



BRISTOL  
WATER

# New Connections

## Information Pack

April 2021

[bristolwater.co.uk](http://bristolwater.co.uk)

# Everything you need to know about installing a new water supply

This leaflet explains how to apply for a new water connection. It covers how to submit an application, the timescales involved and the things you will need to do before the connection can be made

You will also find information on the replacement of lead and iron service pipes and shared service pipes. Reading the information in this document will help you ensure that getting your new or replacement water supply flows as smoothly as possible



In some circumstances it is possible for those who require a new supply to arrange for someone other than Bristol Water to connect the service pipe; this is known as self-lay. Information on the self-lay process is not included in this leaflet, but if you require further information on this option, please read our Self Lay Policy – which is available on our website or via this link: <https://www.bristolwater.co.uk/business-developers/new-supplies-and-mains/self-lay>

## Our Supply Area



# Definitions

**Service Pipe** – the complete length of the water pipe from the main (usually in the street/footpath) to the first internal water fitting (usually an internal stop tap). The pipe is divided into two sections; the communication pipe and the customer supply pipe

**Communication Pipe (CP)** – normally the length of pipe from the connection with the water main, to a point where the pipe crosses the boundary of the property. This pipe is normally maintained by Bristol Water

**Supply Pipe (SP) Customer Supply Pipe** – the length of pipe from the boundary of the property, up to the first internal water fitting. In exceptional cases the supply pipe can extend right up to the connection to the main. This section is owned and maintained by the owner/s of the property/ies served by that pipe

**Mains** – most mains can be divided into one of two categories: distribution mains and trunk mains

**Distribution Mains** – generally small diameter pipes that distribute water to a number of buildings in an area. They are owned and maintained by Bristol Water and are normally laid in the public highway – these can be in the road or footpath. They can also be installed in privately owned streets or lanes and across fields and public open spaces. Communication Pipes are connected directly onto distribution mains

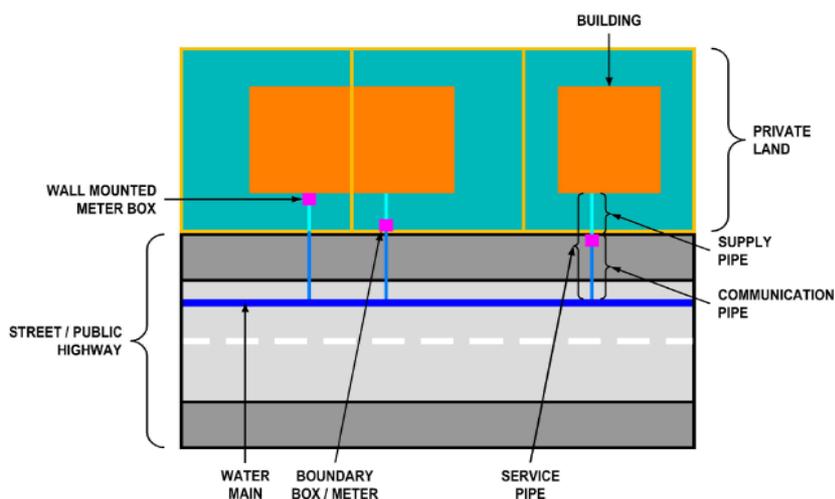
**Strategic Mains** – generally larger diameter mains that transfer water from one area to another. We have no legal duty to make service connections to trunk mains ( as we cannot guarantee availability of water from these mains) and due to their importance, we do not normally do so

**Boundary Box** – the small underground chamber in which stop taps and meters are installed. They are normally installed either in the footpath or less than one metre inside the boundary for the property supplied. They are maintained by Bristol Water

**Wall Mounted Box** – the same as a Boundary Box but are wall mounted on or within the wall of the property supplied

**Stop Tap/ Stop Cock** – valves that stop the flow of water in a pipe and can be operated by hand. Most buildings will have an internal Stop Tap, located on the supply pipe as it enters the property ( often in the kitchen or hallway) and a second external Stop Tap located in a Boundary Box. The internal Stop Tap is the responsibility of the property owner, while the external Stop Tap is generally the responsibility of Bristol Water, if it is located in the highway or within one metre of the highway, except for stop taps within wall mounted boxes which are also the responsibility of the property owner

## Typical Supply Arrangement



# The Application Process

## Application Form

To apply for a new supply, you should complete an Application For Supply Form (AFS) Form. You can complete this form online or download and print off a copy. If you do not have access to the internet, please contact us and we will send you a copy in the post. In all cases you will need to attach or enclose a site plan. In addition, if you are developing anything other than a greenfield site, you will need to enclose a soil analysis report which should identify any potential ground contamination risk. You will be able to attach all these documents to your online application

