



Dŵr Cymru  
Welsh Water

# Leakage

Non Household Customers  
—Information for Retailers



This document is available  
in Welsh on request



## Water is a precious resource and it is in all our interests to ensure that we use it wisely.

We are committed to ensuring the efficient use of water and to reduce leakage. Reducing water loss, repairing leaks on our mains and preventing bursts are a top priority for us. We have specialist teams working day and night to check for hidden leaks in our underground pipes. Over the last 20 years we have succeeded in reducing the amount of water lost through leaks by 50%.

However, some of the water lost comes from customers' own pipework, and if customers have a leak and they are metered, they may be paying for water they haven't used. Fixing leaks has other benefits; water leaking from pipes can damage roads and the foundations of buildings, so it's in everyone's interest to prevent and repair leaks quickly. Efficient use of water also helps protect the environment and keeps bills low.

Suspected leaks on our network should be notified to us by calling **0800 052 0130**; it's free of charge and open 24-hours a day.

This leaflet is for Retailers. It explains what to do if a Non Household Customer (NHH) has a leak at their property, who is responsible for fixing it and, if the customer has a meter, when there would be an entitlement to an allowance for water lost through leakage.



# Responsibility for water pipes

## Our water mains and pipes

We're normally (but not always) responsible for all pipework to the boundary of the street where our water main is laid. This includes

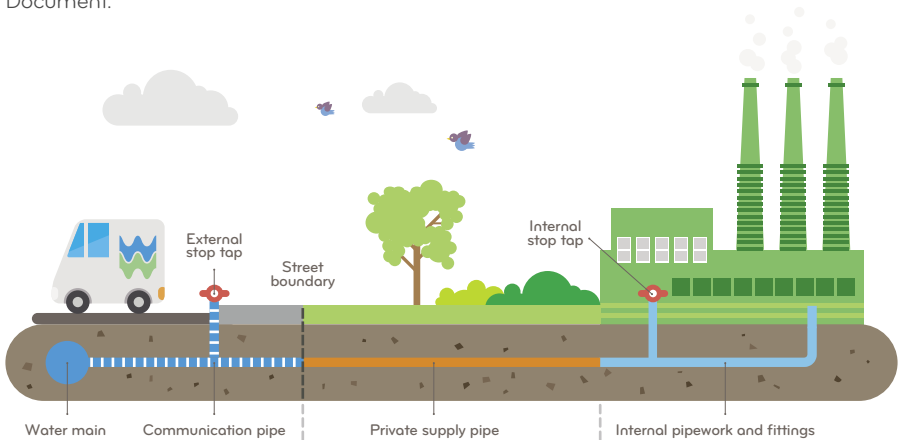
- Water mains;
- Stop taps in the road or pavement;
- Pipework between the main and the boundary of the street known as the communication pipe.

These are usually displayed on maps which you can see free of charge at our Linea Offices, Fortran Road, St Mellons, Cardiff CF3 OLT or available at a charge as detailed in our Wholesale Tariff Document.

We look after our own water mains and our communication pipes, undertaking regular maintenance and repairs. We also have an extensive programme to replace old mains in poor condition to reduce the number of leaks and bursts.

It is important to know which pipes your customers are responsible for and which we look after.

If you have any queries about your customer's responsibility, please contact our Wholesale Service Centre.



### We own and fix

We maintain it and fix leaks as quickly as we can.

### Your private supply pipework

You own, but subject to certain conditions, we may offer to fix free of charge.

### Your internal pipework and fittings

You own and fix.

