

Water Pipe Responsibility

Which pipe is my pipe?

Water Company v's Home Owner:

The water mains are generally owned by individual water companies and are their responsibility to maintain. Your property will be connected to one of these mains via a private supply pipe, these are owned by the property owner and are their responsibility to maintain.

Generally, the Water Company will be responsible for all of the pipework up until your property boundary, or when the pipework leaves the public highways and footpaths*, therefore your responsibility will usually begin at your property boundary, or when your supply pipe leaves the public highways.

**Water Companies may lay mains pipes in private land if there is a justified need. An easement is not always required for this; however, if an easement is in place you may obtain a copy from the Local Registry Office. If you have a mains pipe running through your land, you may build/dig no closer than 1.5 meters (sometimes this is a larger distance depending on the size of the main) as the Water Company will require access to the pipe to carry out maintenance etc. If you would like to discuss the pipe running through your land and your options, please do phone the Developer Services department of your local Water Company to discuss your options.*

What if my pipe is in someone else's land?

Your supply pipe may not only be within your own property boundary, it may run under your neighbour's land too – this is still your responsibility, although you will need permission to access the pipework from your neighbour before you go digging up their new flowerbed!



If you look at the infographic below, House 6's supply pipe runs through their neighbour's property (House 5), but House 6 is still responsible for the whole length of pipe until it enters the public footpath.

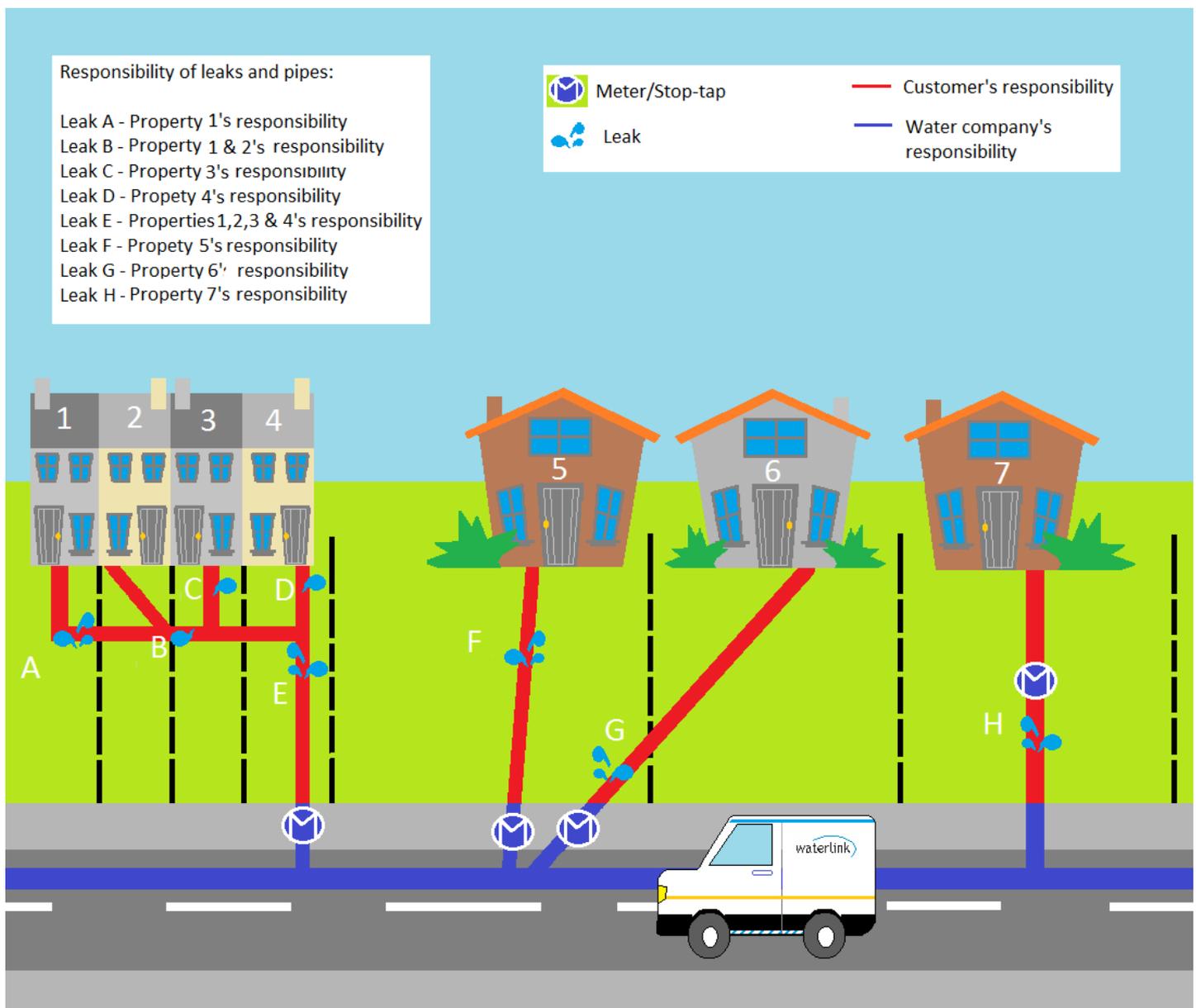
Shared Supply – Shared Responsibility!

Modern houses should all have their own supply pipe; however, some older properties may be on a shared supply pipe. This would mean that there is one pipe attached to the Water Company mains, and this then splits off into multiple pipes that enter your properties. Properties on a shared supply are jointly responsible for the maintenance of the pipes. Shared supply pipes can be a nuisance for responsibility as, depending on where the issue is on the pipe, you will need to get all of the affected neighbours to agree to the repair work. *(Please see the image below for examples.)*

The infographic below shows a shared supply for Houses 1-4. As you can see, House 4 is responsible for the shortest amount of pipe, and House 1 is responsible for the longest stretch of pipe. The responsibility for each of the illustrated leaks is shown in the table.

Disputes over a shared supply pipe are a civil matter, and the water company cannot help in the resolution. However; if you would like to separate your supply from the shared pipework, you can do this without permission from your neighbours. **Please note: the shared supply will continue to supply your neighbours and will remain in the same location, unless all of the properties connected to the shared supply each arrange to have their own supplies.**

If you are on shared pipework and would like a Free Quote for separating your supplies, please do phone **0333 000 0058 (option 1)** .



How can I locate my supply pipe?

Because supply pipes are private, water companies may not be able to provide records of where they are. This is due to the fact that you may move your supply pipes where-so-ever you wish to on your own land, and as long as the area they connect to the meter/mains is unchanged, you do not need to alert your water supplier; however you need to comply with any relevant regulations, i.e. The Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations Act 1999. Water supply pipes are usually between 600mm – 1 meter deep.

Therefore, to locate your own private water supply it is advisable that you hire a plumber to locate them for you. [If you would like a Free Quote for locating your supply pipe, please do phone 0333 000 0058 \(option 1\).](#)