

You can write to us at:

Scottish Water

PO Box 8855

Edinburgh, EH10 6YQ

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 will need special assistance from Scottish Water then please contact us and we can add your name, address and special requirements to our confidential Additional Support Register.

We record all calls for quality and training purposes.



your pipework
responsibilities

For more information on Scottish Water and our services call our Customer Helpline on **0845 601 8855** or visit our website at:

www.scottishwater.co.uk



**Scottish
Water**

Always serving Scotland

who's responsible for what?

At Scottish Water we provide water and waste water services to over 2.4 million households across Scotland. Our large network of pipes and sewers is enough to run twice around the globe. We work hard to provide all our customers with quality tap water, 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year.

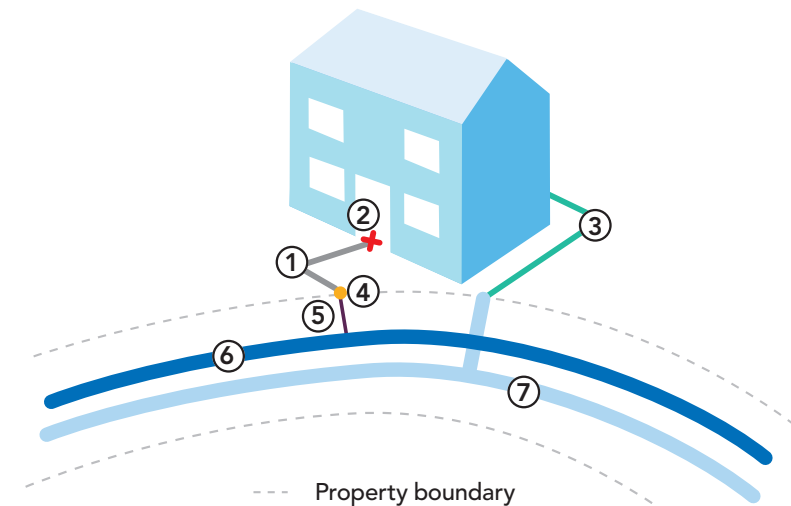
But did you know that our responsibility for water and waste water pipework usually stops at your property boundary? Our customers have been asking for help in understanding who owns and is responsible for the water and waste water pipes in and around their property. This is useful to know if you experience a burst with a pipe.



Our example below shows the typical pipework found in an average property that will apply to most of our customers. The quick reference table will help you identify exactly what you are responsible for.

To help you understand more about pipework in and around your home we've included many frequently asked questions over the page, as well as examples of things that can happen.

this shows a typical property



Water and waste pipes		Water and waste pipes	
①	— The water supply pipe		Homeowner
②	✘ Stop valve		Homeowner
③	— Private drain		Homeowner
④	● Stopcock/meter		Scottish Water
⑤	— The communication pipe		Scottish Water
⑥	— The water main		Scottish Water
⑦	— Sewer		Scottish Water

your questions answered

1. What is a water supply pipe and who owns it?

For most of our customers the water supply pipe is the pipe that runs from the edge of your property boundary and continues to the stop valve inside your home. A property can have an individual supply pipe or a common supply pipe (one pipe feeding more than one property). You will often find that flats and older or terraced houses are more than likely to have their water supplied by a common supply pipe. The owner or occupier of the property is responsible for the maintenance of the water supply pipe. If you are on a common supply pipe you are jointly responsible, along with your neighbours. You are also responsible for the installation and maintenance of all plumbing inside your home.

2. What is a water communication pipe and who owns it?

The water communication pipe starts at its connection with our water main and usually ends at the property boundary between your premises and the pavement. This is where you will normally find Scottish Water's stopcock. If you have a water meter, this will usually be at the same location. In some cases, this stopcock may be found within, but close to, the boundary of your property. In any event, we own the water communication pipe and it is our responsibility to maintain it.

3. What is a stopcock and a water meter and who owns them?

A stopcock is usually found at the end of the communication pipe. The stopcock is where we would access your water supply to carry out any necessary work or checks. If you have a water meter, it is usually located at this point, and the meter is used to measure the amount of water entering your property. We are responsible for the maintenance and repair of both the stopcock and the water meter.

4. What is a water main and who owns it?

The water main is the main public water pipe into the local area. We are responsible for the maintenance and repair of the public water main.

5. What is the stop valve and who owns it?

The stop valve controls your water supply into your property. It is located within the boundary of your property and normally inside the building. The stop valve allows you to switch off your water supply within your property if you are doing plumbing work or if your pipe bursts. The location of the stop valve will vary but the most common locations are under a sink (kitchen or utility room), in a garage or close to the hot water system (wherever the mains supply enters your house). In some older properties, the stop valve may be outside the building. The stop valve is your responsibility.

6. What is the private drain and who owns it?

The private drain is the pipe that removes the waste water from your property (for example, from your toilet and sinks). It runs from your property up to your property boundary where it meets and connects to the main public sewer. The private drain is the responsibility of the homeowner.