## Site Visit

Once we receive your completed Application Form and site plan, we will contact you to arrange a site visit so that our Network Site Agent (NSA) can visit you to discuss the planned work. During this visit the NSA will establish the amount of work needed to make the new connections, explain what you will need to do and show you the point where the connection will be made and where you will need to extend your supply pipes

## Inspections

You are responsible for making sure your new supply pipe meets the requirements of the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999 as well as our connection requirements (these are detailed elsewhere in this leaflet) You should contact us once your site is ready for connection so that our NSA can visit and inspect the work. You may be charged for a re-inspection if your site is not ready for connection when the NSA visits, or if the work does not meet all of the relevant connection requirements

# Quotation Letter

Following the visit, we will send you a quotation letter detailing the charges that will be payable – these will normally include both a charge for installing the new connection and an infrastructure charge. Any other charges will also be highlighted in the letter, for example the cost of applying to the local Highway Authority for the temporary closure of a road and the Highway Permit Fee. You can find out more about charges on our website or in our Charges Leaflet or via this link;

<https://f.hubspotusercontent30.net/hubfs/7850638/Charging%20Arrangements%20for%20New%20Connections%20Services%2021-22.pdf>

You will be sent a plan with your quotation letter; it will confirm where your supply pipe should terminate. **Quotation Letters are normally sent out within 28 calendar days of receipt of your application**

Unless otherwise stated on the quotation letter, the quotation will expire on 31 March of the financial year in which the quotation has issued. If your quotation has expired and you still wish to proceed with the work, please contact us to request an up to date quotation

## £ Payment

You can make payment at any point during your work, but the connection cannot be made until your work has passed an inspection, payment has been received and your work has passed all Water Supply ( Water Fittings) Regulations 1999

The Infrastructure Charge becomes payable when the new connection has been made, however for ease of processing payments we encourage developers to pay both the infrastructure charge and the connection charge at the same time before the connection is made

You can pay us Online, in the New Supplies & Connections section of the Bristol Water website or via this link;

<https://nsc.bristolwater.co.uk/crm-odata/FS0016/index.php> your Customer Number and AFS number will be on your quotation letter

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You can also pay by cheque or BACs (using Sort Code; 30-62-96 Account Number; 80966860) **But whichever payment option you choose please ensure you quote your Application Number on all payments.** Once we have received your payment, we will send you receipted invoices

## Connection

We aim to carry out most connections within 21 calendar days from the date your connection passes its inspection, the date the payment is received, or the date the work passes all Water Supply ( Water Fittings) Regulations 1999. The only exceptions to this are if your property is being connected to one of our strategic mains or if a road closure is required to complete the work. Traffic Sensitive streets require a minimum 28 days notice to the Highway Authority and a road closure requires a minimum of 12 weeks notice, This will be identified at quotation stage

**From the date of connection, you will be charged for water used as well as a standing charge. If the bill payer changes, please inform our Billing Company: Pelican Business Services – [www.pelican.co.uk](http://www.pelican.co.uk) or 0345 600 3600**

# Large Developments

If your development consists of six or more dwellings (or the rough equivalent in non-residential properties) you should, during the early planning of your development, contact our Developer Interface Team with details of your development to ensure that we will be able to supply your development. You can do this by completing the Basic Supply Strategy Application on our website via this link; <https://www.bristolwater.co.uk/basic-supply-strategy-form> or by downloading and emailing the form to; [developer.interface@bristolwater.co.uk](mailto:developer.interface@bristolwater.co.uk)

Further details of the information they require can be found in our Developers Charter, which can be found on our website or by clicking this link; <https://f.hubspotusercontent30.net/hubfs/7850638/Site%20Assets/Offline%20docs/Developers-Charter-April-2020.pdf>



Larger developments often require new water mains to be laid. In addition, we also need to make sure that our network will be able to accommodate the extra demand from the site. If your site does require new mains, you will need to apply for them on a separate form, known as the Application for Mains and Services Form. From the date you submit this form, it could be at least three months before new mains can be installed, so please contact the Developer Interface Team as early as possible. You also have the option to have any new mains self-laid. Please see our website for details on how to do this or click this link; <https://www.bristolwater.co.uk/business-developers/new-supplies-and-mains/self-lay>

# Metering

The company's preferred methods for the control and metering of water supplies are; a boundary box fitted where possible, less than one metre inside the boundary of the property it supplies (in a position which give the meter reader unimpeded access) a boundary box installed in the public footpath that fronts the property, or in a wall mounted box at the front of the property (in a position that would give a meter reader unimpeded access)

The meter can only be located in a boundary box in a driveway, vehicular crossing, or car parking area if that vehicular area is used solely by the occupants of the property the boundary box supplies. Meter boxes cannot be installed in communal vehicle trafficked areas

