

# Preventing plumbing leaks in your new home

**Congratulations on moving into your new home, we hope you love it.**

The plumbing inside your home, and the underground pipe which carries drinking water from the water main to your house, are all newly fitted and tested.

This means your new home will be watertight and not have any leaks.

However, it's important to keep an eye out for leaking water in the future.

Your new home is fitted with a water meter, which means your water bills will be based on the amount of water you use – so a leak could push up your bills.

Water leaks are also a waste of a precious resource and some leaks could even damage your home.



# Which pipes and leaks are you responsible for

**It's helpful to know which pipes and leaks you are responsible for and which ones your local water supplier is responsible for.**

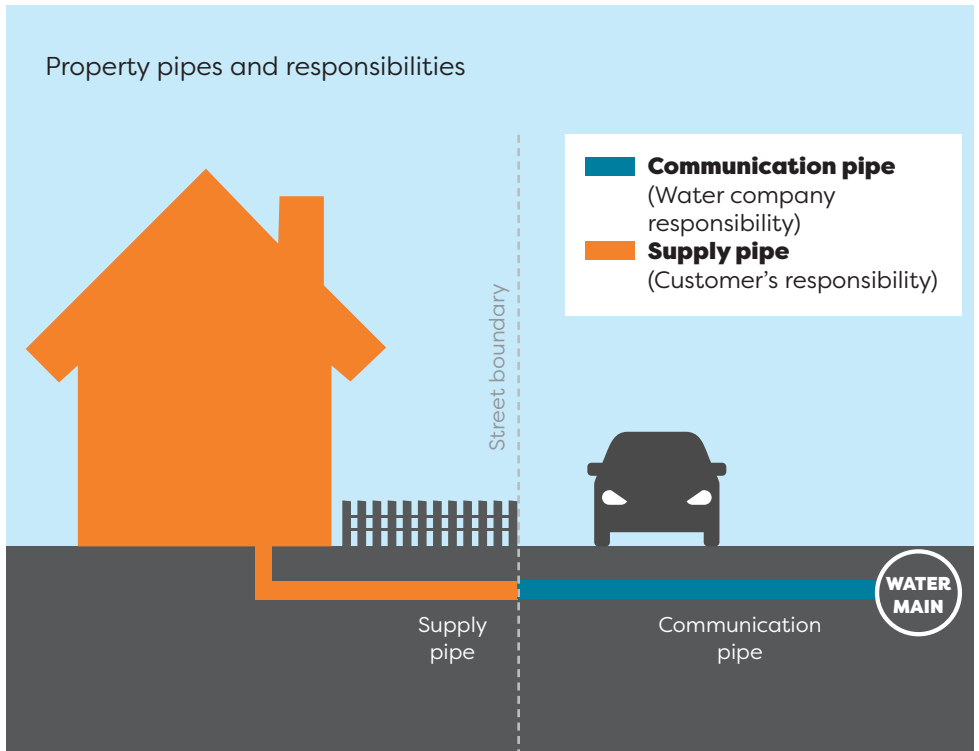
The plumbing, fixtures and fittings inside your home are all your responsibility.

You're also responsible for the underground supply pipe which connects your home to the water company pipe. This supply pipe

usually extends from your house to the boundary of your property.

The diagram below shows how this works.

*Water companies in the UK have committed to reduce leaks on their network by 16% by 2025.*



# Leak spotting – *outside your home*

**It's not always easy to spot if there is a leak on the underground pipe outside your home.**

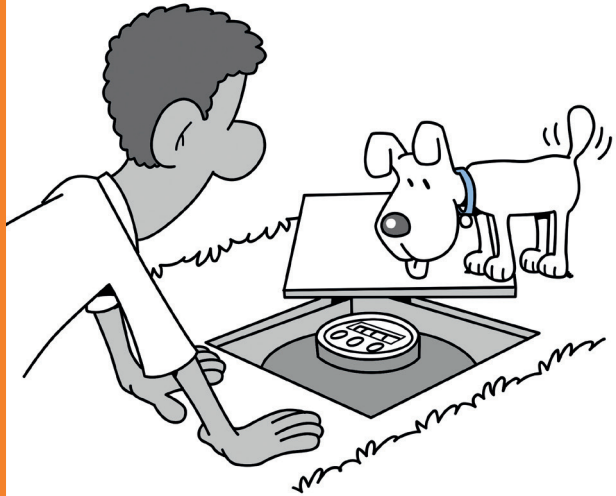
Sometimes there may be water bubbling out of the ground, or a wet patch which doesn't go away on dry days. Or part of your lawn may be much greener in one area.

There's a very simple way to check:

*Water meters are fitted in all new homes as households on metered charges tend to use about 15% less water – which leaves more in our environment to support wildlife.*

## Step 1:

Find your water meter – this can be located either outside at the boundary of your property or on the wall of your property – and take a reading. (If you have a smart meter you may have a monitor inside your house).



## Step 2:

Make sure you're not using any water – e.g. washing machines, dishwasher.

## Step 3:

Wait about 15 minutes.

