



# New Connections Information Pack

Everything you need to know about installing a New Supply

## Introduction

This leaflet explains how to apply for a new water connection. It covers how to submit an application, the timescales involved in doing so and the things that 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 the provision of your new or replacement water supply runs 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 up the service pipe; this is known as self-lay. Information on the self-lay process is not included in this leaflet. If you require further information on this option please read our Self Lay Policy – which is available on our website – as a starting point.

### **Please Note**

Following the changes made by the Introduction of the Retail Water Market in April 2017, if you are applying for a non-household/commercial supply or building water only supply, then you will need to appoint a water retailer to be registered to that supply. If you do not appoint a retailer, then the market will appoint one for you.

For a list of retailers in the market please refer to: [www.open-water.org.uk](http://www.open-water.org.uk)

## Definitions

**Service Pipe** - the whole of the water pipe from the main to the first internal water fitting. 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 street within which the main is laid. This pipe is normally maintained by Bristol Water.

**Supply Pipe (SP)/Customer Supply Pipe** - the length of pipe from the boundary of the street within which the main is laid, 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 medium diameter pipes that distribute water to a number of buildings in an area. They are the responsibility of Bristol Water and are normally laid along public highways – sometimes in the carriageway and sometimes in the footpath. They can also be installed in privately owned streets or lanes and across fields or public open spaces. Occasionally they can be found in other locations. Communication pipes

are connected directly onto distribution mains.

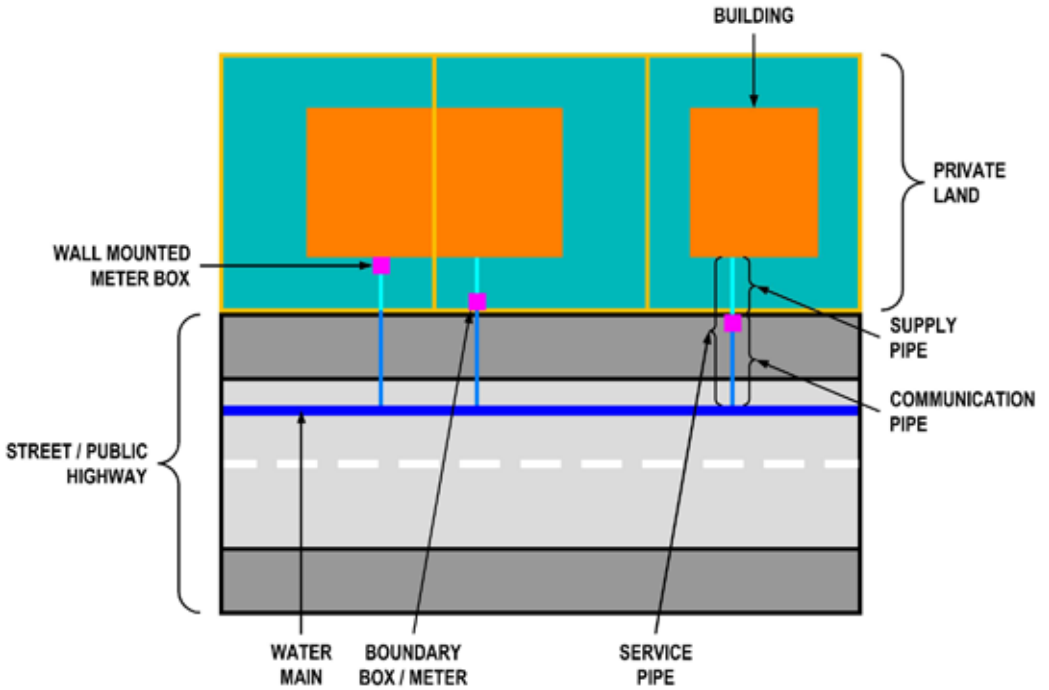
**Trunk Mains** - generally large diameter mains that transfer water from one area to another. We have no legal duty to make service connections to trunk mains and, due to their strategic importance, we do not normally do so. This is so that their integrity can be maintained.

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

**Wall Mounted Box** - provides the same function as a boundary box but are mounted on, or within, the wall of the property supplied.

**Stop Tap/Stop Cock** - valves operated by turn-able handles that stop the flow of water in a pipe. Most supplies will have an internal Stop Tap, located on the supply pipe as it rises into the habitable part of a property (often in the kitchen), and a second, external Stop Tap, located in a meter box. The internal is the responsibility of the property owner, while the external is generally the responsibility of Bristol Water, if it is located in the highway, within one metre of the highway, or within a wall mounted box.