The company may, at its discretion, accept the installation of internal meters, but normally only on the supplies to blocks of high-rise flats with boosted / pumped systems. In all cases the company would have to agree that the use of boundary boxes or wall mounted boxes is unfeasible. Any intention to install internal meters should be discussed and agreed with Bristol Water in advance and before building layouts are finalised



# Do I need a New Connection? (provision of separate supplies)

## New Supplies

Historically, it was common for a single shared service pipe to supply multiple properties, however, water usage has increased, and their use can now sometimes cause problems with flow, pressure and water quality. The Water Industry Act 1991 gives water companies the authority to require that new premises (or those that are newly created by the conversion of existing properties) are supplied by totally independent service pipes connected directly to our network

Bristol Water requires, in most cases, that the following have their own totally independent, metered water service pipes connected directly to our network;

- Newly developed properties that are capable of separate occupation
- Every part (eg flat or commercial unit) of a newly converted property that is capable of separate occupation
- Separately occupied parcels of land created by the recent sale of sections of a larger premise. Properties or water fittings (eg animal troughs) on either side of the boundary cannot remain on the same supply after the sale

We typically become aware of a developer's failure to provide separate supplies when the new owner/occupier of a property asks for a water bill or meter, or alternatively, when someone informs us of poor flow or pressure at an address that we have no record of previously supplying

Upon discovering an unauthorised connection, we will serve the developer of the property a statutory notice under Section 64 of the Water Act to separate the supplies within three months. If the notice is ignored, Bristol Water can, under the Act, undertake the work on the property and recover the cost from the customer directly or, if necessary, through the Magistrates Court

## Existing Supplies

Your water may reach you via a shared service pipe. This isn't necessarily a problem; however, if you are experiencing poor flow or pressure caused by your joint supply, you may wish to consider installing a separate service pipe

If you think you are on a joint supply and would like to find out about separation, you should speak to a plumber as you will be responsible for arranging and paying for the replacement of your supply pipe. You will also need to apply to us for a new communication pipe and connection to the main, as if you were constructing a new property. If you meet the requirements of our Lead Replacement Scheme, we may replace your communication pipe free of charge

Applying for a new supply and requesting a quotation does not put you under any obligation to proceed with the separation

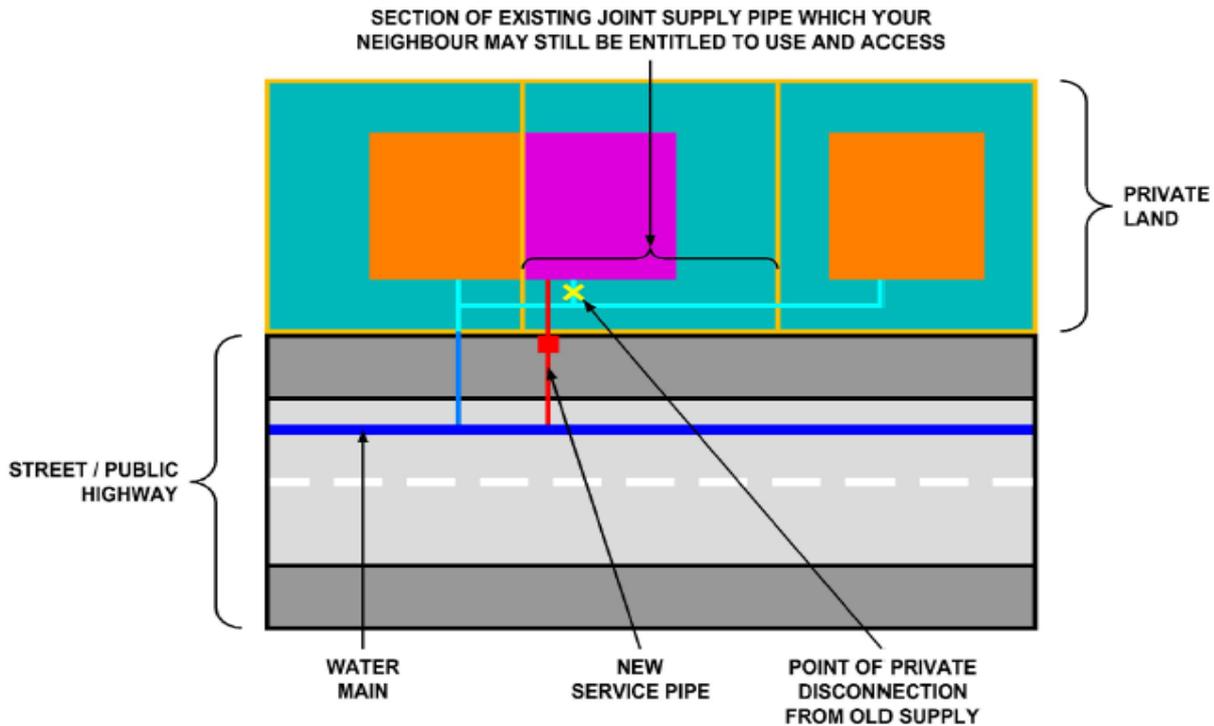
If you do decide to proceed you must also arrange for your old water supply pipe to be disconnected where it branches from the existing shared supply pipe. It should be stressed that any properties remaining on the shared supply pipe may still have a legal right to continue using, maintaining, and therefore accessing the old supply pipe, even if it passes through or under your property

