are likely to have a fire hydrant. They are found under a cover on your road or street, a bit like a drain. These are a vital connection to water network for the emergency services. Water hydrants are critical resources to help the Fire Service in emergencies and help us to manage and maintain the water network.

Some individuals and companies access our hydrants, using them to take water from the network to use themselves. All approved users will have a large, bright green standpipe which they use to connect to the hydrant. The bright green standpipe has the Severn Trent logo on it.

Hydrant misuse and vandalism is a criminal offence. We have had cases of businesses, including some road sweepers and bin cleaners, illegally access our main water pipes through the hydrants to take water without our permission.

Problems caused by hydrant misuse

Illegal hydrant misuse can damage the hydrant, break our mains pipework and put your home or business at risk during an emergency. It can also cause water quality and supply issues, including:

- changes to the colour of the water
- reduction in pressure
- loss of supply
- contamination

What to do if you suspect illegal water hydrant use

If you think you've seen somebody illegally accessing a water hydrant, you should report it to us straight away. You can complete a digital form to report suspected hydrant misuse to us on our website **stwater.co.uk/get-in-touch/report-hydrant-misuse.** Please give us as much info as you can.

3. New water connections

3.1 If you want a new water service (New Connections)

We will connect all new premises to our water mains if you ask us to do so where the supply is required for domestic purposes. Alternatively, on development sites, connections can be carried out by an approved contractor working to our self-lay scheme if agreed prior to work commencing (Accredited on the Lloyds Register).

All new connections will be metered and charged according to our metered tariffs (with the exception of fire supplies).

We sometimes require developers to fit Severn Trent supplied water meters on new service connections - usually this is only required on internal meters and large diameter connection bulk meters. Severn Trent will install external meters at the boundary on standard size connections i.e. 25mm or 32mm services.

We are required to recover all reasonable costs, therefore where we make the new connection you'll need to meet associated costs which are likely to include:

- The cost of processing the application
- The cost of making the connection to your pipe and our water main
- The cost of laying our part of the service pipe and arranging for it to be metered.

- Appropriate reinstatement of the highway.
- Traffic management.
- Where the new connection is made by an approved contractor you'll have to meet our costs which include administration and inspection fees.

In addition, for all new connections (with the exception of fire supplies and process water) you will be required to pay an infrastructure charge. This is a fixed contribution to the cost of developing the local water and waste network for supplying additional demand. If your development site/address includes properties where there has previously been a billable account within 5 years of your new connection a credit may be applicable towards this cost.

To obtain a new connection, you must complete an application form providing relevant details and pay the associated fee. We'll then inspect the site and send you a quotation if you'd like us to do the work. Before we can make a connection we must be satisfied that:

- Your part of the service pipe has been laid to our specification and complies with the Water Supply Regulations.
- A separate service pipe has been provided to each of the buildings or premises that are separately occupied.
- The appropriate regulations have been or will be complied with.
- You've obtained the necessary consent from others (e.g. landlords, land owners).
- Relevant charges for making the connection have been paid

Once you've completed the above steps and paid the necessary charges, we will arrange an inspection of the pipework, including the meter chamber where applicable. Following a passed inspection we will then connect the service pipe to the mains within 21 days. Normally we'll agree a time with you to make the connection but the period may be extended where working restrictions are imposed under the Traffic Management Act. This may take longer if offsite reinforcement is required prior to making the connection.

If we fail to meet these deadlines and you sustain loss or damage as a result, you may have a legal claim against us. Any dispute relating to such connection may be referred to Ofwat; more details can be obtained from our Developer Services Team **(0800 707 6600)** or email us at **new.connections@severntrent.co.uk.**

3.2 I want a new main

If you ask for a new main that is required to serve a new development this can be requested under our mains application process. Following a change in our charges process from the 1 April 2020 income offset is now against service connections, with all mains at full cost for construction.

For our part, we must provide the main within three months of you signing the agreement and making the required payment.