# TYPICAL SUPPLY ARRANGEMENT



## Our Supply area



# The Application Process

## Application Form

To apply for a new supply you should complete an “Application for Supply” form. You can fill this form in online or download and print off a copy to fill in by hand. If you do not have access to the internet please contact us and we will send you a copy of the form in the post. In all cases you will need to either 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. You will be able to attach these documents to your online application.

## Site Visit

Upon receipt of your “Application for Supply” form and site plan, our Network Site Agent (NSA) will visit you and discuss the planned work. This visit normally takes place within five working days of the day we receive your application. During this visit the NSA will establish the amount of work needed to make the connections and show you where to extend your supply pipe(s) to.

## 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 abnormal charges will also be highlighted in this letter. These could include, for example, the cost of applying to the local Highway Authority for the temporary closure of a road, which is

normally around £1,000 – £1,500. You can find out more about our charges on our website or in our “Charges Scheme – Connection, Disconnection and Infrastructure Charges” leaflet. You will be sent a plan with the quotation letter. It will confirm where your supply pipe should terminate. Quotation letters and plans are normally sent out within ten working days of receipt of your application. If the connection point is not within your site boundary it may take a little longer to reply, but you should receive a reply with twenty working days.

The quotation will expire on 31 March of the financial year in which the quotation was issued. If your quotation has expired and you still wish to proceed with the connection you will need to request a revised quotation.

## Inspection

You are responsible for making sure that your new supply pipe meets any relevant Water Regulations as well as our connection requirements. These are detailed elsewhere in this leaflet. You should contact us once your site is ready for connection. Our NSA will then visit and inspect the work. This will normally take place within five working days. You may be charged for a re-inspection if your site is not ready for connection when our NSA calls, or if the work does not meet all of the relevant connection requirements or Water Regulations.

## Payment



You can pay for the connection before or after the inspection takes place, but the connection cannot be made until the work has been inspected and payment has been received.

The infrastructure charge normally becomes payable at the point at which the new connection is made, however, for simplicity, we encourage developers to pay for both the infrastructure charge and the connection charge at the same time, before the connection is made.

Payment of our charges can be made by cheque, by credit or debit card over the phone, by BACS payment or online through our website. Cheques should be made payable to Bristol Water Plc. Please write your invoice number or Application for Supply number on the back of every cheque and post it to our New Supplies Team. When paying by card please phone our New Supplies Team and have your card details ready. Payments by BACS should be made into Bank Account No 80966860, sort code 306296. Please quote the invoice number or Application for Supply number as a reference and post us the remittance advice.

## Connection

We aim to carry out most connections within ten working days of the date your connection passes its inspection or the date payment is received, whichever is later.

However, there are some circumstances under which we will be unable to do so. For example if the road in which the work will be carried out is deemed to be traffic sensitive or requires a temporary road closure, the highway authority responsible for the road may not allow us to work there for twelve weeks.

From the date of connection you will be charged for the water used as well as a standing charge. If the bill-payer changes please inform Bristol Wessex Billing Services Ltd (BWBSL).

# 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 for 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, posting the information to them, or emailing. Further details of the information that they will require can be found in our Developers' Charter, which can be downloaded from our website.



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 that your site will put on it. If your site does require new mains, you will need to apply for them on a separate form, known as an "Application for Mains and Services" form. From the date on which 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.

## 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 serves, in a position which gives the meter reader unimpeded access; a boundary box installed in the public footpath that fronts the property; or 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 that the boundary box serves. Meter boxes cannot be installed in communal vehicular areas.

In 2004 Bristol Water stopped routinely accepting the installation of internal meters. The company may now, at its discretion, accept their installation, 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 well in advance, and before building layouts are finalised.

# Do I Need A New Connection?

## (Provision of Separate Supplies)

### New Supplies

Many years ago it was common for a single shared service pipe to supply multiple properties, however, water usage has increased and their use can sometimes now cause problems with flow, pressure, or water quality. The Water Industry Act 1991 gave water companies the authority to require that new premises (or those that are newly created by the conversion of existing ones) 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 (e.g. flat or commercial unit) of a newly converted property that is capable of separate occupation, and
- separately occupied parcels of land created by the recent sale of sections of a larger premise. Properties or water fittings (e.g. animal troughs) on either side of the boundary cannot, therefore, 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 and/or

meter, or alternatively when someone informs us of poor flow or pressure at an address that we have no record of ever having supplied. Upon discovering an unauthorised connection we will serve the developer of the property with a statutory notice under Section 64 of the 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 consumer directly or, if necessary, through the Magistrates' Court.



