

# Leakage Code of Practice

## Commercial Customers

**Leakline 0800 801011** (manned 24 hours every day)

If you require any further information please contact  
**Customer Services on 0845 702 3797 between 8.00am  
and 6.00pm, Monday to Friday**

Or you can write to us at  
**Bristol Water plc, P O Box 218, Bridgwater Road, Bristol  
BS99 7AU**

Or email us on  
**customer.services@bristolwater.co.uk  
www.bristolwater.co.uk**

If you have a **water supply emergency** telephone  
**0845 702 3797** at any time



**BRISTOL  
WATER**  
An AGBAR Company

## Leakage Code of Practice Commercial Customers

Water is a precious resource and it is in all our interests to ensure that we use it wisely. We are continually working to reduce the level of leakage from our supply network to a minimum.

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 prices down.

If we find a leak on our network of pipes, or a customer reports a leak to us, we will ensure that the leak is repaired within 10 working days (unless we have to give extended notice to, or are directed by the local Highway Authority or third parties). If we fail to undertake a repair on a leak notified to us within 10 working days (excluding those instances where the local Highway Authority or third parties expect or direct us to give extended notice), under the Bristol Water Bond compensation scheme we will make a payment to the first person who reported the leak.

We also have a **Freephone Leakline 0800 801011** (available at all times) so that customers can tell us if they have spotted a leak.

## What causes pipes to leak?

The action of frost, water logging, dry spells and the weight of traffic can cause small ground movements affecting the pipework. The types and ages of pipework can also be affected by the nature of the ground that they are laid in. With over 6,500 kilometres of water mains in the Bristol Water area, it is inevitable that leaks will occur and this is particularly the case where sections of pipe join or where customer pipes join ours.

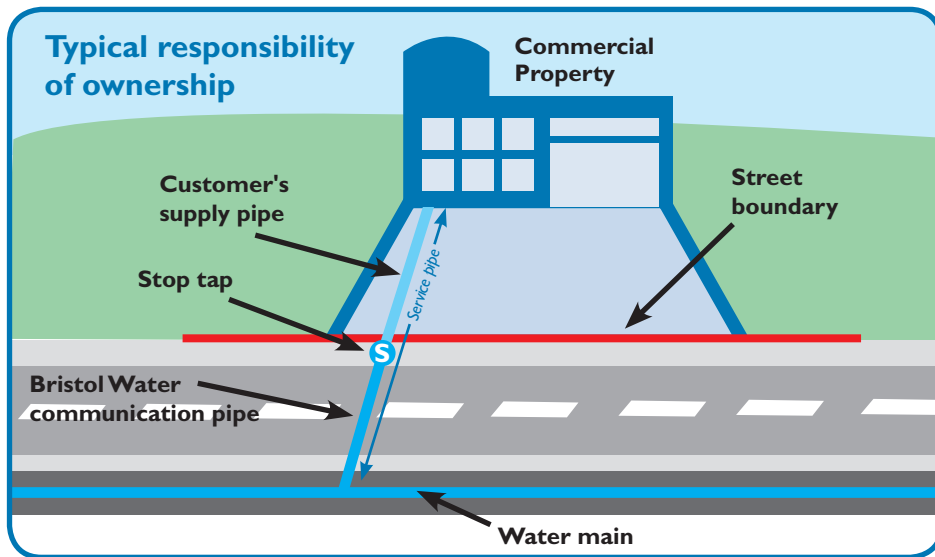
Since the pipes are underground, only the worst leaks may show as water gushing out of the ground whereas smaller leaks are often difficult to find.

## How to spot a leak

Customers are recommended to regularly check that their pipework is in good condition as this helps identify any leakage early. Leaks can be spotted in various ways:

- Sudden loss in water pressure/flow
- In the worst cases, water gushes from the ground
- In dry weather there may be damp patches on the ground or lush plants where you don't expect to see them
- Your own plumbing may make a constant noise when no-one is using any water
- If you are a metered customer and you find that your water bill is much higher than you were expecting
- Your meter is registering flow when no taps/appliances/processes are in use

We recommend customers make weekly checks on their meter readings to help spot leaks. If your reading rises for no apparent reason, you may have a leak on your supply.



This illustration shows a typical plan of pipe ownership and responsibilities.

For further information relating to supply pipe ownership, telephone 0845 702 3797 (8.00am - 6.00pm, Monday to Friday).

## Responsibilities for leaks

We are responsible for fixing leaks on our own pipework. Customers are generally responsible for all the service pipe inside the boundary of their property or site and in private land: this is from where the pipe enters private land, usually at the stop tap/control valve in the boundary. However in certain circumstances customer's responsibility may extend to that of the service pipe in a street. This means that, if there is a leak from the customer's pipework, it is their responsibility to have the pipe repaired or replaced.