A boundary box will be installed on the new supply, and the stop tap will be located in this box. A meter can also be installed in the boundary box, but we would not normally do so if you are currently unmetered, unless you are the new occupier of the property or you ask us to install a meter

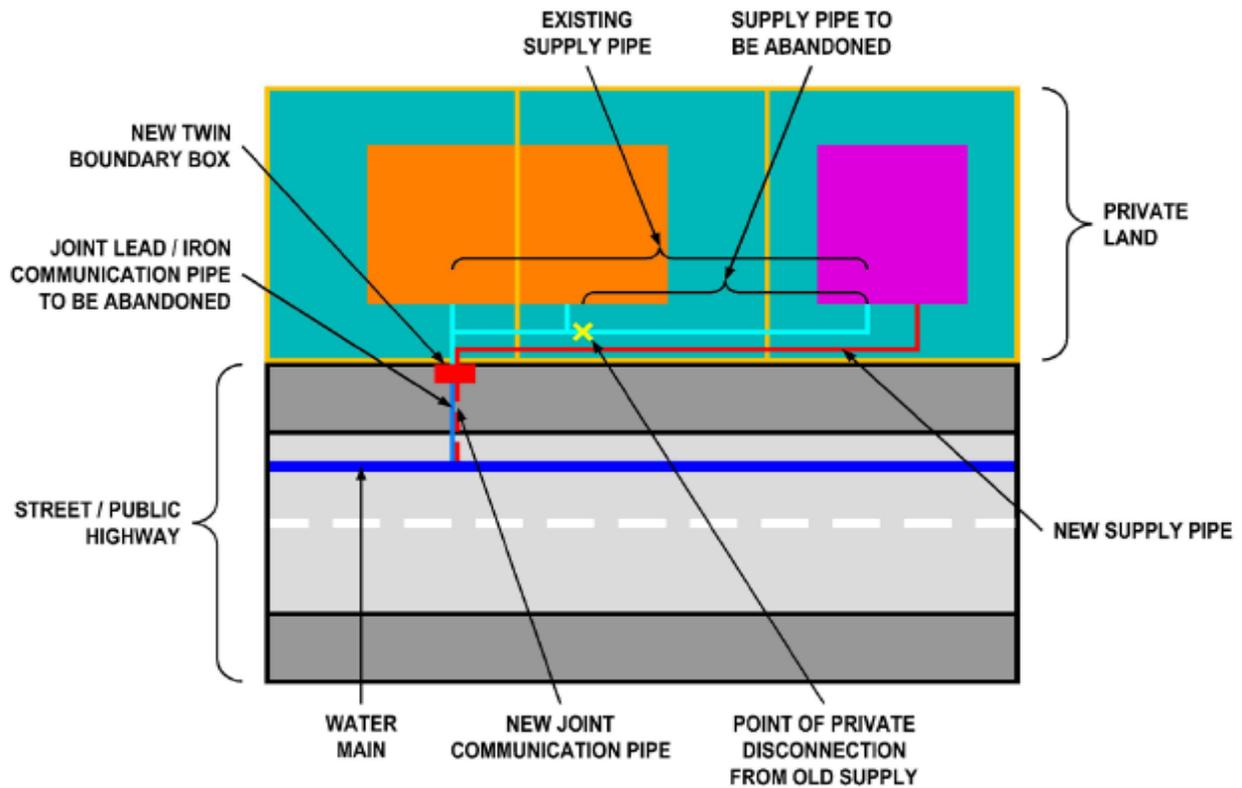
For more information on shared supplies visit our website or complete an Application Form so that we can contact you to arrange for an NSA to visit you and give some advice

You may also find some helpful information on shared supplies via this link;  
<https://www.bristolwater.co.uk/home/supplies-and-connections/new-supplies-and-connections/>

The diagrams and notes on the following pages show some of the possible shared supply scenarios;



The pink property was sharing its supply with the two orange properties. They laid out their new supply pipe completely within their own garden and were required to disconnect their old supply from the existing joint supply at the position marked with a yellow x to stop a dead leg from being formed. The owners of the pink property would allow the owners of the detached orange property to continue to use and maintain the section of the old joint supply pipe that crosses the pink properties garden