## Do I Need A New Connection? continued...

### 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 separating it you should speak to a plumber as you will be responsible for arranging and paying for the replacement of your supply pipe. You will, however, also need to apply to us for a new communication pipe, in the same way as if you were constructing a brand new property. If you meet the requirements of our Lead Replacement Scheme we may replace our 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.

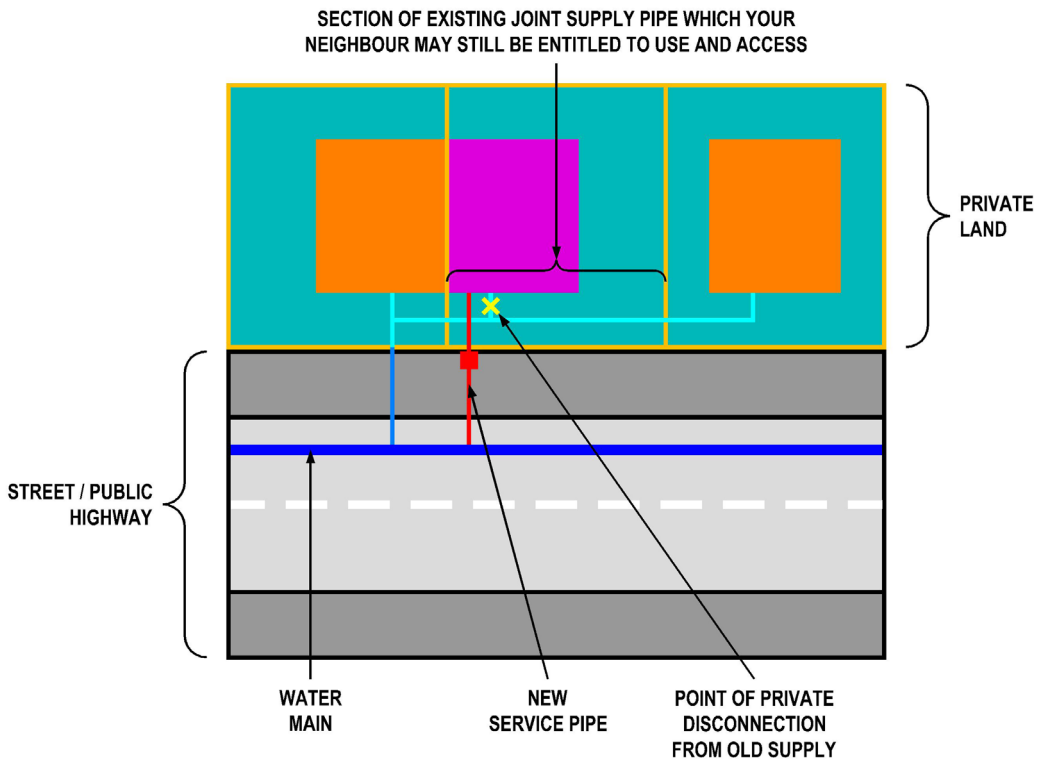
If you do decide to proceed you must also arrange for your old water supply pipe to be disconnected where it branches from the existing shared supply pipe. It should be stressed that any properties remaining on the shared supply pipe may still have a legal right to continue using, maintaining and therefore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

A boundary box will be installed on the new supply. 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 ask us to.

For more information on shared supplies visit our website or contact us to arrange for a NSA to come and speak to you.

