

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT REPLACING YOUR LEAD OR IRON WATER SUPPLY PIPE

WHY BOTHER?

Lead or iron was commonly used until the 1960's for all supply pipes. It has been found that although we treat the water to minimise it, small amounts of lead can find their way into the water, as can rust from the iron pipes.

If you are worried about lead in the water we will take a sample from your property and test it for you free of charge. Phone our Helpline on **0845 702 3797** or write to our Water Quality Department at the address on the back of this leaflet.

Additionally the older pipes are more prone to leakage and, being smaller than modern plastic pipes, can result in poor water flow. If you have a leak, phone our LeakStop number free of charge, **0800 281402**, between 8am and 4pm, Monday to Friday.

HOW DO I FIND OUT ABOUT MY PIPES?

You are responsible for all the pipework in your property and for the pipe between your property and the boundary of the street within which our main is laid, which will normally be at the edge of the property's boundary. See the diagram opposite. In exceptional circumstances, for instance where your property is situated beyond the end of our main, you may also be responsible for the pipe between your property and our main.

If you share any part of your pipe with your neighbour(s), you are jointly responsible with your neighbour(s) for that section of pipe. In this situation you may have to pay for a new connection to our main. Please try to establish the route of your existing pipe before you contact us.

Look at the pipe where it enters your home. This can often be found by your internal stop tap - try looking under the kitchen sink. If the incoming pipe is not plastic or copper it will be lead or iron. Scratch the surface with a knife and if it is lead you will see the shiny silvery coloured metal underneath. If you are still unsure about any of the above ask your plumber.

WHAT ABOUT THE NEW PIPE?

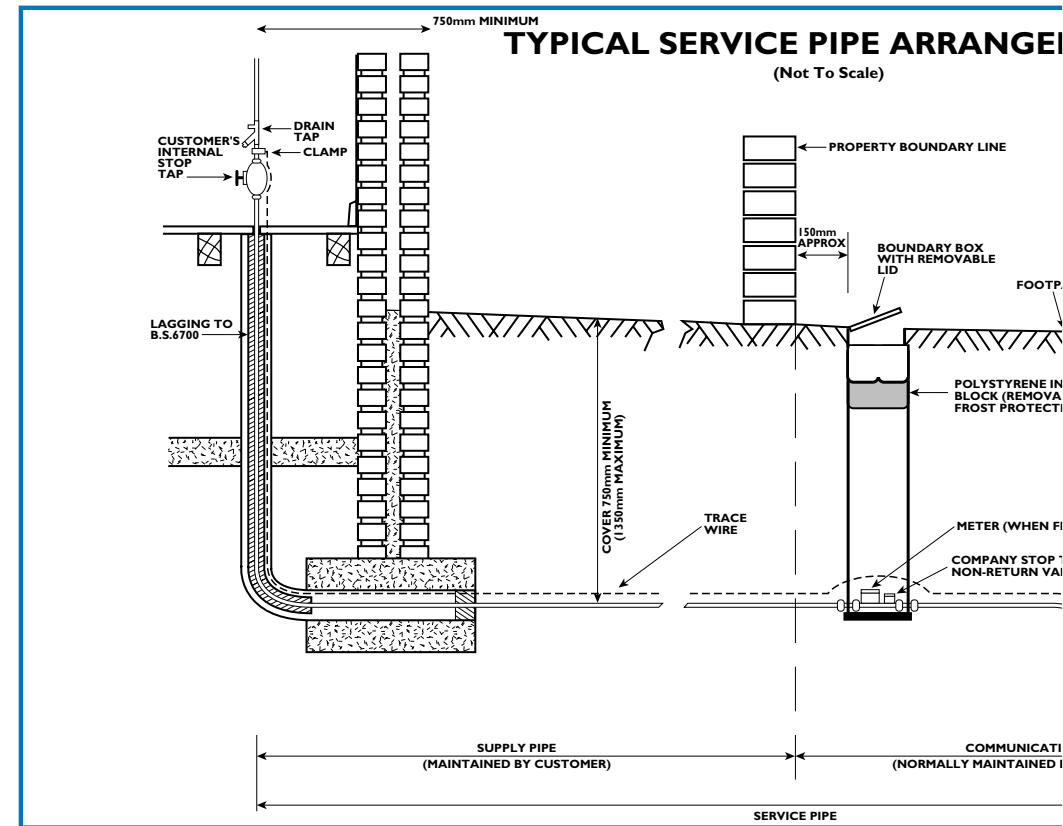
It will normally be a blue-coloured plastic pipe made from Medium Density Polyethylene (MDPE) of a minimum of 25mm external diameter as far as the internal stop tap, then it will normally be copper.

