



CODE OF PRACTICE  
AND PROCEDURES  
FOR LEAKAGE ON  
DOMESTIC SUPPLIES

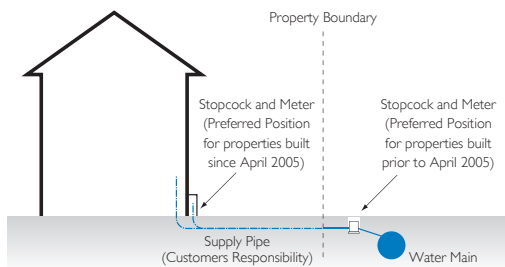
# Information for Metered Customers

## Paying by Volume

If you have a water meter installed you pay for the volume of water you use. The meter is installed on the supply pipe to the property. The supply pipe, which is your responsibility to maintain, normally runs between your property boundary and your first draw-off point, which is usually the cold water tap at the sink and includes all the pipework at mains pressure in the property.

## Meter Position

The exact position of your meter will normally be determined by us. There are three possible installation positions: externally next to the stopcock close to the property boundary, internally where unrestricted access is available or externally adjacent to the house wall. Subject to unrestricted access being available we will consider locating the meter in a position of your choice. However, any additional cost in positioning the meter will be borne by you. The meter, when fitted, remains the property of the Company.



Since April 2005 we have required all new properties to be metered. We have asked that builders install a meter box on the property wall, rather like those used for gas and electricity, to allow easier meter reading and maintenance.

For properties that were built before April 2005, we normally fit our meter at the external stopcock, which is usually situated at

the property boundary. Please note that we cannot fit a meter at the stopcock if you share your water supply with your neighbour. If you believe that you have a shared supply and would like help or advice please contact us and we will confirm the supply arrangement.

## **Meter Reading Service**

If you would like us to read your meter for you, or if you suspect you have a leak and would like help or advice, please call 023 9247 7999. Free meter reading may be limited to one read per month.

## **Leakage**

### **1. Leakage Checks made when a Meter is installed for the first time**

We know from experience that a substantial amount of water escapes from unidentified leaks in our customers' pipework. When a meter is installed, a check will be made to establish if there are any significant leaks in the pipework.

If a leak is detected in your pipe which can be repaired without additional excavation at the time the meter is installed, the leak will be repaired at our expense. If the check reveals a leak between the meter and the taps and other appliances which cannot be repaired as above, you will be notified of the leak and asked to repair it

It may well be that a leak of this nature qualifies for our Free Supply Pipe Repair Service, but if not, it will have to be repaired at your expense. Contact us for details.

### **2. Undetected Leaks**

If your Meter is fitted at the external stopcock it is possible that an abnormally high consumption may indicate an undetected leak in the supply pipe which is your responsibility.

In these circumstances, an adjustment will be made to the metered charges for the first leak that you experience at your property. This will be on the condition that you as the consumer

(or owner) carry out the remedial work within three weeks of notification of the leak, either by the Company or to the Company. No adjustment will be made in the event of any subsequent leak at this address, or where a leak has been caused through negligence by you or your agents or where you know or should have known that there was a leak and failed to repair it.

Where the remedial work does not qualify for our Free Supply Pipe Repair Service, it needs to be carried out at your direction and expense.

Most leaks occur because the pipe is badly corroded and it is usually more economical to replace the pipe when a leak occurs rather than to repair it.

### **3. Indications of a Possible Leak**

We recommend that you regularly check for signs of leakage. The easiest way to check are by regularly reading your meter and looking out for higher than expected readings. You should look for damp areas in dry weather or lush vegetation during hot temperatures. If running water can be heard within your property at night time, this may also indicate a leak. When we prepare our bills, we always check to see if consumption is higher than previously and if so, we enclose a letter with your bill, alerting you to a possible leak.

### **4. Checking for a Leak**

If you think you may have a leak on your supply, you can carry out a simple check. Either turn off your supply at the internal stopcock, or ensure that no water is being used in your property and take a meter reading. Wait an hour and take another reading. If the reading has increased, you may have a leak. Our booklet, Living With Your Meter, available from our Head Office, gives advice on how to read your meter.

### **5. The Adjustment of Charges - Water Supply**

We will make an adjustment where you suffer a first leak on your supply pipe, that is any leak between the external stopcock and the first draw off point within your property. Your charges will be assessed on the basis of past normal consumption. The adjustment will apply to any excess consumption since your

meter was previously read. Where there is no record of previous consumption, the size of the adjustment will be based upon typical usage for a property of a similar type to yours.

