



**Scottish  
Water**

Trusted to serve Scotland



**Lead pipe replacement**

In Scotland, lead does not occur naturally in significant concentrations in our water supplies. The problem arises when drinking water comes into contact with lead supply pipes, lead tanks, lead solder joints on copper pipes, or inferior quality brass fittings and taps, particularly for longer periods (e.g. overnight). This can result in high lead levels in the drinking water supply.

Information on the health effects of exposure to lead can be found on the NHS Inform website: [www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/lead-poisoning](http://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/lead-poisoning)

## Lead service pipes

(supply + communication pipes)

If a water sample result suggests that there is any lead in your drinking water this is likely to be due to the service pipe to your property or your internal pipework.

The service pipe carries water from the water main in your street direct to your property and is made up of two parts - the communication pipe and the supply pipe (please see the typical property diagram).

Scottish Water is responsible for the water main in your street and the communication pipe up to, and including, the stopcock, which is normally located at the boundary of your property. The property owner is then responsible for the water supply pipe from the stopcock into the property and all of the indoor plumbing.

The use of lead in water service pipes was phased out during the 1960's and officially

became illegal in 1969. However many older properties may still have lead piping. If you discover that you have a lead water supply pipe and want to replace it, Scottish Water will replace the communication pipe feeding the property if it is found to be made from lead.

## Scottish Water's lead pipe replacement policy

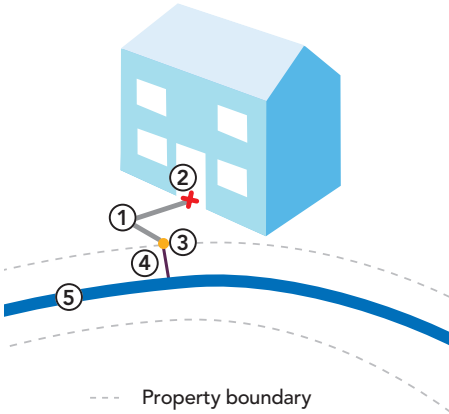
We will renew the part of the water service pipe from the existing water main to the boundary of the property, which is known as the communication pipe, when the level of lead in the water supply is greater than 5 microgrammes per litre (ug/l).

## Replacing your lead water supply pipe

It is important to note that any replacement pipework carried out by a property owner must comply with the Scottish Water Byelaws 2014. The replacement water supply pipe should normally run to the existing stopcock where possible.

Once you have completed the relevant lead replacement form and returned it to Scottish Water, and carried out all the required work to the water supply pipe in accordance with Scottish Water Byelaws 2014, please contact us to arrange a Byelaws/track inspection, allowing sufficient notice prior to the pipe track being backfilled. If the water supply pipe you wish to replace serves more than one property (which can be common among older and terraced properties), you will be required to provide a new, independent water supply pipe. In these instances, we may be able to provide a new connection to the water main free of charge.

## A typical property



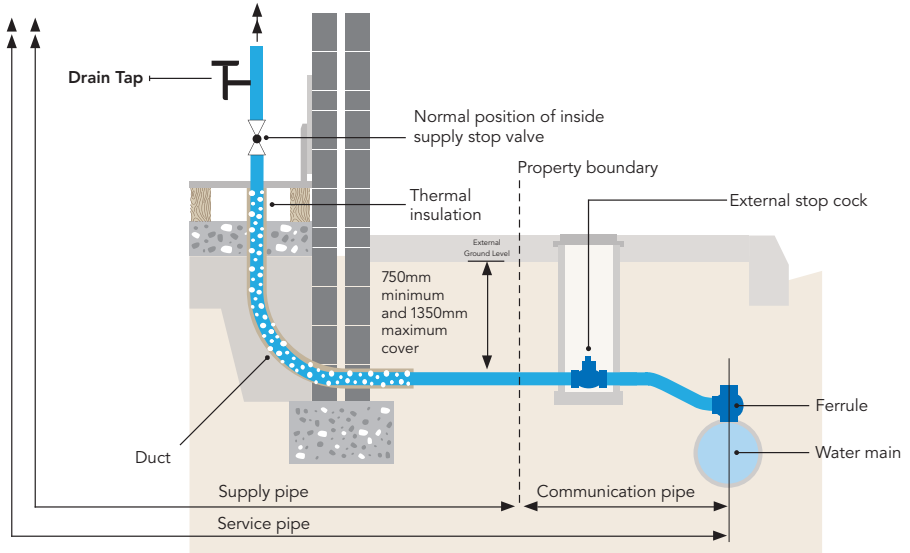
	Responsibility
1 The water supply pipe	Homeowner
2 Stop valve	Homeowner
3 Stopcock/meter	Scottish Water
4 The communication pipe	Scottish Water
5 The water main	Scottish Water