If there is any suspicion that the ground may be contaminated with hydrocarbons, (eg petrol, oil etc), even in tiny quantities, standard MDPE pipe must not be used. Proprietary barrier (foil wrapped) PE pipe or PVC-wrapped table Y copper must be used. Please inform us if you suspect that the ground may be contaminated in any way.

HOW DO I GO ABOUT REPLACING MY SUPPLY PIPE?

Fill in the form at the back of this leaflet and send it back to us. We will then arrange for one of our Technical staff to visit you. He will:

- check whether you share your supply pipe with anyone else
- advise you whether any payment will be required from you (full details will be provided in a follow-up letter)
- advise you on where to lay your new pipe



- specify the point to which it should be laid (normally next to the stop tap in the verge or pavement)

We may also check that your water system complies with the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999, published by the Stationery Office Limited (www.hmso.gov.uk).

WHO PAYS FOR WHAT?

This depends on individual circumstances. In all cases you pay for the cost of buying and installing a replacement for your pipe in accordance with our standards. You may wish to get some quotes from plumbers for the work.

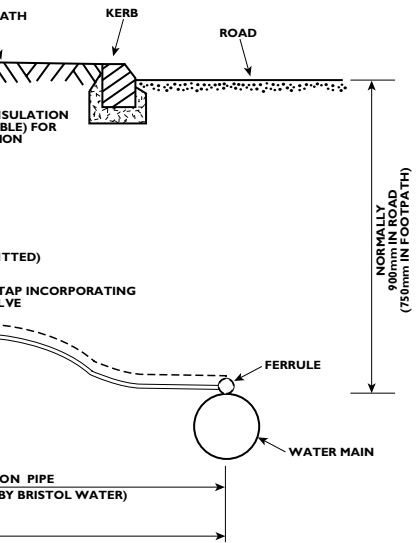
If ours is already a plastic pipe, you pay for connecting to our pipe, and maybe for replacing a stop tap box.

If our pipe is made of lead or iron, and you lay your pipe to our preferred location, we pay for the cost of replacing our pipe from the main to where it joins your pipe; for a new stop tap box (if required); for connecting the pipe to the main and for our inspections.

If our pipe is made of lead or iron but you do not lay your pipe to our preferred location, we may not connect. However, if we do agree to connect, other charges may apply. These could include the full cost of the connection.

Our charging policy will be explained in more detail after one of our Technical staff has visited you, or you can call our New Supplies team on one of the numbers on the back of this leaflet.

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LAYING YOUR PIPE (see diagram)

Your pipe must be laid in a trench between 750mm (2ft 6in) and 1350mm (4ft 6in) deep. It must enter the property and remain at that depth for a minimum of 750mm (2ft 6in) from the external face of the wall, before it rises to your internal stop tap, otherwise it must be insulated to 750mm below ground level. You will also need to replace the section of pipe from that point to your first tap for drinking water if it also is made of lead or iron.

Where the pipe passes through the foundations or is buried under the building (excluding suspended floors) it must be put into a continuous duct of a minimum recommended size of 100mm (4in) for 25mm pipe with the largest radius possible where it changes direction. The duct will allow for the pipe to

be insulated. A trace wire must also be laid with your pipe, attached to it with cables ties at 1 metre intervals, and clamped to your pipe in an accessible location inside your property (eg. next to your internal stop tap). The wire must be 1.5mm single strand blue plastic coated wire to BS 6491X standard.

INSPECTION

One of our Technical staff must be given the opportunity to inspect your pipe when it has been laid and before the trench has been filled in to make sure it has been laid correctly. If you have any problems in complying with any of our requirements you should contact us as soon as possible.

CONNECTING WITH OUR PIPE AND THE MAIN

Once your pipe has passed our inspection we will connect your pipe to ours. If our pipe is made of lead or iron we will also lay a new MDPE pipe to our main and may install a new stop tap box, normally at the point where our pipe joins yours. This will normally be done within 14 days unless there are specific difficulties (in which case we will let you know).