The pink property was sharing a lead supply pipe with the two orange properties. The communication pipe feeding the properties was also made of lead. The owner of the pink property made the necessary legal arrangements to lay a new individual supply pipe through the gardens belonging to the owners of the orange properties, so that their new supply pipe finished at the same point as the old one. Bristol Water connected the new supply pipe, replaced the old communication pipe completely (with a pipe capable of supplying all three properties) and installed a double boundary box, free of charge. The owners of the pink property were required to disconnect their old supply from the existing joint supply at the position marked with a yellow x. This was so that a dead leg was not formed

# Lead/Iron Replacement Scheme

Until the 1960's, service pipes were commonly made from lead or iron. Most have not been replaced and remain in use. Small amounts of lead and rust from pipes can find their way into water supplies even though we treat the water to minimise the degree to which this happens. Older pipes, such as those installed before 1970, also tend to result in poorer flow due to their smaller diameters. In addition, they are prone to higher levels of leakage

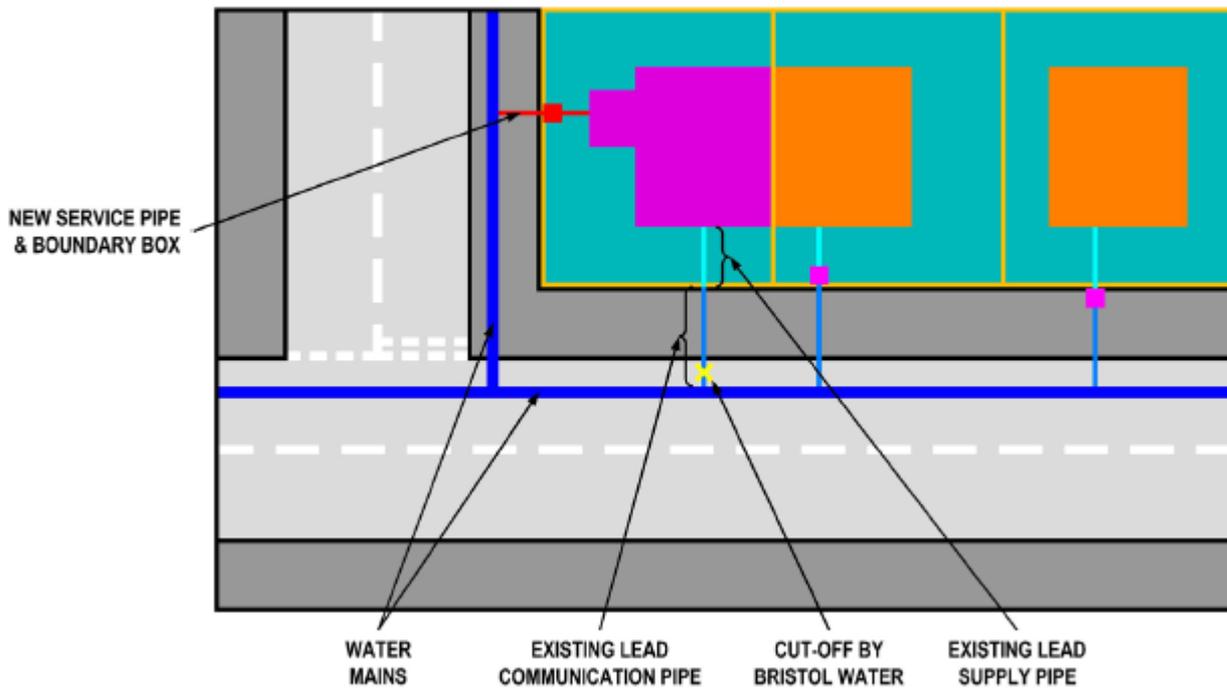
Bristol Water operates a Lead and Iron Replacement Scheme to help qualifying customers replace their ageing pipes with polyethylene (PE) pipes. However, if you have immediate concerns about the concentration of lead in your water supply you should contact our Customer Service Department on 0345 702 3797, who will arrange for a water sample to be taken from your property and tested for lead free of charge

The costs of replacing service pipes will depend on individual circumstances. In all cases, it is the customer who arranges (through their own plumber) and pays for the replacement of their supply pipe, in accordance with our connection requirements and any relevant Water Regulations. Where the new supply pipe is brought out to our preferred location and the communication pipe is made from lead or iron, Bristol Water will fund the replacement of the communication pipe, the installation of a boundary box, the connection to the mains and any necessary inspections

If our communication pipe is already made from plastic but your supply pipe is made from lead or iron, you may need to pay for the connection to our communication pipe and the installation of the new box. If your new supply is not brought out to the same point as the old supply, you will have to pay a disconnection fee. For more details on our Lead and Iron Pipe Replacement Scheme please visit our website, click this link;

