

# Whose pipe is it?

Your guide to pipework responsibilities.



YorkshireWater

**If there's a problem with your water supply or drains, do you know who's responsible for fixing them? And what if you share a pipe with your neighbours, then who's responsible? This handy guide will help with any queries.**

On the back cover of this leaflet you'll find all the ways you can get in touch with us, along with a full list of other free customer guides about all the services we offer.

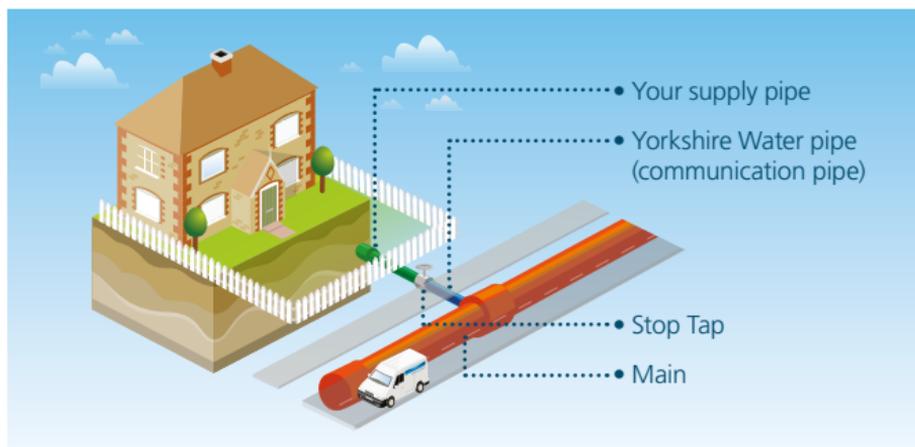
# Water Pipes

## Is Yorkshire Water responsible for my pipes?

We're normally responsible for all the pipes leading to the boundary of the street where our water main is laid. This includes:

- Water mains.
- Stop taps in the road or pavement.
- Pipework between the mains and the boundary of the street, known as the communication pipe.

You can view our network of pipes on a map, for free, at our head office at Western House, Halifax Road, Bradford, BD6 2SZ.



## So what pipes am I responsible for?

You're normally responsible for all the pipes taking water from the boundary of the street to your home. This includes:

- Pipework between the boundary of the street and your home, known as the supply pipe.
- Stop taps on your property, either inside or outside.
- All the plumbing in your home.

## What if I share pipes with my neighbours?

In some older properties, you may share a supply pipe with your neighbours. If so, you're both responsible for maintaining and repairing it.

If you're not sure whether you share, we can find out for you. One sign may be if you experience low pressure or flow from your taps when your neighbours use the supply.

## My supply pipe runs through another private property, who's responsible?

Most likely, it's you. So if any plumbing work needs to be carried out at your home, it's down to you.

Sometimes, we may insist on separate water supplies being installed. For example, if you're planning to re-develop your property into flats, we'll normally require that you provide a separate metered water supply to each.

If you don't agree with this, you have the right to raise it with the industry regulator Ofwat at [ofwat.gov.uk](https://www.ofwat.gov.uk)

### Did you know?

Many older homes may be earthed by a metal water supply pipe. Since 1966, electrical wiring regulations have prevented this, but you'll need to check.

If your checking we would recommend getting hold of a qualified electrician to ensure that you have the right earthing arrangements. Yorkshire Water is not responsible for this.

## Who's responsible for repairs?

We're responsible for our water pipes (in the road, footpath and up to your home's boundary) and for repairing leaks.

If there's a leak in the street or near your home, please call our 24-hour freephone Leakline on **0800 57 35 53**.

## What about the meter?

The meter and its connections belong to us, and we'll take care of any repairs or replacements we'll take care of any repairs or replacements at our cost.

More details can be found in our Code of Practice for water meters titled 'Would a water meter be right for you?'

## Am I responsible if my pipes leak?

Yes, for repairing leaking pipes between the boundary of the street and your home, as well as faulty plumbing in your home.

However, you may be eligible for a free repair. Please visit our website for more information at [yorkshirewater.com/policies](https://www.yorkshirewater.com/policies)

If you've got a water meter and suspect there's a leak, you can check by:

- Turning off all taps inside and making sure that no water is going into cisterns or storage tanks.
- Then read the meter.
- Leave the water turned off between 15 and 60 minutes.
- Read the meter again.
- If the second reading is higher than the first, you may have a leak.

For help and assistance go to [yorkshirewater.com/leakcheck](https://yorkshirewater.com/leakcheck) or get in touch via any of the ways listed on the back cover.