INSULATING THE PIPE

The pipe buried in the trench at the required depth does not need to be insulated, however, in common with all your water pipes, the pipe must be insulated where it passes through any unheated area such as under a suspended floor or through a garage or out-house.

INSULATING TIP

When buying your insulation, check that it complies with the Regulations, which will ensure that it is designed for frost protection. Most insulation commonly available is designed for copper pipe, which has a thinner wall than MDPE. To ensure that the insulation fits the MDPE pipe, you will need to use that designed for the next larger size in copper. See table overleaf.

AFS no.



LEAD AND IRON PIPE REPLACEMENT APPLICATION FORM

Address of property

Post Code

Name of owner

Tel:

Name of occupier (if different)

Tel:

Applicant (must be one of the above)

Signature

Date

Correspondence address if different from above

Post Code

Person to contact for site visit if different from above

Name

Tel:

AFFIX
POSTAGE
STAMP
HERE

**NEW SUPPLIES TEAM,
BRISTOL WATER PLC,
PO BOX 218,
BRIDGWATER ROAD,
BRISTOL
BS99 7AU**

IMPORTANT NOTICE

ELECTRICAL EARTHING

Before 1966 it was common practice to earth properties using the incoming metal water pipe. Earthing is necessary to discharge electricity in the ground in the event of an electrical fault. In 1966 the law was changed to prevent water pipes from being used. The introduction of non-metallic material to the water pipe, such as fitting a meter box, a meter or installing plastic pipes, breaks the earthing route, making it potentially dangerous for the people using the property and anyone working on the water pipe or electrical system.

The safety of the electrical system and adequate earthing in a property are the responsibility of the property owner. We and your electricity company take no responsibility for the earthing. We are not qualified to give you advice on this subject and advise you to contact an electrician.

INSULATION REQUIRED FOR MDPE PIPE	
MDPE pipe size	Insulation required (based on copper pipe sizes)
25 mm (3/4 in)	28 mm (1 in)
32mm (1 in)	35 mm (1 1/4 in)

BACKFILLING YOUR TRENCH

When backfilling the trench, care should be taken to ensure that no stones, bricks or other sharp objects are within the backfill material. Leaks in new pipes are sometimes caused by stones and other sharp objects pressing against the pipe. Even though they may be in an area of backfill well above the pipe, over a period of time they can gradually work their way down as the ground settles. The base of the trench should be clear of any sharp objects and the pipe should be covered with clean soil (no stones etc.).

Where, due to the nature of the ground, this is not possible, the pipe should be laid on a 100mm bed of sand or stone dust. The pipe should then be covered with 100mm of sand or dust, the remainder of the backfill should, as far as possible, be kept clear of any aggressive material. In very poor ground conditions it may be necessary to duct the pipe throughout its length.

WHAT ABOUT A METER?

A water meter may save you money, particularly if you have a high rateable value and use relatively little water. You can, if you wish, have a meter fitted free of charge when we connect your pipe. If you would like a leaflet which explains metering please contact us on the number below.

WARNING

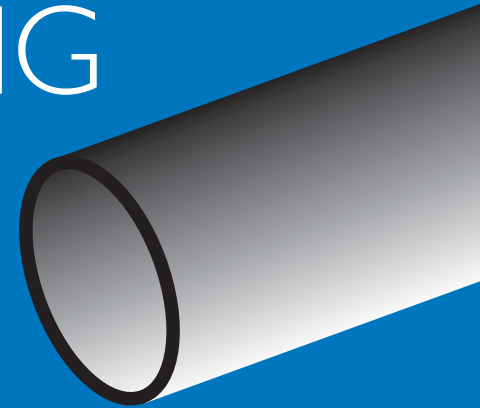
If your installation does not comply with our standards we will ask you to alter it and will make a further inspection free of charge. If it still does not comply we will make further inspections until it does, charging a fee for each additional inspection.

If you ignore the connection point specified by our Technical staff and bring your pipe to another position we may not connect your pipe. If we connect in the new location, other charges may apply.

**For further information please contact:
New Supplies Team, Bristol Water plc,
PO Box 218, Bridgwater Road,
Bristol BS99 7AU
Tel: 0117 934 1064**



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