<https://www.bristolwater.co.uk/home/supplies-and-connections/new-supplies-and-connections/> OR request a copy of our Lead and Iron Pipe Replacement Leaflet

This diagram shows an example of work involved during a lead replacement;



The owners of the pink property were extending their property. They had a lead supply pipe and wished to replace it as part of the work. The communication pipe was also made of lead but because the owners decided not to bring their supply pipe out to the original connection point, they had to pay for the new connection, the installation of the communication pipe, the installation of the boundary box, the installation of their supply pipe and for the disconnection of their old supply

# Connection Requirements

A number of requirements must be met before a supply is connected to our mains. Your installation must successfully pass an inspection carried out by one of our NSAs and the installation must be designed to meet the requirements of the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999. A re-inspection will be carried out and may be charged for, if your installation is incomplete or was not installed in line with the following requirements;

1. supply pipes must be laid to comply with the requirements of the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999
2. a new supply must not feed more than one property unless a previous agreement with Bristol Water has been put in place
3. all pipes must be laid in trenches that are between 750mm and 1200mm deep. Supply pipes must then enter the property and remain at that depth for a minimum horizontal distance of 750mm from the external face of the wall before rising to an internal stop tap. Pipes must remain at a depth of between 750mm and 850mm for a meter either side of the boundary box
4. BS6491 standard trace wire must be installed with every service pipe. It should be 1.5mm diameter, single or multi-stranded, blue plastic coated wire and should be attached to the pipe with cable ties, at intervals of not less than one metre
5. any sized pipe over 25 meters in length must be chlorinated for one hour contact @ 50 parts per million (ppm) by an approved contractor unless agreed by our NSA. We must have a copy of a satisfactory chlorination certificate, which will be checked by our Water Quality Team

6. all pipes and fittings that are to be used to convey wholesome water must be of an appropriate quality and standard ( this includes but may not be limited to, water fittings approved by WRAS, NSF, KIWA and other suitably UKAS accredited test facilities) The fittings must also be suitable for the circumstance in which they are used. Further information can be found within Regulation 4 of the Water Supply ( Water Fittings) Regulations 1999 which can be found at;

[www.legislation.gov.uk/ukis/1999/1148/regulation/4/made](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukis/1999/1148/regulation/4/made)

If you are installing sections of pipework or any fittings, such as meter boxes, that will belong to Bristol Water, these items must also have been approved by Bristol Water for use within the company's area. A list of all the items that are currently approved by Bristol Water is available on the company's website or via this link;

<https://f.hubspotusercontent30.net/hubfs/7850638/Bristol%20Water%20Self-lay%20Material%20List%20v6%20December%202020.pdf>

7. developers of sites that are currently built upon, or that may have been previously built upon, should submit a Site Assessment Report; in accordance with our guidance for developers and others requiring new supplies, on the installation of new mains and service pipes on contaminated or potentially contaminated land, which can be found on our website or via this link;

<https://f.hubspotusercontent30.net/hubfs/7850638/Site%20Assets/Offline%20docs/Contaminated-Land.pdf> this should be submitted to Bristol Water well in advance of the date that water pipes are to be installed. Barrier pipework must be used

for pipes conveying wholesome water when a report is not available for such sites, as well as in cases where Bristol Water deems that the report indicates that relevant contamination is present at concentrations that are likely to be problematic. Suitable protective pipework material include barrier PE and PVC wrapped table Y copper. The only permitted boundary boxes in such cases are Ebco sealed boxes for contaminated ground, part number MBB 2010. Approved wall-mounted boxes, since they are installed above ground, are also acceptable