## My supply pipe is old

If your home has an old metal supply pipe, you're more at risk of a burst pipe. Because modern supply pipes are made of durable plastic, we'd recommend you consider replacing it.

## Can I prevent leaks?

During cold, frosty weather, your pipes inside and out are at greatest risk, especially if they're not properly protected.

But there are things you can do:

- Check that all pipes, cisterns and tanks in unheated areas like lofts and cellars are well insulated - use waterproof foam lagging or insulated tape.
- Keep your heating on low during cold spells – set your timer to constant and use your thermostat to maintain warmth.
- Make sure you know where your stop tap is just in case there's a burst pipe.
- If you're going away, ask your neighbours to pop round to check that your pipes haven't frozen or burst.

For further advice visit [yorkshirewater.com/frost](https://yorkshirewater.com/frost)

## Are there regulations that my pipes must meet?

Yes. Your pipework and plumbing must comply with the 1999 Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations. We can't connect you to our pipework if your home doesn't comply. The government requires us to do so and we may have to enforce these regulations.

## What about lead pipes?

None of our mains are made of lead, but some older homes may have lead plumbing and pipes leading from our mains. If this worries you, we can test your water supply.

We'll replace any communication pipes for free. However, we'll need written request from you to confirm that you're also prepared to replace your lead supply pipe.

Just so you know, we're currently replacing hundreds of lead pipes with modern plastic ones.

Some grants are available for renovation and replacement. Please contact your Local Authority to check.

## What do lead pipes look like?

Look behind your kitchen cupboards for the pipe to your kitchen tap. Lead pipes are dull grey and they're soft. If you gently scrape the surface of the pipe, you will see the shiny, silver-coloured metal beneath.

If you're worried, we can take a sample of your water to check the lead content.

### Need more info?

If you have any questions about pipework responsibilities, leakage or water supply regulations, get in touch via any of the ways listed on the back cover.

# Waste Water Pipes

## Who's responsible for my waste water pipes?

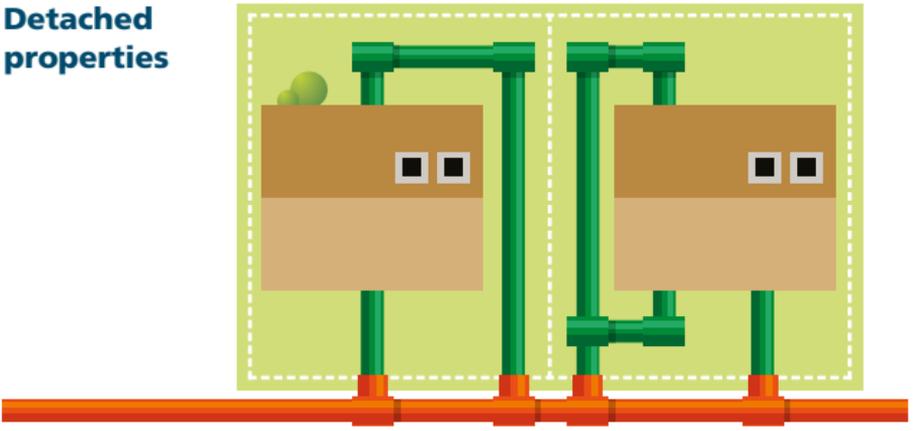
We own and maintain many miles of underground public sewers (drains). They're displayed on public sewer maps, which you can view free at our head office at Western House, Halifax Road, Bradford, or your Local Authority office.

## What types of drainage pipes are there?

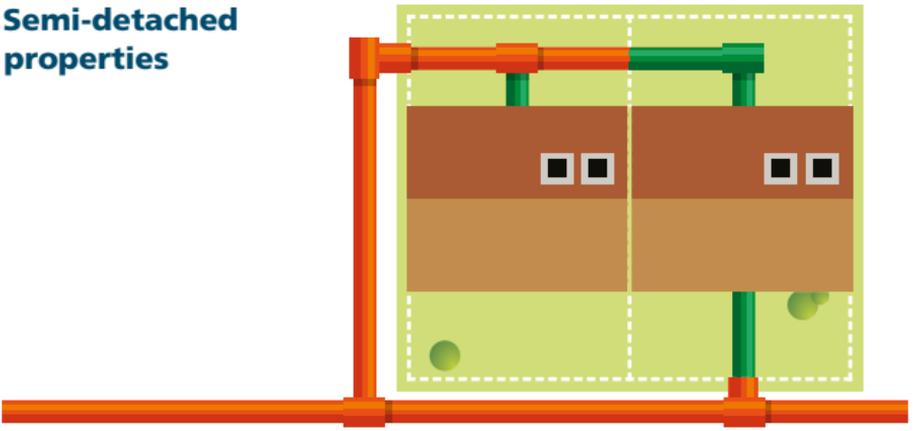
There are two:

- Private drains serving just one home and located within its boundary. Occasionally, there may be private sewers within the boundary too.
- Public drains sit outside the home's boundary or serve more than one home. They can be in private land, footpaths, public roads, gardens or public open spaces.