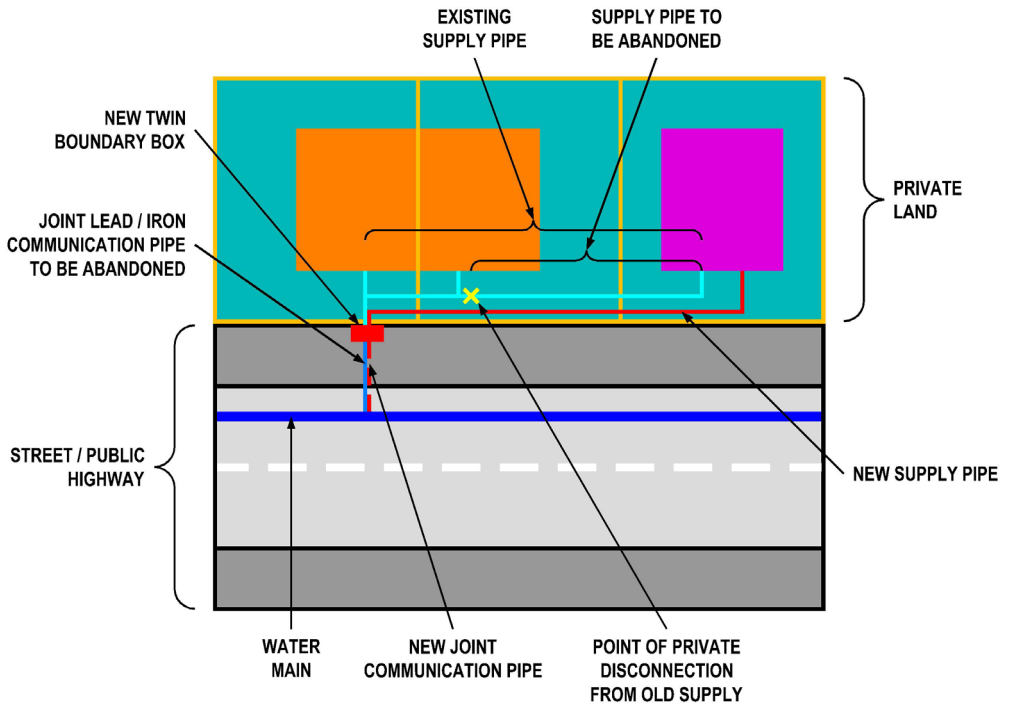
.....  
Please see the following page for a graphical interpretation of the separation of shared supply..

# Separation of shared supply (1)



The pink property was sharing its supply with the two orange properties. They laid 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 probably have to continue to 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 property’s garden.

## Separation of shared supply (2)



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 owners 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 1960s service pipes were commonly made out of lead or iron. The majority of them 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 flows 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 Services Department. They will arrange for a water sample to be taken from your property and tested free of charge.

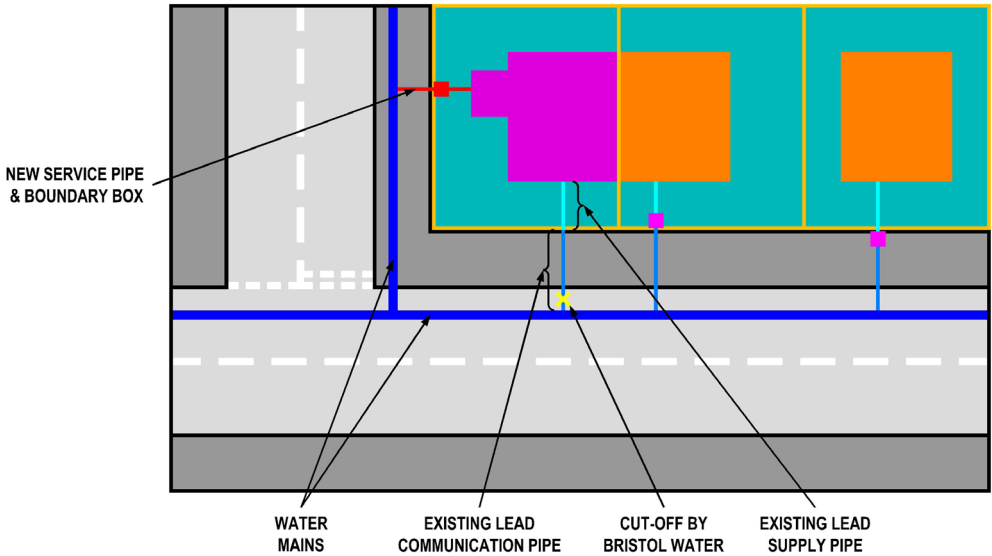
The cost of replacing a service pipe will depend on individual circumstances. In all cases, it is the customer who arranges (through their own plumber), and pays for, the replacement of their supply pipe in accordance with our connection requirements and any relevant Water Regulations. Where the new 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 main 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 boundary box. If your new supply is not brought out to the same point as the old supply you may also have to pay a disconnection fee. For more details on our lead and iron pipe replacement scheme please visit our website, or request a copy of our "Lead Replacement" leaflet.