Alternatively, if it has been agreed in advance, you can choose to have a main laid by approved installers (accredited on the Lloyds Register). Where this is done, you'll have a choice to either pay us to do the design or you can simply request that we check and approve the design. We will test the main and make the connection to our distribution network. Any dispute in respect of the amount we require you to pay or the undertakings or securities we expect you to give can be referred to Ofwat for determination.

For all new connections (except for fire supplies) an infrastructure charge is payable. This is a fixed contribution to the cost of developing the local water and waste network for supplying additional demand. If your development site/address includes properties where there has previously been a billable account within 5 years of your new connection a credit may be applicable towards this cost.

3.3 Infrastructure Charges

When a new property is connected to our water mains or sewerage system for the first time, we must make sure that we can deliver the same high standard of service as a result of the extra demand. For all new connections (except for fire supplies) an infrastructure charge is payable, one for water and one for sewerage, which is a fixed contribution towards additional investment in our local distribution system. The charge is in addition to the actual cost of making a connection. Infrastructure charges are intended to make sure that the costs of the investment are met from a one-off charge to new properties as and when they are connected rather than from higher charges to existing properties. If your development site/address includes properties where there has previously been a billable account within 5 years of your new connection a credit may be applicable towards this cost.

If the infrastructure charges, or part of them, are not paid within 14 days of connection, or if an agreement to pay the charges is terminated incorrectly, then we have the right to recover the charges. If part of the infrastructure charges have already been paid, then this amount will be treated as a credit and subtracted from the total charge. The infrastructure charge for a domestic supply is agreed annually and shared with Ofwat. Details of our charges can be found at www.stwater.co.uk/developers.

3.4 Fire Sprinklers

If you are building or developing a site/property that has a fire sprinkler requirement, please be aware that we cannot guarantee the constant availability, flow or pressure needed for such systems. Therefore, this needs to be considered by you when designing the sprinkler system.

4. Working to reduce leakage

We have a duty and responsibility to reduce leakage and promote the efficient use of water. We do this by keeping our 46,000 kilometre network of water mains and pipes in good condition.

You can help us by reporting any leaks that you see so that we can fix them quickly. You also have a responsibility to fix leaks on your pipework and we can help.

4.1 Our responsibilities

It is our duty under law to prevent the loss of water from the water supply network.

We do this by monitoring our network to find and fix leaks and replace water mains and service pipes in poor condition. Over the last 5 years, we have fixed on average, over 40,000 leaks and replaced more than 200km of water mains per year. We plan to reduce leakage across our network by 15% by 2025.

The faster we can find and repair leaks the better so if you spot a leak in the road or another public place, please let us know by contacting us or visit **stwater.co.uk/reportaleak**. We can't fix a leak if we don't know about it.

A water leak is a waste of a precious resource and it is in everyone's interest to get it fixed quickly. It's your responsibility to fix leaks that are on the pipe that runs under your garden or driveway to the boundary of your property. If it's left running it may cause damage to your property and, if your water supply is metered, it will cost you more money.

The bill payer at the property must repair the leak and we may start legal proceedings under section 75 of the Water Industry Act 1991 if the repair is not made in reasonable time.

4.2 Frequently asked questions

Who do I contact if I am a non-household customer?

If you are non-household customer and find a leak on your private pipework you should initially make contact with your retailer who will be able to offer advice regarding the appropriate course of action.

Who is responsible for the pipes?

As the consumer, you're responsible by law for looking after the underground water service pipe that runs from the first stop tap or boundary box to your home, subject to some exceptions. If our controlling stop tap is within your property boundary we may be responsible for some of the pipe that is on your land. If there's a leak on a part of the service pipe that supplies your property you are responsible for making any repairs.