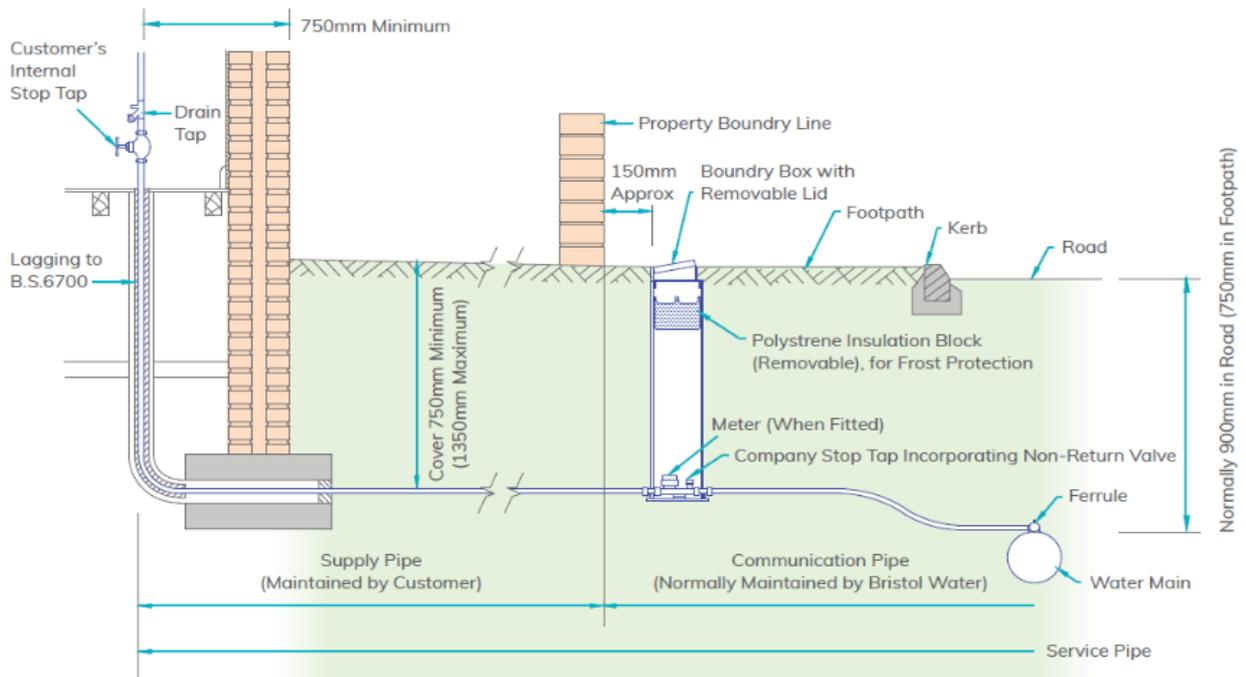
8. pipes must be laid in a continuous duct where they pass through foundations, are buried under buildings, or are installed under suspended floors (eg block and beam). In general, ducts should extend from the outside face of the point of entry to the building, right up to the point where the pipe enters the room containing the internal stop tap. The duct should be sealed at both ends to prevent the ingress of contaminants. The minimum recommended duct diameter for a 25mm pipe is 100mm although a duct with as large a radius as possible should be used where the pipe changes direction
  
9. pipes must be insulated from the point where they pass through the outside face of the structure (eg wall or footings) through which they enter the building, up to the point where they enter the room containing the internal stop tap. Ducts should therefore be of a sufficient diameter to allow for this
  
10. stones, bricks, and other sharp objects should not be used as backfill material for supply pipe trenches, as leaks can be caused when sharp objects rest against the pipe. Pipes should be laid on a 100mm bed of sand or stone dust where the ground conditions are such that the trench contains sharp objects. Such pipes should then also be backfilled with sand or stonedust up to a point that is 150mm above the crown of the pipe. The remainder of the backfill material, can then be excavated material providing any sharp objects are removed prior to its use. In very poor ground conditions, it may be necessary to duct the pipe throughout its length, but you will be advised of any such requirements by our NSA
  
11. supply pipes should, where possible, be laid solely within the boundary of the property they supply or failing that, within communal areas to which the owner of the property has a legal right of access. Prior agreement should be obtained from Bristol Water where pipes are to be laid in any other location

12. supply pipes must be brought to the position that was agreed with our NSA, as marked on the plan sent with the quotation letter. Developers must provide at least one extra metre of pipe and trace wire
13. where developers have installed the communication pipe it should be laid along a straight line that is perpendicular to the main to which it is to be connected
14. if a boundary box is to be used, the back edging and front kerb of any footpath must be fitted prior to the final inspection
15. where there are multiple supplies in the same trench, each one must be permanently marked to identify the property it supplies
16. all supply pipes must be capped off to prevent the ingress of debris, vermin, or other contaminants. If a pipe is found with an open end it will have to be chlorinated at the customer's expense. Connection will be delayed as a result
17. ideally the plumbing in each property should be at second fix stage prior to the inspection. Where this is not possible each service pipe must be blanked off within the premises with a stop tap. Bristol Water will not be held responsible for any damage caused by the failure to blank off any supplies
18. supplies to multiple properties (where permitted) must have a stop tap fitted prior to the point at which the supply divides, in a convenient location that all occupiers of the premises will have access to
19. all work has passed The Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999, which are checked by our Water Regulations Team

This diagram shows the typical service pipe arrangement for most properties

## Typical Service Pipe Arrangement

(Not to Scale)



# Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999

Work on all new and replacement water systems is subject to compliance with the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999. Copies of the Regulations are available from Her Majesty's Stationery Office ([www.opsi.gov.uk](http://www.opsi.gov.uk)). Bristol Water has a legal duty to enforce the Regulations and it is the responsibility of the installer to ensure that their work complies with them

The requirements of Regulation 5 are included on the Application for Supply Forms. Please complete these sections fully, to provide us with the necessary notification required under Regulation 5(1)(a) of your planned work