.....  
[Please see the opposite page for a graphical interpretation of how a lead pipe might be replaced along with further explanation of the work Bristol Water will undertake.](#)

# 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 same connection point as the old one, 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. A re-inspection will be carried out, which may be charged for, if your installation is incomplete or was not installed in line with the following:

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 metre 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 at intervals of not less than one metre with cable ties.
5. Where a supply pipe has an outside diameter of 63mm or larger, you must provide a copy of a satisfactorily passed chlorination certificate. You must also arrange for a pressure test to be carried out on the pipe. You should contact us in advance of the test, as one of our

NSAs will need to be present for the duration of it.

6. All pipes and fittings that are to be used to convey potable water must have approval from the Water Regulations Advisory Scheme (WRAS). If you are installing sections of pipework, or any fittings, such as meter boxes, that will belong to Bristol Water, these items must, in addition to being WRAS approved, have been approved by Bristol Water for use within the company's area. A list of the items that are currently approved by Bristol Water is available on the company's website.
7. Developers of sites that are currently built upon, or may previously have been 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) to Bristol Water well in advance of the date that water pipes are to be installed. Barrier pipework must be used for pipes conveying potable 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 materials 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 (e.g. 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 (e.g. 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 that any sharp objects are removed from it prior to 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 accompanying the quotation letter. They must then 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.

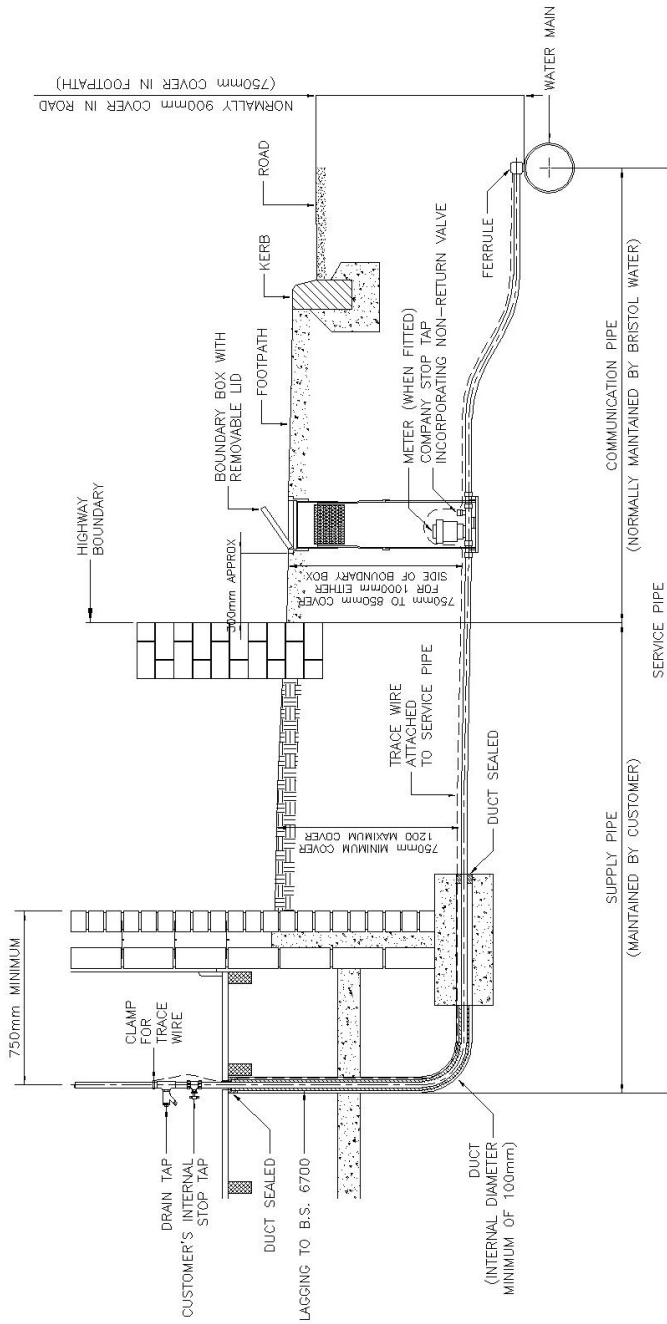
15. Where there are multiple supplies in the same trench, each one must be permanently marked to identify the property it supplies.

