

Will my metered bill be corrected?

This depends on the circumstances.

If you are paying metered charges, we will correct both water supply and wastewater charges to reflect the extra amount of water recorded because of the leak once it has been repaired. We normally re-calculate your metered charges based on past usage. Where there is no record of past consumption, the adjustment shall be based upon typical usage for a property of a similar type. Charges will be adjusted back to the previous bill for metered customers. For those customers who have not previously received a bill then the re-calculated charges will be back dated to the beginning of the financial year.

There will be no correction of charges if any of the following applies:

- another leak occurs after a correction for an earlier leak
- you (or someone else living with you) caused the leak by acting negligently
- you knew, or could reasonably be expected to have known, that there was a leak and you failed to repair it or tell us about it
- the leak occurred because of faulty pipes or fittings inside your home
- you did not repair the leak within a reasonable period

If we have repaired your supply pipe the adjustment to your account will be made automatically. If you believe you may be entitled to an adjustment to your bill after making repairs yourself, or you believe that a correction to your bill should have been made but has not been, you should contact our Customer Service Centre within 18 months of receiving the bill requiring the adjustment.

What if my water is supplied by another company?

If your water is supplied by another company, you should contact them about any suspected or obvious leak.

If your water supplier makes an adjustment to your charges they will send details about the adjustment to Southern Water. You are entitled to a bill correction for wastewater charges once we have received details from your water supplier.

Customer representation

The interests of Southern Water customers are represented by an independent body – Consumer Council for Water – London and South East. The Consumer Council for Water represents the interests of consumers generally and deals with enquiries and complaints from customers who have been unable to resolve their complaint with their water company. It is independent of both the industry and the regulator. The Committee meets in public at least four times during the year. For details please contact:

Consumer Council for Water – London and South East,
PO Box 61778, London, SW1P 9NB

Telephone: 02079 318502

Email: londonandsoutheast@ccwater.org.uk

Website: www.ccwater.org.uk

If you would like any further information please contact:

Customer Service Centre

Southern Water
PO Box 41
Worthing
BN13 3NZ

Telephone:

0845 278 0845

from any part of the UK at local call rate.

Our lines are open between 08:00 and 7:00pm Monday to Friday, and 08.00 and 1.00pm on Saturdays.

Please always quote your Customer Reference number shown on your Southern Water bill.

Minicom:

0845 275 0845

If you notice water leaking from our supply pipes please call our leakline on freephone:

0800 820 999

www.southernwater.co.uk

REMEMBER

This Code of Practice applies to **domestic** customers only.

Our Code of Practice
for dealing with leakage

Water Leaks on Domestic Premises



 Southern
Water

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This leaflet sets out Southern Water's Code of Practice for dealing with water leaks on domestic and mixed use premises. It explains who is responsible for dealing with water leaks and what we will do if a leak is found. The Code applies to domestic customers only. Certain parts of the Code also apply only if you have a water meter and pay for water by reference to volume.

Southern Water also publishes Codes of Practice for dealing with Customers in Debt and Customer Service. Copies of these other Codes are available from our Customer Service Centre. Each of these Codes of Practice is required by our licence and has been approved by our regulator Ofwat.

Water leaks at your home

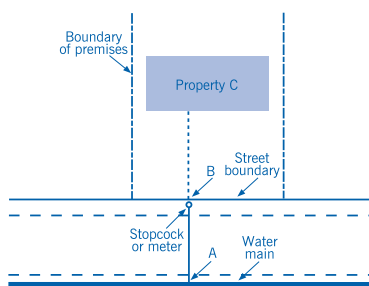
Southern Water is committed to ensuring the efficient use of available water resources. We have a legal duty to promote water efficiency and have a water efficiency plan.

Water leaks are a waste of a precious resource and, if left to run, may cause damage to your property. The cost of putting right long-term damage is always far greater than dealing with a leak promptly.

Who is responsible?

Southern Water owns and maintains the water mains which carry water to homes and businesses. Your home is linked to the water main by a **service pipe**. Responsibility for this underground pipe is split between you and us as shown on the diagram below:

- You are legally responsible for the section of pipe from the boundary of the public highway and your property – this is called the **supply pipe**. You may share the supply pipe with other people and this means that you also share responsibility for leaks with any neighbours supplied by the same pipe.