### Your water supply and internal pipes

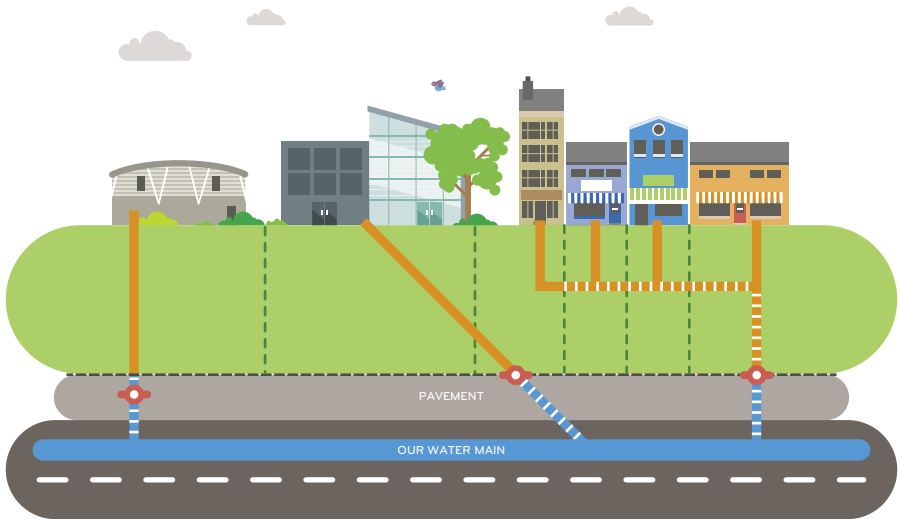
NHH customers are responsible for:

- Your private supply pipe, which is the pipe that connects onto our communication pipe and runs into your property; and
- All of your internal pipework and fittings.

If the property is some distance from our water main it's likely there will be a very long supply pipe.

NHH Customers are responsible for the entire length of the supply pipe from the property to the boundary of the street in which our main is laid (or to the main itself if our main isn't laid in the street) even though it may pass through public highways or third parties properties.

In some cases they may share responsibility for the supply pipe with neighbouring properties.



**Our responsibility**

- █ Water main
- ▣▣▣▣ Communication pipe

**Customer responsibility**

- █ Private supply pipe
- ▣▣▣▣ Shared private supply pipe

- - - Property boundary
- ⊙ Stop tap/Meter
- - - Street boundary



## Finding leaks

### On our water mains and pipes

We repair leaks on the water mains and pipes that belong to us as soon as we can, replacing pipes in poor condition, as part of our ongoing maintenance programme. Although we make every effort to repair leaks quickly, we must ensure we always work safely and we may need to gain permission from the Highway Authority before we dig up a footpath or road.

### On a NHH customers water supply pipes or internal fittings

It's the customers responsibility to fix a leaking water supply pipe or remedy wastage from the internal pipework or fittings at their property but we may be able to help them in locating the leak and give advice regarding the repair.

Any leak repairs or wasting of water must be resolved within 30 calendar days of the date we confirm the leak. If this isn't done we'll refer the case to our Legal team who will contact your customer to outline their legal responsibilities and take further action to address the waste of water. You will be notified if a leakage notice is issued to your customer.

Under Section 73 of the Water Industry Act 1991 it's a criminal offence to waste water. This includes any intentional cause or negligence for water supplied by us to be wasted or misused. Please take time to read the legal notice on page 9 and share this information with your customers.

To find the nearest contractor/plumber we recommend that customers visit either:

#### Watersafe

[watersafe.org.uk](http://watersafe.org.uk)  
0333 207 9030

#### Water Industry Approved Plumbers Scheme

[wras.co.uk](http://wras.co.uk)  
01495 248 540



## Allowances

Any water wasted or lost through leaks from a customer's pipework is likely to record usage on their meter and be charged to their Retailer through the settlement process.

If the leak is our responsibility we will make a volumetric adjustment to cancel any additional water and sewerage charges.

If the leak is the customer's responsibility, the water charges will still be applicable however we may reduce the sewerage charges where water lost due to leakage has not returned to the sewer as detailed below.

If the meter serves both a non-household and household property, i.e. a pub with a flat (occupied as a home) we will award an allowance for water on the household element of the bill only.

### Claiming leakage allowances

A leakage allowance should be claimed by submission of form H/O1

A leak allowance will be granted once the supply pipe has been repaired or replaced, as long as:

- It is repaired within 30 calendar days of the leak being confirmed.
- A claim is made within 6 months of the date of the repair.
- The leak wasn't caused through negligence.
- An allowance hasn't been given at the same property within the previous 2 years.
- We haven't referred the matter to our legal team because the leak wasn't repaired within 30 calendar days.
- The leak was on the external supply pipe and not on internal fittings.