## Step 4:

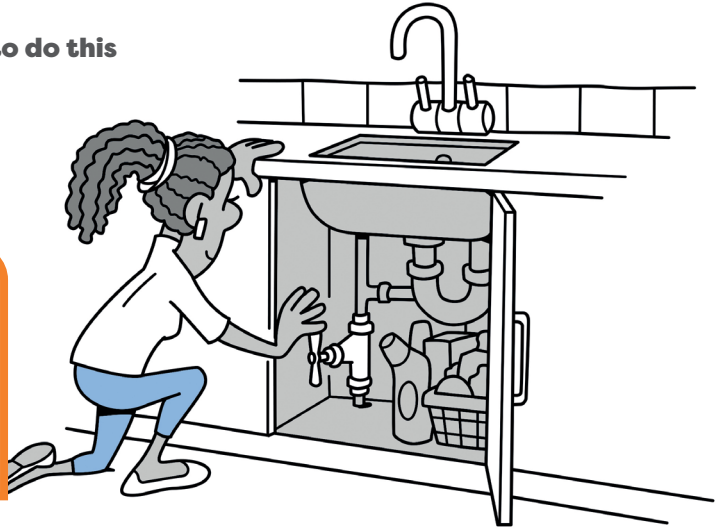
If the meter reading has gone up – you may have a leak.

# How to trace if the leak is inside or outside

There's a simple way to do this too:

## Step 1:

Turn off your internal stop tap – usually under a kitchen sink or in a cupboard.



## Step 2:

Check it's turned off by turning on the kitchen tap – no water should come out.

## Step 3:

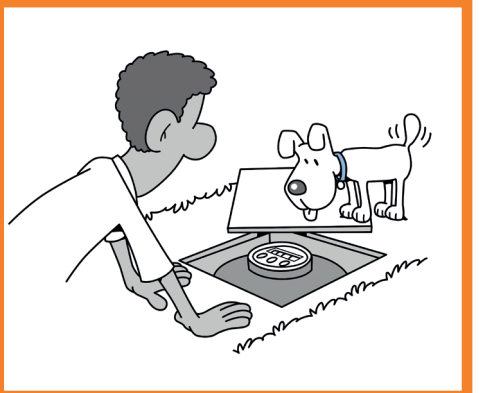
If the meter reading goes up the leak is probably outside on the supply pipe.

## Step 4:

If the meter reading stays the same – the leak is probably inside.

## Find your meter

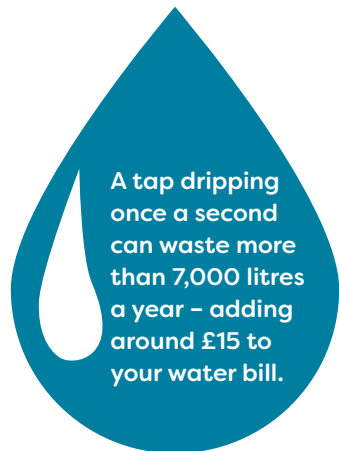
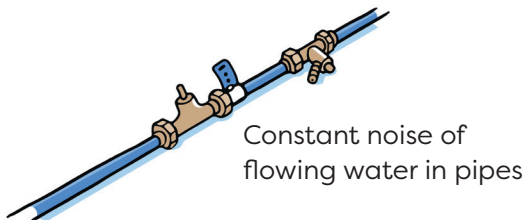
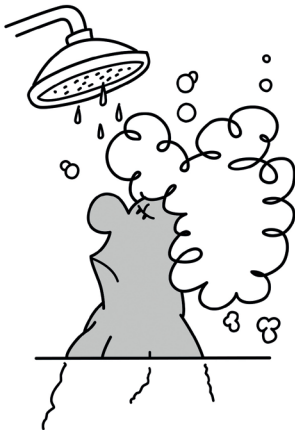
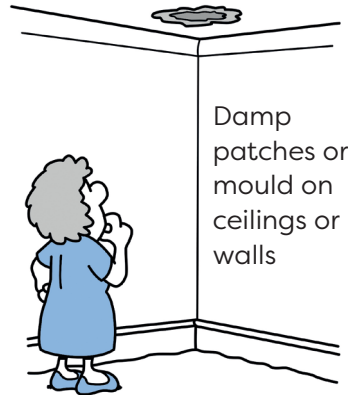
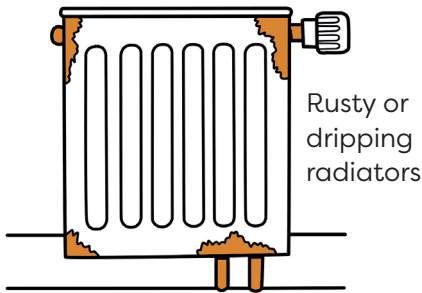
Most meters are found outside. You'll find them in an underground box in the footpath next to your home, usually under a metal or plastic cover, or in a box above ground next to your house. Sometimes meters are located inside, under a kitchen sink or in a box on the wall.