Bristol Water requires that the reverse of the paper Application for Supply Form is completed for all applications, apart from those that are solely for temporary supplies, separations of supplies or lead / iron replacements. Online applicants will be prompted to fill in all necessary information

The basic principles of the Regulations are listed below, but you should consult a plumber if you are unsure how they might affect you

- All fittings must be protected from damage (e.g. frost)
- The design and installation must meet the requirements of the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999. It must also include adequate devices or arrangements to prevent backflow. We strongly recommend you discuss your proposals with one of our Water Regulations Officers at an early stage, if applicable, as many fittings are unsuitable for direct connection to water mains

- All water fittings must be economical in the use of water. We may, at our discretion, meter altered or amended systems that we deem to use excessive quantities of water
- Installers must notify the relevant water undertaker ( i.e. Bristol Water) prior to undertaking certain operations. Further information can be found on the Water Regs UK website at the following link:

<https://www.waterregsuk.co.uk/guidance/legislation/notification/>

- A copy of the full Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999, can be found at:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1999/1148/contents/madeW>

# Requirements of Regulation 5 of the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999

All materials used must be of an appropriate quality and standard and suitable for the circumstance in which they are to be used. A water fitting is of an appropriate quality or standard only if:

1. sub paragraph (a) omitted due to revisions
  2. sub paragraph (b) omitted due to revisions
  3. it conforms to an appropriate British Standard or some other national specification which provides an equivalent level of protection and performance;
- or
4. it conforms to a specification approved by the regulator.

## Advanced Notification

In most cases, before work starts on any proposed installation the installer, owner, or occupier must obtain Bristol Water's consent by giving notification of the details of the proposed work

Proposed work which must be notified is summarised in the following list;

1. The erection of a building or other structure, not being a pond or swimming pool
  2. The extension or alteration of a water system on any premises other than a house.†
  3. A material change of use of any premises
  4. The installation of:
    - (a) a bath having a capacity, as measured to the centre line of the overflow, of more than 230 litres.\*
    - (b) a bidet with an ascending spray or flexible hose.†
    - (c) a shower unit of a type specified by the Regulator (none are currently specified).\*
    - (d) a pump or booster drawing more than 12 litres per minute, connected directly or indirectly to a supply pipe.
    - (e) a unit which incorporates reverse osmosis.
    - (f) a water treatment unit which produces a wastewater discharge, or which requires the use of water for regeneration or cleaning.
    - (g) a reduced pressure zone (RPZ) valve assembly or other mechanical device for protection against a fluid which is in Fluid Category 4 or 5.
    - (h) a garden watering system unless designed to be operated by hand.\*
    - (i) any water system laid outside a building either less than 750mm or more than 1350mm below ground level.
  5. The construction of a pond or swimming pool over 10,000 litres capacity, designed to be replenished automatically with water supplied by a public water supplier.\*
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There is no charge by Bristol Water for dealing with notifications or granting consent

Work on installations must not start until consent has been given

Consent will not be withheld unreasonably and may be granted subject to conditions, which must be followed

If within ten working days of receipt of a valid notification by Bristol Water consent is neither granted nor refused, it is deemed to have been granted

This does not alter the obligation upon the installer and owner or occupier to see that the Regulations are fully met

### **Contractors Certificate**

Most UK water suppliers either operate their own approved plumbers' scheme or support the national Water Industry Approved Plumbers' Scheme (WIAPS). Members of these schemes have demonstrated their experience of plumbing work, knowledge of the Regulations and have liability insurance cover

An Approved Plumber will certify that his installation work satisfies the regulations

In the event of breaches of the regulations in connection with the certified work, the owner or occupier can use the certificate as a legal defence against any resulting prosecution

When installing items marked (†) in the list above, an Approved Plumber does not have to receive prior consent before starting work. On completion of the work, in addition to supplying a certificate to the person who asked for the work to be done, a copy of the compliance certificate must also be sent to Bristol Water

## Some helpful contact details;

### **New Supplies Team**

Tel; 0345 602 8022

Email; [newsupplies@bristolwater.co.uk](mailto:newsupplies@bristolwater.co.uk)

### **Developer Interface Team**

Tel; 0117 934 1224

Email; [developer.interface@bristolwater.co.uk](mailto:developer.interface@bristolwater.co.uk)

### **Bristol Water Customer Services**

Tel; 0345 702 3797

Email; [customer.services@bristolwater.co.uk](mailto:customer.services@bristolwater.co.uk)

### **Water Regulations Team**

Tel; 0117 963 8516

Email; [waterregulations@bristolwater.co.uk](mailto:waterregulations@bristolwater.co.uk)

### **For Billing Enquires – Pelican**

Tel; 0345 600 3600

Email; [customer.services@bwbsl.co.uk](mailto:customer.services@bwbsl.co.uk)