Our representative will then carry out an inspection, inform you of their findings and let you know if you are required to carry out any further work. When carrying out a Byelaws/track inspection, our representative will carry out a number of checks including:

- A suitable Water Regulations Advisory Scheme (WRAS) approved stop valve must be fitted as close as possible to the point where the water supply pipe enters the property. A double check valve should also be fitted above the stop valve to reduce the risk of backflow or contamination.
- The water supply pipe is a minimum of 25mm external diameter and must be laid to the correct point of the property boundary.
- It should be a blue polyethylene pipe approved to British Standards BS EN 806 or equivalent.

- The water supply pipe must be capped prior to connection to ensure vermin, insects or loose dirt is unable to enter the pipe.
- It should be laid with a minimum cover of 750mm and a maximum cover of 1350mm.
- Where the water supply pipe enters a building or runs underneath a building, it should be located inside a suitable duct for accessibility. It should also be sufficiently insulated. See typical example of water supply pipe entering a property on the next page.
- All non-household properties are required to be supplied by a metered water connection.
- If a new point of connection is required, it must be in a location that our teams can safely access (e.g. not under a solid wall).

## Typical example of the requirements for pipes entering buildings



If you are in any doubt about the requirements please contact our **Customer Helpline** on **0800 0778778**.

### Grants

You may be able to obtain a grant for part of this lead replacement work from your local council. For specific information on your local council and up to date details of funds available, please contact your local council's Environmental Health Department. If you find that you have lead solder fittings and your house is less than 10 years old you should contact the house builder.

### Timescales

We always aim to carry out the water communication lead pipe replacement within 4 weeks of approving your water supply pipe replacement. In areas where

traffic management is required it may take longer, however we will make you aware of this.

### Electrical Earthing

Please note that the former practice of earthing electrical installations to the water supply pipes is now forbidden, although many older properties still have such an arrangement.

The part of the service pipe laid in the street by Scottish Water will be in plastic material and, therefore, non-conductive. This may affect the earthing of your installation. Should you require guidance on this matter you should contact your electricity company or a qualified electrician.

## Contacting a plumber

We would always recommend the use of licensed plumbers.

Scottish Water supports and promotes the WaterSafe scheme. WaterSafe is a dedicated online search facility to help customers to find the nearest qualified

plumbing and heating professionals in their area.

To find a licensed plumber in your area, visit WaterSafe at [www.watersafe.org.uk](http://www.watersafe.org.uk)

## Lead pipe replacement – Customer Journey



**Step 1:** Customer contacts Scottish Water to request a lead renewal application form. One of our customer advisers arranges for an application pack to be sent. A visit from a customer representative may also be arranged if required.



**Step 2:** Once the customer has returned the completed application form and completed all the required work to the water supply pipe in accordance with the Scottish Water Byelaws 2014, they then call our Customer Helpline on **0800 0778778** to arrange a Byelaws/track inspection.



**Step 3:** Our customer service centre arranges for a customer representative to attend an appointment.



**Step 4:** Our customer representative then carries out the Byelaws/track inspection. They explain their findings and advises if the customer is required to carry out any further work.



**Step 5:** The customer representative explains the next steps of the lead pipe renewal to the customer and arranges for further work to be carried out.



**Step 6:** At a later date, operatives arrive on site to carry out the lead pipe renewal. This is normally within 4 weeks of approving your water supply pipe replacement. However, in areas where traffic management is required, it may take longer.

# Keeping up to date and getting in touch

We are always working so the cycle never stops – find out more about Scottish Water, our services, and keep up to date with what we are doing in your area:

## Visit



[www.scottishwater.co.uk](http://www.scottishwater.co.uk)

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[@scottish\\_water](https://twitter.com/scottish_water)

## Call

Customer Helpline free 24/7



0800 0778778

Alternative formats of this leaflet can be made available free of charge. For information on Braille, large print, audio and a variety of languages, please call our Customer Helpline.

If you have a disability, medical condition or other reason where you may need additional assistance from Scottish Water then please contact us and we can add your name, address and requirements to our confidential Priority Services Register.

We record all calls for quality and training purposes.