Yorkshire Water Household Customer Supply Pipe Policy

1. Introduction

A leak on a private water supply pipe refers to:

1. a leak on the water pipe that runs from the property boundary to the property, up to the internal stop tap; and/or
2. a leak on the water pipe under a highway/public footpath fed from a Yorkshire Water main laid in a neighbouring street.

Fixing a leak on the private water supply pipe is crucial to prevent water waste and avoid potential damage to the property and consumer health. Leaks can also lead to mould growth and structural problems, impacting the home's integrity and air quality.

Here's a more detailed look at why fixing leaks is important:

Preventing Water Waste and High Bills:

Leaking pipes waste a significant amount of water, which will lead to higher water bills, if the consumer has a water meter.

Some studies estimate that 10% of homes have leaks, resulting in substantial water wastage.

Avoiding Property Damage:

Leaks can cause damage to walls, floors, and even the foundation of properties.

Moisture from leaks can lead to wood rot, mould growth, and weakening of structural components.

In severe cases, leaks can even cause electrical damage.

Protecting Your Health:

Mould growth, which can result from leaks, is a common allergen and can trigger asthma and respiratory problems.

Leaks can also increase the risk of asbestos exposure in older homes.

Preserving Water Resources:

Fixing leaks contributes to water conservation, which is especially important given climate change and population growth.

2. Responsibility

Under section 75 of the Water Industry Act 1991 (“the Act”), where Yorkshire Water provides a supply of water to a property, it can serve a notice (“a Section 75 Notice”) on the consumer of that supply to take steps to repair a leaking supply pipe.

“Consumer” is defined in the Act as follows:

> *“In relation to a supply of water provided by a water undertaker to any premises, means a person who is for the time being the person on whom liability to pay charges to the undertaker in respect of that supply of water would fall.”*

Accordingly, the consumer is responsible for repairing any supply pipe leak (including fittings) in a timely manner, at their own cost.

Put simply, the person who pays the water bill for the property is responsible for the repair and maintenance of the supply pipe.

3. Customer Supply Pipe Policy

When a leaking supply pipe is identified by Yorkshire Water or a consumer, it is the responsibility of the consumer to fix the leak. However, Yorkshire Water will offer support and guidance to the consumer on how to do this.

We will offer a range of options that will support the consumer in getting their supply pipe leak fixed.

Where the consumer does not engage with Yorkshire Water or is not taking steps to fix the leak, we may enforce a Section 75 Notice. This will allow the consumer no less than 7 days to repair the leak through the range of consumer support options available.

If the leak is not resolved by the consumer within the prescribed timeframe, Yorkshire Water may undertake the repair, and all reasonable costs incurred in doing so may be recharged to the consumer.

Note: Where a supply pipe leak on a property constitutes an emergency, Yorkshire Water has the power to disconnect or cut off the water supply.

Note: This policy applies to both internal and external leaks within the property boundary

4. How We Can Support Consumers To Fix Their Leak

Our dedicated team are here to support everyone in resolving their supply pipe leak. Once a leak is identified, our specialist advisors will be able to offer advice and guidance and direct consumers to different external resources that offer services to fix private supply leaks.

If you need additional assistance such as alternative communication methods, a nominated person that you want us to deal with for you, or additional support in understanding this policy, or accessing relevant repair services, please let the team know and we will make any necessary adjustments needed.

Some consumers may have other vulnerabilities due to age, disability, physical or mental health conditions, cognitive impairment, safeguarding concerns, life events, or other circumstances that make arranging and managing repairs difficult. In these situations, Yorkshire Water are committed to taking vulnerability and individual circumstances into account when determining what support may be appropriate.

5. Customer Supply Pipe Policy Exceptions and Exclusions

5.1 Exceptions

Consumers in receipt of specific income related benefits, or on one of our support tariffs, will qualify for additional assistance in resolving their leak which may include, but is not limited to, leak detection, repair, or additional financial assistance to repair their leak.

Once a leak is identified, our dedicated team will discuss the consumer's individual circumstances with them and identify what, if any, additional support may be available.

This service is for household properties only that receive a domestic bill from Yorkshire Water for water services i.e., water used for drinking, washing, cooking, central heating, and sanitary purposes.

This service only applies to the supply pipe, which is the underground pipework, including fittings, from the boundary of the street, up to the first point of entry into the property, i.e., pipework laid in private land (see the Whose pipe is it? leaflet, on the Yorkshire Water website).

Where the consumer is a tenant, the property owner or occupier on behalf of the property owner must sign a Form 3, authorising Yorkshire Water to carry out the supply pipe investigation. The occupier must advise the landlord of the investigation prior to the work taking place.

Yorkshire Water shall prioritise the repair based on the impact and severity of the leak, as it is not intended as an emergency service.

This service is offered by Yorkshire Water on a case-by-case basis and is subject to exclusions in section 5.2.

Yorkshire Water reserve the right to withdraw the service at any time.

5.2 Exclusions

Further to the additional support offered in section 5.1, the following exclusions apply:

Household Properties with Internal Leaks

Where Yorkshire Water identifies the leak is within the property, or at point of entry to the property, or within the cavity wall.

Note: Where an internal leak within a property constitutes an emergency, Yorkshire Water reserves the right to disconnect or cut off the water supply under Section 75 of the Act. The supply shall not be reconnected until the relevant steps in the Section 75 Notice have been undertaken.

'New Build' Household Properties

Properties less than 2 years old.

Third Party Damage of Supply Pipe

Where Yorkshire Water identifies the leak has been caused by accidental damage by a consumer or third party.

6. Reinstatements

Where Yorkshire Water is to undertake a repair for a consumer, we will carry out any excavations as needed. We will refill and reinstate, leaving the site in a safe and tidy condition.

Yorkshire Water do not guarantee the reinstatement will look the same as the original surface. Specialist reinstatement work is not covered under this offer and remains the homeowner's responsibility.

7. Allowances

For consumers who are billed through a meter, if they have fixed their leak within a reasonable time frame, they may qualify for an allowance to cover the additional water usage arising from the leak. Once the leak is fixed, Yorkshire Water's dedicated billing team will review the case and advise consumers on the next steps for any allowances as appropriate.

Definitions of Terms Used:

Yorkshire Water	Yorkshire Water is used in this document to refer to Yorkshire Water Services Limited and all other subsidiary companies within Kelda Holdings.
Consumer	"In relation to a supply of water provided by a water undertaker to any premises, means a person who is for the time being the person on whom liability to pay charges to the undertaker in respect of that supply of water would fall."