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.

# Typical Service Pipe Arrangement





# 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, however it is the responsibility of the installer to ensure that their work complies with them.

The basic principles of the Regulations are listed below, however you should consult a plumber if you are at all unsure as to how they might affect you.

All materials used must be suitable for the purpose for which they are intended

All fittings must be protected from damage (e.g. from frost)

All fittings must be installed in a manner that minimises the risk of backflow (we strongly recommend that you discuss your proposals with one of our Water Regulations Officers at an early stage, if applicable, as many non-domestic fittings are unsuitable for direct connection to water mains)

As far as is reasonably practicable, all fittings must be installed to avoid the excessive 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.

## Notification

The regulation that refers to notification has been reproduced below. Developers who accurately complete an online "Application for Supply" form or return a paper copy of an "Application for Supply" form with the front and reverse fully completed and signed will be complying with paragraph 1(a). 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, separation of supplies or lead/iron replacements. Online applicants will be prompted to fill in all necessary information.

If you are signed up to our "Water Connection Agreement", you may not be required to notify us before commencing work. Contact our Water Regulations department to find out more about the agreement, and how to sign up to it.

.....  
[Details of Section 5 Water Supply \(Water Fittings\) Regulations 1999 are listed on the following pages](#)

## Section 5 of the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999

(1) Subject to paragraph (2), any person who proposes to install a water fitting in connection with any of the operations listed in the Table below

- a) shall give notice to the water undertaker that he proposes to begin work;
- b) shall not begin that work without the consent of that undertaker which shall not be withheld unreasonably; and
- c) shall comply with any conditions to which the undertaker's consent is subject.

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 overflow, of more than 230 litres;
  - b) a bidet with an ascending spray or flexible hose;
  - c) a single shower unit (which may consist of one or more shower heads within a single unit), not being a drench shower installed for reasons of safety or health, connected directly or indirectly to a supply pipe which is of a type specified by the regulator;
  - 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 waste water discharge or which requires the use of water for regeneration or cleaning;
  - g) a reduced pressure zone 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; or
  - i) any water system laid outside a building and either less than 750mm or more than 1350mm below ground level
5. The construction of a pond or swimming pool with a capacity greater than 10,000 litres which is designed to be replenished by automatic means and is to be filled with water supplied by a water undertaker.

## Section 5 of the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999

2) This regulation does not apply to the installation by an approved contractor of a water fitting falling within paragraph 2, 4(b) or 4(g) in the Table.

3) The notice required by paragraph (1) shall include or be accompanied by –

a) the name and address of the person giving the notice and (if different) the name and address of the person on whom notice may be served under paragraph (4) below;

b) a description of the proposed work or material change of use, and

c) particulars of the location of the premises to which the proposal relates, and the use or intended use of those premises;

d) except in the case of a fitting falling within paragraph 1(d)(iii)-(v) or 1(e) above –

i. a plan of those parts of the premises to which the proposal relates, and

ii. a diagram showing the pipework and fitting to be installed, and

e) where the work is to be carried out by an approved contractor, the name of the contractor.

4) The water undertaker may withhold consent required under paragraph (1), or grant it subject to conditions, by a notice given before the expiry of the period of ten working days commencing with the day on which notice under that paragraph was given.

5) If no notice is given by the water undertaker within the period mentioned in paragraph (4), the consent required under paragraph (1) shall be deemed to have been granted unconditionally.

### Contractors Certificate

6) (1) Where a water fitting is installed, altered, connected or disconnected by an approved contractor, the contractor shall upon completion of the work furnish a signed certificate stating whether the water fitting complies with the requirements of these Regulations to the person who commissioned the work.

(2) In case of a fitting for which notice is required under Regulation 5 (1) above, the contractor shall send a copy of the certificate to the water undertaker.

## **Developer Interface Team**

telephone 0117 934 1224

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

## **Bristol Wessex Billing Services Ltd (BWBSL)**

post BWBSL  
1 Clevedon Walk  
Nailsea  
Bristol  
BS48 1WA

telephone 0345 600 3600

## **Customer Services**

telephone 0345 702 3797

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

## **New Supplies Team**

post New Supplies Team  
Bristol Water plc  
Bridgwater Road  
Bristol  
BS13 7AT

telephone 0345 602 8022

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

## **Water Regulations**

telephone 0117 963 8516.

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