SERVICE PIPE	RESPONSIBILITY	
	OWNERSHIP	MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITY
A - B Communication pipe	Water Company	Water Company
Stopcock or meter	Water Company	Water Company
B - C Supply pipe	Property Owner	Property Owner
Internal plumbing	Property Owner	Property Owner

- We are responsible for the section between the water main and the boundary of the street beneath which the main runs – this is called the **communication pipe**.
- If water is leaking from the outside stop tap, the water meter or the joints around the meter (if fitted), we are responsible for putting this right.
- Any leaks on internal plumbing are the responsibility of the householder and you should contact a plumber to arrange necessary repairs.

In some cases, for example where the same pipe supplies several properties, you and your neighbours are jointly responsible for the supply pipe. If you are unsure of the layout at your premises you can contact our Customer Service Centre.

How do I know there's a leak?

Apart from the visible signs, such as water bubbling out of the ground or a very damp patch in your garden on a dry day, there are other ways of checking whether there is a leak.

If your water supply is metered you can carry out a simple check. Take a reading from the meter, then either turn off the supply indoors or make sure you have no taps or water-using appliances (e.g. washing machine or dishwasher) running. After one hour, take another meter reading. If the reading is higher, you probably have a leak.

Depending on where the leak is, you may also notice a slight hissing noise, particularly at night time when it is quiet.

Where is the meter fitted?

We have to decide where to fit the meter in accordance with regulations made by the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). It will be in one of the following locations:

- Inside your property.
- In the footpath outside your property boundary.
- Outside your house but within your property boundary e.g. in the garden.

Where a boundary box exists, usually located in the footpath outside your property, this will be our preferred location. If you choose to have a meter fitted somewhere other than our preferred location you may be charged for the cost of fitting the meter.

Leakage checks when a meter is first installed

When we fit a meter, a check is made to establish if there is any leakage on the supply pipe.

- If a leak is detected on the supply pipe and it can be repaired without additional excavation at that time, it will be done at our expense.
- If a leak is detected which cannot be repaired without additional excavation, we will notify you of the leak and arrange for it to be repaired free of charge subject to the conditions mentioned below.

What help is available?

Finding a leak

Where water is not obviously leaking above the ground, we offer up to one hour's free leak detection work. Our equipment is very effective but we cannot guarantee to find the source of the leak. We will ensure that we tell you the results of our detection work.

Repairing a leak

We are making every effort to reduce waste of water through leakage and we may be able to help you if a leak occurs on the supply pipe. Even though you are legally responsible for repairs, we will make up to three repairs free of charge at a property you occupy, provided it is practicable for us to do this. Because any such work involves working on your property, there are a few conditions:

- We cannot repair any pipes that are inside or under the building, under the footings, steps, outbuildings (e.g. garage), ponds, drains or inspection chambers.
- If the pipe is in a bad condition, we will suggest you have the whole supply pipe replaced – see next section for further details. We will replace free of charge up to 10 metres of leaking lead pipe.
- Replacement of the supply pipe is normally limited to the section between the boundary of your property and the inside stop tap
- We will backfill and make safe where we have had to dig holes, but cannot fully restore any hardstanding, paved or ornamental areas.
- The materials and workmanship carry a one year guarantee from the date the repair or replacement is completed.

What happens if a free repair is not available?

If we can't repair the leak, you (or the property owner if you are a tenant) must arrange to have the leak repaired within 7 days. Where we have advised you to replace the whole supply pipe, we can provide you with an estimate for undertaking this replacement, but you can get the work done by any reputable contractor of your choice.

We have a legal duty to prevent loss of water from our supply system; therefore if you (or the owner) refuse to repair a leak or prevent us from carrying out a free repair, we can take the following action:

- we can repair the leak on your behalf and send you a bill for the work carried out
- we may consider legal proceedings under Section 75 of the Water Industry Act 1991.
- as a final remedy, we reserve the right to disconnect the water supply

However, we hope none of these will ever be necessary.