### Calculating leakage allowances

We will reassess the sewerage charges on the basis of the normal usage, taking into account where applicable any seasonal variations in use.

Any allowance will be backdated for a maximum of 12 months prior to the date the leak was repaired.



## Using water wisely – water saving tips for customers

### Check for unusually high use

Take regular water meter readings (if it is safe to do so) to help understand your water consumption and identify any potential leaks.

Check for underground pipe leaks and leaks from internal plumbing, outdoor taps, sprinklers and hoses.

### Fix leaking taps and overflows

Check remotely located buildings and pipe work so that leaks don't go unnoticed.

Check that all water using devices, such as toilets, urinals and ball valves are working correctly.

Constant flushing of urinals and dripping taps can increase water consumption.

Use pipe insulation so that your pipes aren't at risk of freezing and splitting in cold weather.

### Reduce water for toilet flushing

- Insert displacement devices in the cistern.

- Where dual-flush cisterns are installed, place a clearly visible notice to explain how to operate both flushes to prevent incorrect operation and wastage.

- New toilets may have overflows or leaks that discharge directly into the pan which may not be noticed or reported. Identify toilets with internal overflows and regularly check for discharge.

### Buy Water Efficient Equipment

- Specify low water consumption requirements for any new fittings or processes.

- High pressure spray jettors can use less water than conventional hoses as they use pressure.

- instead of a large volume of water to clean.

- Review water usage once a year and produce plans to reduce consumption.

- Educate all staff on water efficiency initiatives and get support from managements.

- Look at how to incorporate initiatives into your wider environmental policy.





## The legal bit

**A water leak is classified as an offence under Section 73 of the Water Industry Act 1991 (WIA 1991). This means that if a customer doesn't get the leak fixed, we can prosecute them for allowing their water fittings to be, or remain, in a defective condition. The maximum fine is £1,000.**

Details of Section 73 are provided below if you wish to read them:

"if any person who is the owner or occupier of any premises to which a supply of water is provided by a water undertaker intentionally or negligently causes or suffers any water fitting for which he is responsible to be or remain so out of order, so in need of repair or so constructed or adapted, or to be so used that water so supplied is or is likely to be wasted or, having regard to the purposes for which it is supplied, misused or unduly consumed that person shall be guilty of an offence and liable, on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale".

Leaks don't just waste water; they can also damage properties. This is why its important leaks are fixed as quickly as possible and why we have to set a time limit on getting everything sorted. This is 30 calendar days from the date a customer was made aware of the leak. Section 75(2)(b) of the WIA 1991 gives us the authority to do this.

If the leak isn't repaired within 30 calendar days, we will refer the matter to our Legal team who will take further action to address the waste of water. This could include: serving legal notice to repair leaks where possible and recharging the cost to the customer; prosecuting for the waste of water or any faulty water fittings; and, in the case of a shared supply, serve a legal notice insisting that the properties install separate supply pipes within a 3 month period.

In emergencies, for example, where the leak is freezing across a public highway or causing damage to a property, we might need to disconnect the supply pipe. We only do this when absolutely necessary and as a last resort. This is in accordance with Section 75(2) (a) of the WIA 1991.

It's important that your customer is aware that as well as being classified as an offence under the WIA 1991, any water fittings which allow water to be wasted are also in breach of the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999 which has a maximum fine of £1,000. Sometimes we may need access to a property to inspect the pipes and fittings.

Hopefully this won't be a problem, but if access is not permitted to the property, we may need to apply for a Warrant of Entry from a Magistrates Court. If any of the water fittings are found to be defective, we will serve the customer with an infringement notice giving a set period in which to repair or replace them. If a customer fails to do so within the time limit they may be prosecuted.

We really hope that we won't have to apply any of the above. However, we feel it is important that your customer are aware of the legal bits and what could happen if they don't arrange for a leak at their property to be fixed.

