

leakage code of practice

commercial customers



BRISTOL
WATER

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 you have a water meter you may be paying for water you 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. Efficient use of water also helps protect the environment.

WHAT CAUSES PIPES TO LEAK?

The action of frost, water logging or even dry spells and the weight of traffic can cause small ground movements that can affect the pipework. With over 6,500 kilometres of water mains in the Bristol Water area, it is inevitable that leaks will occur.

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. You can spot a leak in various ways:

- Sudden loss in water pressure.
- In the worst cases water may gush 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.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR LEAKS

We are responsible for fixing leaks on our own pipework. Customers are generally responsible for all the pipework inside the boundary of their property or site; this is from where the pipe enters private land, usually at the stop tap/control valve in the boundary. 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?

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 is likely to cause harm to people or damage property, or there is a 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 the pipe has not been repaired within a further 7 calendar days, we have the right to repair the leak ourselves and charge the customer all the costs involved.

If a 'leakage notice' is issued and you are not sure what to do, telephone the following number for help and advice between the hours of 8 am – 4 pm, Monday to Friday – **0117 305 1321**.



HOW BRISTOL WATER CAN HELP

We will provide up to half an hour free leak detection advice, either when the leakage notice is issued or when a customer contacts us. 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

We may make allowances for leakage to customers who pay for water by meter, 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 up to 20,000 cu.m. p.a.

may claim an allowance of 50% of consumption above normal usage based on two check readings taken after the repair has been carried out.

- 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, two check readings will be taken from your meter to establish normal usage. These readings will be used to calculate any allowance.
- Allowances will only be made for leakage from underground supply pipes.
- No allowance will be made due to water loss through faulty equipment.

- If you have a joint Bristol Water and Wessex Water bill, you may be entitled to a sewerage allowance. This is subject to the Wessex Water leakage policy. 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 personally. Allowances will be applied to your next water bill.

Customers using over 20,000 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 monthly.



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. If you are dissatisfied or have a complaint, call Customer Services on

0845 702 3797

between 8am and 6pm, Monday to Friday.

Or you can write to us at:

**Customer Services
Bristol Water plc
P O Box 218
Bridgwater Road
Bristol
BS99 7AU**

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

If you remain dissatisfied after following our complaints procedure, you can refer your complaint to WaterVoice Wessex, the local water watchdog. This independent body represents the interests of water and sewerage customers and has legal duties for dealing with customer 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, detailing your complaint and the responses you have received, should be sent to:

**WaterVoice Wessex
2 The Hide Market
West Street
St Philips
Bristol
BS2 0BH**

Telephone: 0845 707 8268

Fax: 0117 955 7037

Email: wessex@watervoice.co.uk



LEAKLINE
0800 801011
(manned 24 hours every day)

If you require any further information
please contact **Customer Services** on

0845 702 3797

between 8 am and 6 pm Mondays to Fridays.

Or you can write to us at

**Bristol Water plc, PO Box 218, Bridgwater Road,
Bristol BS99 7AU**

or E-mail 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.

(0845 telephone numbers are charged at local rate).