7. What is a sewer and who owns it?

The waste water from your property passes down your private drain and into the main public sewer. From there, our vast network of sewers transports the waste water to our waste water treatment works. We are responsible for the provision, operation and maintenance of the public sewer network.



here are a few examples of things that could happen

- **overflows**

A continuous flow of water in your toilet pan, or a running overflow at the exterior wall of the building, means that you are likely to have a faulty ball valve inside your storage cistern or WC. This problem can be easily fixed by repairing or replacing the ball valve. A licensed plumber* will be able to help with this repair. If this is left unattended it not only wastes water but could cause damage to your building and its foundations. This also has the potential to become a nuisance to your neighbours and can be a danger to pedestrians and traffic if the water freezes.

- **airlocks**

Airlocks can occur when a pocket of air collects in a water pipe after an interruption to the water supply. Sub-standard plumbing within your home may also cause airlocks. If this does happen we would strongly advise that you contact a licensed plumber* to inspect your pipe work to help prevent this happening again. If we have been working in your area and have turned off your water supply, call our Customer Helpline on **0845 601 8855** and we can attend and attempt to clear the airlock.

- **combination boilers**

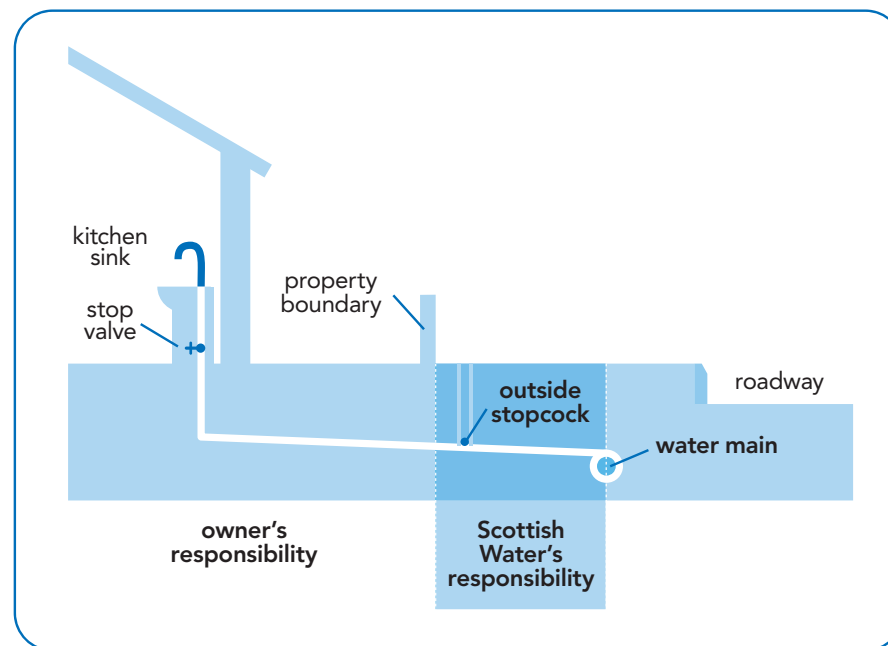
Combination boilers are a convenient way of providing heating and hot water but should only be fitted to properties that have adequate flow and pressure to operate this style of system. If you are considering the installation of a combination boiler you should ask your licensed plumber*, or the installer, to check the flow and pressure inside the house at the cold water kitchen tap. To minimise the cost of service to our customers, we manage pressure within the water mains network, providing a pressure of about 2 / 2.5 bar in most cases. However, our guaranteed minimum service standard is 1.0 bar. Homes with lower water pressure may not be suitable for combination boilers due to the elevation of the property and/or condition of the private supply pipe.

- **water supply pipe bursts**

If you experience a burst, you will need to locate your stop valve and turn it off. As question 5 explains, this can normally be found under a sink (kitchen or utility room), in a garage or close to the hot water system (wherever the mains supply enters your house). If you do not know where the burst is, please call our Customer Helpline on **0845 601 8855** and we will do all we can to help you locate the leak.

the location of your stop valve

typical water supply arrangement



Now that you know where to find your stop valve, why not contact us to get one of our **free quick reminder stickers** which you can write the name and number of your local licensed plumber* on, so you've got it handy for an emergency.

Write to Customer Marketing, Free Stop Valve Sticker Promotion, PO Box 8855, Edinburgh, EH10 6YQ; or e-mail customermarketing@scottishwater.co.uk giving us your name and full address (we can only send one sticker per household. This is only available in Scotland).

*licensed plumbers

We would always recommend the use of licensed plumbers. Scottish Water supports and promotes the Scottish and Northern Ireland Plumbers Employers Federation (SNIPEF). To find a licensed plumber in your area visit www.needaplumber.org or call SNIPEF on **0845 224 0391** who will be able to recommend a plumber. Office opening hours are Monday – Thursday 8.30am to 5pm and Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm. For out of office hours, please visit the website or refer to your telephone directory.