If you rent the property, you are still responsible as the consumer of water however you should speak to the owner/landlord of the property as they may cover the cost of this but it's worth checking your tenancy agreement first. Generally, we own and look after the water mains and services in the street up to your external stop tap or boundary box. There are some exceptions:

- If the controlling stop tap is inside your property boundary, you are responsible for the part of the service pipe between the house and the stop tap and we are responsible for the remainder.
- In some circumstances your responsibility might extend beyond the property boundary including, for example, if the water main that serves the property is in a different street from your property or if the service pipe runs through one of your neighbours' properties.
- In cases where your controlling stop tap or meter are some distance from your property boundary your responsibility may extend beyond that boundary.
- Normally, if you share a service pipe you're jointly responsible for maintaining it. If there's a leak on the pipe, all those downstream of the leak are responsible for repairing it. In the diagram, a leak at X is the responsibility of A, B and C. A leak at Y requires A and B to take some action (see Figure 2).

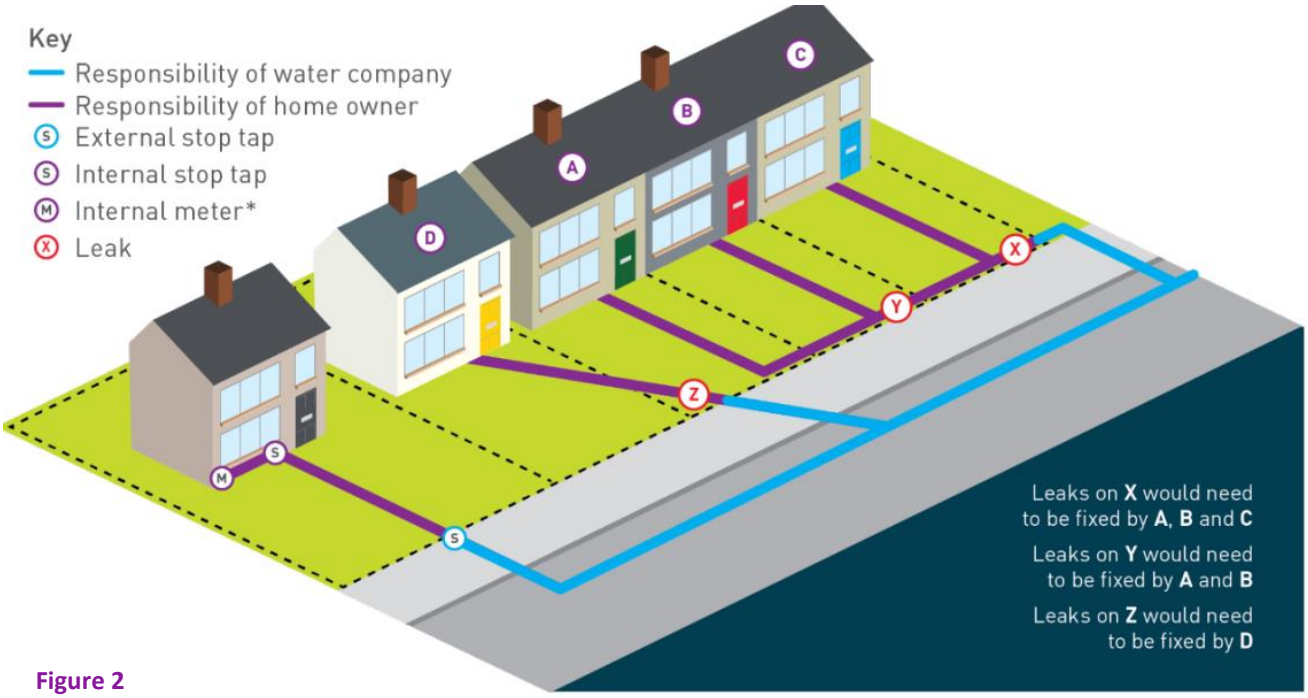


Figure 2

Type of pipe:	Laid under:	Responsibility for pipe:
Water mains	Highway	Severn Trent
	Property owner's land	
	Land owned by someone else	
Communication pipe	Highway	Severn Trent
Supply pipe serving single property	Highway	Property owner
	Property owner's land	
	Land owned by someone else	
Shared supply pipe serving more than one property	Highway	Joint responsibility of all property owners served by the pipe
	Land owned by any of the property owners served by the pipe	
	Land owned by someone else	

Visit our website at stwater.co.uk where you can contact us via Web Messenger, WhatsApp and our Social Media channels, alternatively, you can contact us by phone, our contact details can be found on the last page, if you're not sure whether a leak is your responsibility.