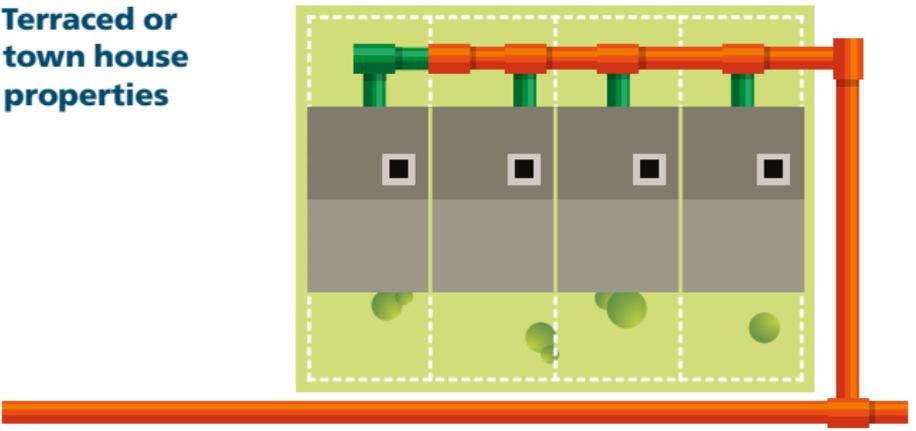
**Detached properties**



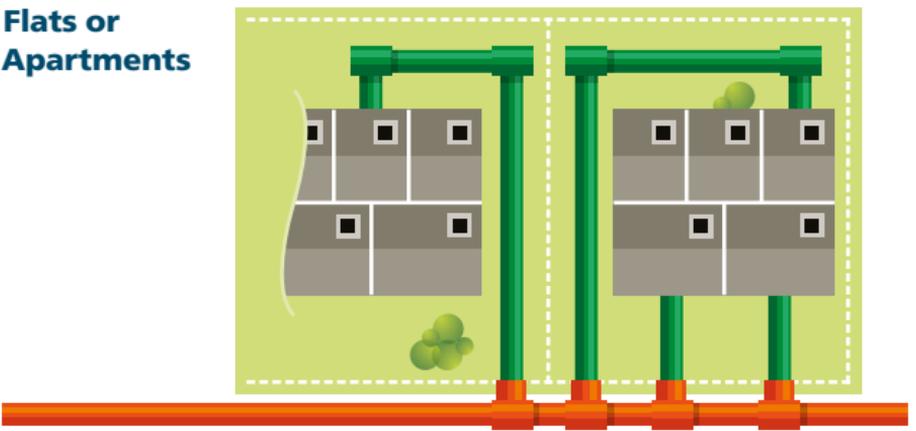
**Semi-detached properties**



**Terraced or town house properties**



**Flats or Apartments**



Property owner's responsibility



Yorkshire Water's responsibility

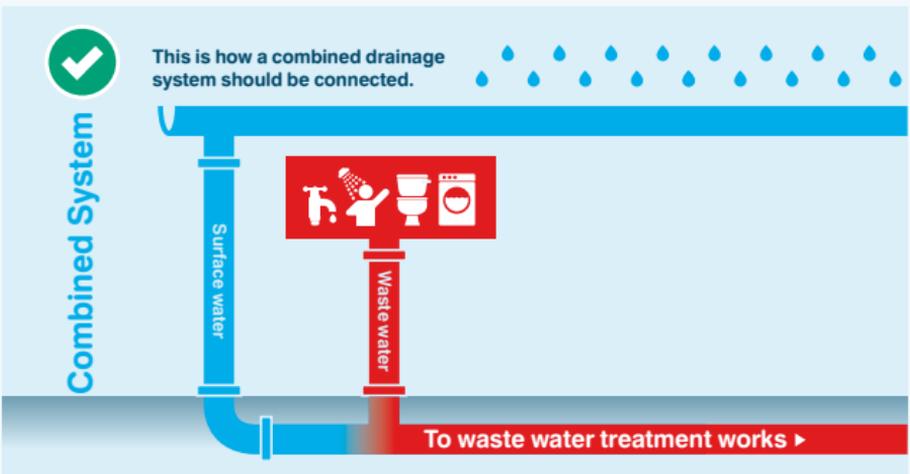


Property boundary

# What can go into my pipes?

## There are two types of drainage networks:

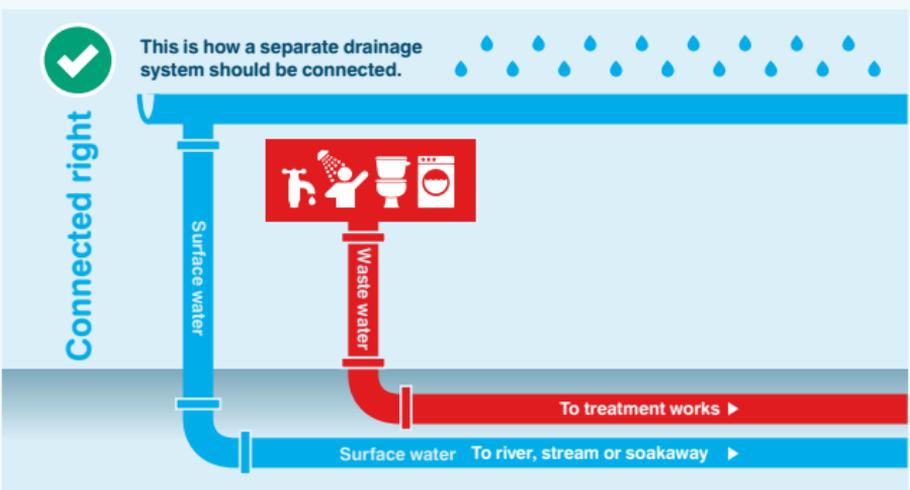
**1. Combined drainage** is where both rainwater and waste water drain into the same pipe (a combined sewer). The combined rain and waste water is taken to the waste water treatment works where the waste water is cleaned so that it can be safely returned to a river or the sea.



**2. Separate drainage** is where there are two independent sets of pipe networks that drain from a property:

**A foul water system** that collects only waste water from your toilet, bath, shower, washing machine and dishwasher. The foul water pipes (foul sewer) take this waste water to the waste water treatment works where it's cleaned so that it can be safely returned to a river or the sea.

**A surface water system** which only collects rainwater from your roof and hard standing surfaces (such as roads and pavements). The surface water pipes (surface water sewer) take the rainwater directly into a river, stream or soakaway.





## Am I responsible for my drains?

You're responsible for the cost of repairs to drains serving your own home, up to where they connect with a public sewer, stream, river or other means of disposal such as a soakaway or septic tank.

Where a drain leaves your home's boundary it's our responsibility.

Shared drains serving more than one home (sewer) are usually also our responsibility, even if they are located within a home's boundary.

If you're unsure about who is responsible, please get in touch via any of the ways listed on the back cover.

## What if I'm a tenant?

If you rent, the landlord is normally responsible for repairs or maintenance. It's best to check this with your landlord. If your landlord refuses to take responsibility, your local environmental health department may be able to help.