## What happens if there is a leak?

As you would expect, we routinely check and repair our pipework system and often detect leaks on customers' pipes. If we find a leak on a customer's pipe or are notified of a leak on private pipework, we will issue a 'leakage notice' under the Water Industry Act 1991. This notice places the responsibility on the customer to have the leak repaired within 14 calendar days. In extreme cases where the leak is causing or likely to cause harm to people or damage property, or there is risk of contamination, we have the legal powers to issue a 7 calendar day 'leakage notice' or disconnect the supply until the leak is repaired. We recheck after 14 calendar days and if the leak is not repaired we will issue a more formal notice for the leak to be repaired. If within a further 7 calendar days the pipe has still not been repaired we have the right to repair the leak ourselves and charge the customer all the costs involved.

## How Bristol Water can help

We will provide up to half an hour free leak detection advice when the 'leakage notice' is issued or when a customer contacts us. A list of Water Industry Approved contractors can be provided to the customer so that additional leak detection advice and repair can be arranged. Other services can be provided to commercial customers to aid water efficiency and avoid misuse. There are charges for some of these, but most prove cost effective.

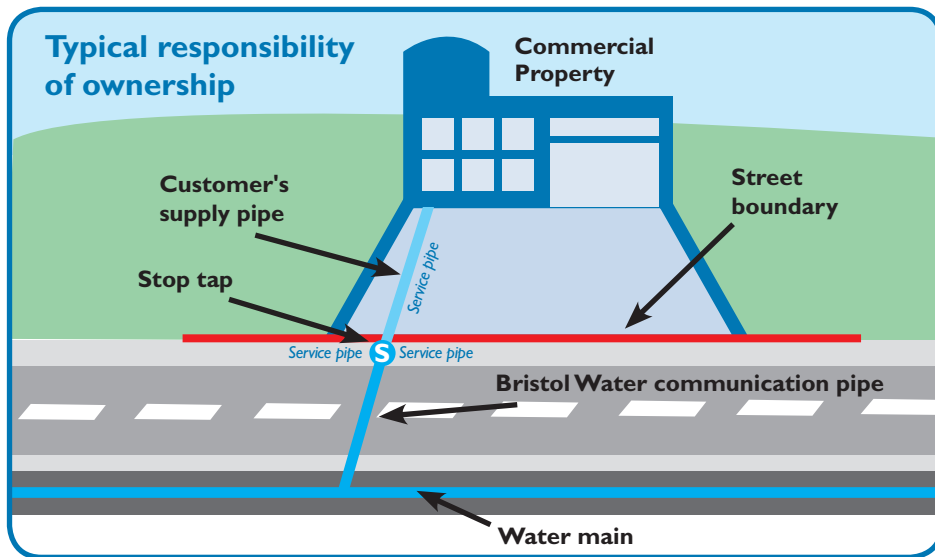
## Leakage Allowance for Metered Commercial Customers

If your metered bill is higher than normal, it could be due to a leak on the water supply pipe or fittings. In some situations, we may make allowances for leakage to metered customers however evidence of regular meter readings will be required to support any leakage allowance claim. It is important that you check your meter weekly because an unusually high meter reading may indicate a leak.

Customers using less than 200 cu.m. p.a. may claim an allowance of 100% of consumption above normal usage in the first instance a leak is claimed for and 50% on the second occasion. This allowance will be in line with average domestic consumption figures.

- We may make allowances for leakage to customers who pay for water by meter subject to the customer repairing the leak within 14 calendar days of first identifying it.
- An allowance will only be made once the repair has been satisfactorily carried out. This repair may be subject to inspection by ourselves.

- If we agree to reduce your bill, we will calculate the allowance based on your last two billing periods. We may adjust the bill again if we find that you use a lot more or a lot less water when we next read the meter. If you are a newly metered customer and there is no consumption history, we will calculate the allowance based on the consumption of a similar business/property type and as soon as actual average consumption is known, the allowance will be adjusted accordingly.
- No allowance will be made for subsequent leaks.
- No allowance will be granted where a leak has been caused through negligence by you or by anyone acting on your behalf.
- No allowance will be made due to water loss through faulty equipment and fittings.
- It is the customer's responsibility to repair the leak quickly and ensure the supply pipe is 'fit for purpose'.
- Allowances will only be made for leakage from underground supply pipes – this may include underground supply pipes located underneath the property.
- A leakage allowance claim must be made within three months of the leak being identified and can be applied for up to two billing periods.



This illustration shows a typical plan of pipe ownership and responsibilities.

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Customers using less than 200 cu.m. p.a. may claim an allowance of 100% of consumption above normal usage in the first instance a leak is claimed for and 50% on the second occasion. This allowance will be in line with average domestic consumption figures.

- We may make allowances for leakage to customers who pay for water by meter subject to the customer repairing the leak within 14 calendar days of first identifying it.
- An allowance will only be made once the repair has been satisfactorily carried out. This repair may be subject to inspection by ourselves.