We all want the leak repaired quickly and as part of our effort to reduce leakage we'll support you as much as possible through the process of repairing your supply pipe. Please remember that if there's a leak on your pipe then legally it is your responsibility to repair it.

Contact our Customer Leakage Support team on **0345 266 0036** and they will be able to talk you through the options available to you. Often, homeowners will have insurance cover which they can use to cover the cost of a repair. If not, you can find a list of approved plumbers at **www.stwater.co.uk/in-my-area/find-a-plumber** that should be able to assist you in completing the repair. You must take steps to stop the water waste within a 28 day period. Please contact us on the above number if you are having difficulty getting your leak fixed.

What if I don't repair a leak?

If you don't take steps to repair a leak that you are responsible for within a reasonable period of time we'll send a notice to you and any other customers who are supplied by the same pipe telling you that the work has to be done at your own cost. If you still haven't repaired the leak after the time limit we have given, we'll take steps to obtain a warrant from a magistrate's court to allow us access to your property to stop the leak by making a repair. If this happens, we'll charge you for the full cost of the repairs, or a proportion if the supply is shared. You'll also have to pay for all of the water which has passed through the meter since the leak was identified. If, in extreme cases, the leak endangers people or property or threatens to contaminate the public water supply, we'll cut off the supply.

What if I can't afford to pay to get my leak fixed?

If you are struggling to pay, please call our Customer Leakage Support team on **0345 2660036**. We will then be able to discuss which options we have available to you. We are here to help and support you.

What work do you do to repair leaks and improve the pipe network?

We work hard to increase our water efficiency by investing millions of pounds in finding and fixing leaks, improving our pipe network, fitting meters for free and providing advice to businesses and households about actions and products that will allow them to save water. Our leakage and detection staff work around the clock to find and fix as many leaking pipes as quickly as possible. Fewer than half of the leaks we repair can be seen above ground. This means that we have to do a great deal of detection work to locate them and to invest a lot in high-tech equipment. For more information about the work and investments we are making in your local area visit **stwater.co.uk.**

Will my water bill be adjusted if I have a leak?

If you have the leak repaired within a reasonable period of time of it being identified, we may be able to offer you an allowance on your bill so long as you meet our criteria. If a leak occurs on our equipment and it affects your bill we'll make an adjustment to remove the extra charges. We'll adjust the charges based on your consumption history. Where there's no record of past consumption, the adjustment will be based on the typical usage for a property of a similar type to yours. If you live in an area where your water is supplied by another company we'll adjust your sewerage charges in the same way as explained above. An allowance to your water charges is made on a once-only basis and will ensure you don't have to pay for additional costs because of a leak for 12 months, or two bills, whichever is longer. A credit will be applied to your account and we'll refund any excess charges that we have made.

We won't make an adjustment if:

- The leak is on internal pipe work or fittings.
- You have been negligent in identifying the leak and seeking its repair (if you should have known about it and repaired it sooner).
- The leak was caused by a third party.
- You have previously received a leakage allowance on the same supply. Our policy is to offer one leakage allowance per customer per property.

If you need to contact us about an adjustment/allowance please contact us. Alternatively, you can fill in a leakage claim form which is available from our website at **stwater.co.uk.**

My bill seems higher than usual; does this mean I have a leak?