This will be subject to a further retrospective adjustment if you are subsequently shown to have significantly different usage when the meter is next read.

This allowance is only available to premises that are used wholly or partly as a dwelling.

## **6. Sewerage Services Provided by Different Companies**

Where we have made an adjustment to your bill in respect of supply pipe leakage we will inform Southern Water, who provide sewerage services. They will also apply an adjustment to your charges.

# **Information for all Domestic Customers**

## **Responsibility for Repair of Leaks**

The supply pipe to your property is owned by you and accordingly any repairs to it are your responsibility. We do, however, have the right to insist that you repair leaks. In the unlikely event of a customer disregarding such a request and allowing water to run to waste (or to contaminate the public water supply), we can complete remedial work and charge the owner of the property or, in extreme situations, turn off the water supply.

## **Free Leak Detection Service**

Where it comes to our notice that a leak exists within your pipework, we will advise you either in writing or by visit. If you suspect you have an external leak, we will spend up to 2 hours on site on each occasion that a leak is suspected in order to help you to establish whether a leak exists or not.

You may wish to appoint a plumber to assist you with the detection of internal leaks, which are your responsibility to repair.

## Free Supply Pipe Repair

Reducing overall levels of leakage is an important Company goal. Accordingly, we are prepared to carry out a Free Repair Service to the external supply pipe of your domestic property. We will excavate the area around the leak or leaks and either repair or replace up to two leaking sections of pipe within the excavations. Whilst every effort is made to leave the area clean and tidy, it may well be wet and muddy as a result of the leak.

We may need to excavate through concrete or decorative paving, or remove plants. Where possible we will discuss this with you before we go ahead with the repair and restore any hard surface as we found it. Where we cannot, we will reinstate using tarmac. Alternatively, you might want to undertake the reinstatement yourself. Once the work is complete, we will advise you of the condition of the pipe and any further work you may need to undertake in the future.

Should there be any subsequent leak at the premises, we will carry out one further repair unless we have previously advised you that the pipe should be renewed.

Please note that our free repair service does not apply to any leaks under your property, where the supply pipe enters the property or where your supply pipe exceeds 30 metres in length. To arrange a free repair or discuss our policy in this area, please call 023 9249 9888.

## Saving Water at Home

Water is a valuable resource and we at Portsmouth Water are trying to minimise abstraction. We also have a duty to promote the efficient use of water by our customers and to prevent water wastage through leaks.

Our free leaflet 'Saving Water at Home' is available from our Head Office. Please call 023 9249 9666 for a copy.

## Limitation of Code

This Code of Practice applies to domestic customers only. Whilst this code is for measured customers responsibility for repairs of leaks and free supply pipe repair equally apply to unmeasured customers.

## Our Codes of Practice

This Code is one of a suite of Codes which also includes:

**Customer** - This code informs you of the main services we provide, and our commitment to our domestic customers, and tells you where and how to get advice and help.

**Debt** - Where to get help and advice if you are having difficulty paying our bill.

These codes, all of which are approved by Ofwat, are available free of charge from our Head Office, contact details for which are listed at the end of this code.

Large print versions of these codes are available upon request.

## Consumer Council for Water Southern

The interests of customers of Portsmouth Water Ltd are represented by an independent body, Consumer Council for Water Southern. This Committee investigates complaints and provides advice and information to all water and sewerage consumers in the Southern Region. The Committee meets in public four times during the year, for details please contact:

Consumer Council for Water Southern  
4th Floor (South)  
High Holborn House  
52-54 High Holborn  
London WC1V 6RL

Telephone: 020 7831 4790

Linkline: 0845 758 1658

Available Monday - Friday 9.00am - 5.00pm

e-mail: southern@ccw.org.uk

## How to Contact Us

### In Writing

Portsmouth Water Ltd  
PO Box 8  
West Street  
Havant  
Hampshire PO9 1LG

### By Telephone

023 9249 9666

Available Monday to Friday 8.30am - 4.30pm

### To Report a Leak

Operations Centre - 023 9247 7999

Available 24 hours a day

### By e-mail

[head.office@portsmouthwater.co.uk](mailto:head.office@portsmouthwater.co.uk)

### By Fax

023 9245 3632

Further information about Portsmouth Water is available at:  
[www.portsmouthwater.co.uk](http://www.portsmouthwater.co.uk)