- If we agree to reduce your bill, we will calculate the allowance based on your last two billing periods. We may adjust the bill again if we find that you use a lot more or a lot less water when we next read the meter. If you are a newly metered customer and there is no consumption history, we will calculate the allowance based on the consumption of a similar business/property type and as soon as actual average consumption is known, the allowance will be adjusted accordingly.
- No allowance will be made for subsequent leaks.
- No allowance will be granted where a leak has been caused through negligence by you or by anyone acting on your behalf.
- No allowance will be made due to water loss through faulty equipment and fittings.
- It is the customer's responsibility to repair the leak quickly and ensure the supply pipe is 'fit for purpose'.
- Allowances will only be made for leakage from underground supply pipes – this may include underground supply pipes located underneath the property.
- A leakage allowance claim must be made within three months of the leak being identified and can be applied for up to two billing periods.

## Customers using between 201 - 15,000 cu.m. p.a.

may claim an allowance of 50% of consumption above normal usage based on the last two billing periods. We may adjust the bill again if we find that you use a lot more or a lot less water when we next read the meter.

- This allowance will be backdated up to a maximum of one calendar month from the date the leak is identified and/or reported to us and up to a maximum of 14 calendar days after it has been identified and reported (maximum of 45 days).
- Leaks must be repaired within 14 calendar days once identified.
- Proof of repair and evidence of weekly meter readings will be required when submitting your claim.
- Claims should be submitted within one month of the repair being carried out.
- No allowance will be granted where a leak has been caused through negligence by you or by anyone acting on your behalf.
- It is the customer's responsibility to repair the leak quickly and ensure the supply pipe is 'fit for purpose'.
- No allowance will be made for subsequent leaks.
- Customers will only be entitled to one allowance per site irrespective of the number of meters on site.
- If you are a newly metered customer and there is no consumption history, we will calculate the allowance based on the consumption of a similar business/property type and as soon as actual average consumption is known, the allowance will be adjusted accordingly.

- Allowances will only be made for leakage from underground supply pipes.
- No allowance will be made due to water loss through faulty equipment.

## Customers using over 15,000 cu.m. p.a.

will be assessed on an individual basis. The amount of the allowance will be determined by the number of days taken to complete the repair together with evidence that you have checked your meter reading weekly.

### Leakage Allowance Claim

Once the repair has been completed, a leakage allowance will be applied to your current or next water bill. You should let Bristol Water know that the repair has been made by telephoning **0845 702 3797** (8.00am – 6.00pm, Monday to Friday). We may check the repair and will then notify our billing company, Bristol Wessex Billing Services (BWBSL) to process the leakage allowance.

If you receive a joint Bristol Water and Wessex Water bill you may be entitled to a sewerage allowance. This will be subject to the Wessex Water leakage policy. If applicable, any sewerage allowance will be made at the same time as the water allowance. Otherwise we will notify your sewerage company of the allowance we have made, although you should check this with them personally. Allowances will be applied to your current or next water bill.

## Complaints about our service

We aim to provide a first class service. Our targets and compensation scheme are set out in our Bristol Water Business Bond leaflet – download a copy from our website [www.bristolwater.co.uk](http://www.bristolwater.co.uk) or telephone **0845 702 3797** (8.00am - 6.00pm, Monday to Friday) and request a copy.

If you are dissatisfied or have a complaint, call Customer Services on **0845 702 3797** between 8.00am - 6.00pm, Monday to Friday.

Or you can write to us at:  
Customer Services, Bristol Water plc,  
PO Box 218, Bridgwater Road,  
Bristol, BS99 7AU

Or email us on  
[customer.services@bristolwater.co.uk](mailto:customer.services@bristolwater.co.uk)

If you remain dissatisfied after following our complaints procedure, you can refer your complaint to the Consumer Council for Water Western Region, the local water watchdog. This independent body represents the interests of water and sewerage customers and has legal duties for dealing with complaints. It will look at the facts relating to your case and take the matter up with us on your behalf. This service is free of charge.

Your letter or email detailing your complaint together with any responses you have received, should be sent to:

### The Consumer Council for Water

Western Region  
2 The Hide Market  
West Street  
St Philips  
Bristol  
BS2 0BH

**E-mail:** [wessex@ccwater.org.uk](mailto:wessex@ccwater.org.uk)

**Telephone:** 0117 955 7001

**Lo-call:** 0845 707 8268

**Fax:** 0117 955 7037

**Office Hours:** 8.30am – 4.30pm,  
Monday - Friday

### Advice for customers

We have a Water Efficiency Plan covering a wide range of activities which we follow and which encourages customers to follow to ensure that water is used sensibly and waste is minimised. If you have any questions about this leaflet please telephone Customer Services on **0845 702 3797** (8.00am - 6.00pm, Monday to Friday) or look on our website – [www.bristolwater.co.uk](http://www.bristolwater.co.uk)