A bill which is higher than normal might have been simply caused by higher consumption. For example, if you used a garden sprinkler during the bill period. However, if you don't think that you have used extra water it may be that there is a leak on your pipe. You can check this yourself in a few simple steps:

- Turn off all the taps in the house and make sure that there is no water being used.
- Read the meter and take a note of the reading. Your meter may be internal or external in a boundary box. You should read all of the digits on the meter from left to right, making a note of where the decimal place is.
- Take a second reading after a few hours, making sure no water is used in the meantime.
- If the second reading is higher, there may be a leak.
- For more information on leakage you may find our website useful, please visit **stwater.co.uk.**
- You can also check for other signs of a leak such as areas of lush vegetation during dry periods and other obvious damp patches or a constant noise coming from the pipes in your home that sounds like water being used.

Will you check for leaks when I have a meter fitted?

If we're installing a meter we'll check for any leaks on the service pipe. If we find a leak we'll tell you about it and support you in getting your pipe work repaired. If you don't repair the leak then we can charge you for the extra water that is being used and you won't be eligible for any leakage allowances.

A Severn Trent water pipe has leaked and flooded my basement, damaging my property, what do I do?

If you believe that we have a leaking pipe which has caused damage to your property, please contact us and we will arrange for an operative to visit. If the leak is from our pipe, they will arrange for the pipe to be fixed and a restoration company to make contact with you to dry out the basement and arrange for the damaged property to be repaired or restored. If this is not possible, they will take photos and pass these to our claims handlers, who will make contact with you to discuss the damage further.

Your water main has burst and my property is flooded, who deals with my damage?

Under Section 209 of the Water Industry Act, in most cases we will be responsible for the damage caused by the escape of water from our water main. You can ask your home insurers to deal with your claim under the terms of your policy with them and they should in turn, pursue a recovery of their costs from Severn Trent's insurers. You can choose to ask for our help in repairing the damage caused. Where necessary, we will arrange for a loss adjuster to attend site and assess the damage, they will arrange for a restoration company to visit and dry your property. If your home is uninhabitable, they will arrange for emergency alternative accommodation. As each property is different you will then be given assistance bespoke to your needs. The loss adjusters or nominated claims handlers will then arrange to settle your contents claim.

5. Complaints

5.1 What if I have a dispute?

We are here to help you. We'll look into any issue, complaint or dispute you have, and we'll follow the process detailed within our Complaints Procedure in our Guaranteed Standards Scheme guide on our website. Whilst we're investigating your dispute, we won't take any further action.

Contact Us

Connect with our team

The quickest and easiest way to get in touch with our teams is through messaging and Social Media. You can click on any of the below icons to open a chat with one of our team members right away.



Questions about your bill.

• Payment arrangements • Metering • Moving house • Problems paying • High water usage • Priority Services.
Manage your account online via our website **stwater.co.uk/contact-us.**

Write to: Severn Trent, PO Box 497, Darlington, DL1 9WD.

0345 7500 500 (Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm, Saturday 9am to 3pm)
When connected press:

1. To make a payment through our automated payment line.
2. To discuss billing, metering, or other account queries.
3. To report an issue with your water or sewerage supply.

Questions about your water supply, sewerage, or emergencies

• Loss of supply • Leaks • Water quality problems • Sewer flooding • Blocked sewers

Find out what work is going on in your local area via our website **stwater.co.uk/in-my-area.**

Manage your account online via our website **stwater.co.uk/contact-us.**

Write to: Severn Trent, PO Box 497, Darlington, DL1 9WD.

0800 783 4444 (Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)
When connected press:

1. If you have any queries about sewerage.
2. If you wish to report a leak or a burst.
3. If you have a problem with the supply of your water.

4 To discuss billing, metering, or other account queries.

Calls to 0800 numbers are free from UK Landlines. Calls to 0345 numbers are charged at a local rate and when phoning from a mobile, may be included in your free minute's package. Calls made from mobile phones will be charges at your operators' rates.