# Leak spotting – *inside your home*

**Leaks can pop up inside your home too and cause damage to floors and ceilings if left unchecked.**

Here's some simple signs of leaks to look out for inside your home:



# Have you got a leaky loo?

**Toilets are one of the most common causes of leaks in homes.**

A toilet leaking clean water from the cistern to the pan can waste up to 400 litres of water a day (that's five full bath tubs) and add around £300 a year to your water bill if left unfixed.

The sound of a constant trickle at the back of the toilet pan is an obvious sign that something's not right. However, some leaks are silent and easy to miss.

Here's a simple way to check:



## Step 1:

Half an hour after a flush, wipe the back of the pan dry with toilet tissue.

## Step 2:

Place a new, dry sheet of toilet tissue across the back of the pan.

## Step 3:

Leave it for three hours without using the toilet, or overnight.

## Step 4:

If the paper is wet or torn – you have a leaky loo.

*\*You could also ask your local water supplier if they supply free toilet leak detection strips. Some even offer free water audits – including fixing leaky toilets.*

# Getting a leak repaired

## In an emergency

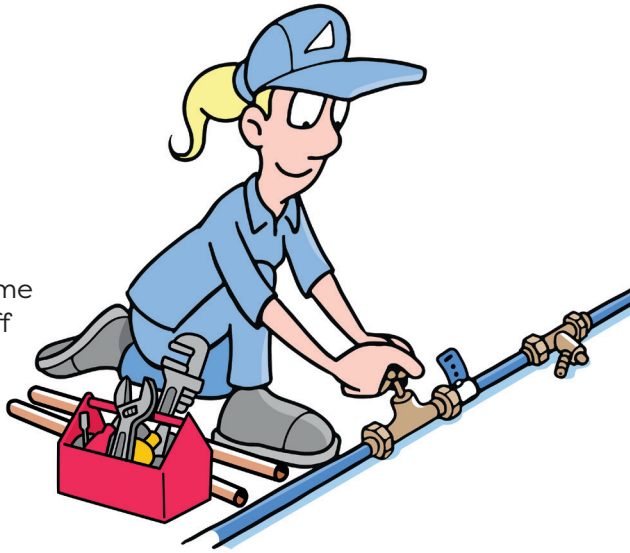
If you have a leak inside your home and need to stop it fast – turn off your stop tap.

## Help from your water supplier

If you think you have a leak on the underground supply pipe inside your garden or boundary contact your local water supplier for advice. Many will offer free leak detection and sometimes repairs to help save water or put you in touch with approved contractors.

## Contact your insurer

Some leak detection and repairs may be covered by your home insurance – contact them for more details.

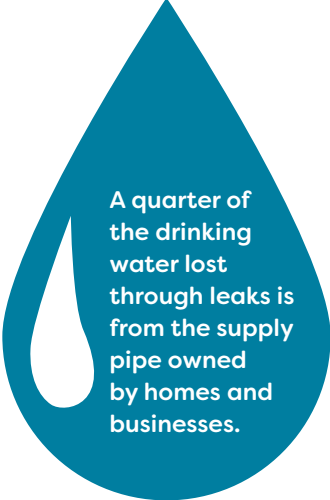


## Warranty on new builds

It's normal for house builders to offer an initial two-year warranty or following this you may have a warranty from an organisation like the National House Building Council (NHBC), so it's worth checking if they can help with leaks and water damage.

## Your legal duty to save water

It's your legal duty to repair leaks within the boundary of your home. If you don't, your water supplier can serve a notice under section 75 of the Water Industry Act 1991 advising you to make the repair within a set time. If the leak is not fixed they can repair it and bill you for the costs. This is because water is a precious resource vital to support communities, wildlife and the economy.



A quarter of the drinking water lost through leaks is from the supply pipe owned by homes and businesses.

## Find a plumber

If you need a plumber to help with leaks, it's important to know they are properly trained to work in your home.

WaterSafe is the free national register of approved plumbers in the UK and it's supported by all the UK water companies and the water quality regulators. Plumbing businesses on the register are all fully trained in the Water Fittings Regulations, which are designed to keep your water healthy and avoid leaks and waste.

Only an approved plumber can give you a compliance certificate which confirms their work complies with the regulations and acts as a defence in court.



You can find your nearest WaterSafe approved plumber at [watersafe.org.uk](https://www.watersafe.org.uk).

You can also find approved groundworkers to repair underground supply pipes at [watersafe.org.uk](https://www.watersafe.org.uk) - using the Water Support Services search.

## Approved fittings and materials

If you replace any taps, pipes or other water fittings, make sure they are approved.

This is because approved products are tested to make sure they won't leak or contaminate your water.

WaterSafe plumbers can offer advice on buying approved plumbing products. An easy way to check if a product is suitable is to look for an approval mark, from schemes like the Water Regulations Advisory Scheme ([wras.co.uk](https://www.wras.co.uk)), Kiwa ([kiwa.co.uk/waterproducts](https://www.kiwa.co.uk/waterproducts)) or NSF ([nsf.org/certified-products-systems](https://www.nsf.org/certified-products-systems)).