For more info about our waste water and sewerage have a flick through our customer guide "Where does your water go?".

## Can Yorkshire Water gain access to my land?

We have legal access to your land to lay, inspect, repair or maintain pipework, but, of course, we'll try to minimise disruption. We have a separate guide explaining our procedure for entry onto private land.

We may also gain access to your home if you've breached water regulations, or for commercial or mixed-use properties to carry out routine water regulation inspections.

Occasionally, we may also need to obtain tap samples to test water quality. Of course, we'll do our utmost not to inconvenience you.

If you do have a problem about us laying pipes on private land, please contact Ofwat, the industry regulator.

# Watch out for bogus callers

**Bogus callers may try to trick you by saying there's an urgent problem with your water.**

Prevent this by setting up a security password, so you can confirm the identity of anyone claiming to be from Yorkshire Water.

To register, please call **0800 1 38 78 78**.

For your own safety, always ask for proof of identification. Yorkshire Water employees all carry identity cards displaying the holder's photograph – just call the number above to check whether a caller is genuine.



A close-up photograph of a hand holding a white water filter pitcher. The pitcher's lid is open, and a stream of clear water is being poured from a chrome faucet into the pitcher's reservoir. The background is softly blurred, showing a yellow object, possibly a lemon, on a surface.

## **What if someone else provides my water or waste water?**

In some places in Yorkshire, the boundaries for water and sewerage services may differ. Indeed, you may find that the people who provide your water and sewerage services are different. It's best to check with the company who sends you the bill (this will always be your service provider).

## Free ways to contact us:



**Chat with us live on our website**



**Free callback service via our website**

No waiting around on hold, fill out a simple form and one of our advisors will call you back as soon as possible.



**Visit our website [yorkshirewater.com](http://yorkshirewater.com)**



**Tweet us @YWHelp**



**Contact us on Facebook**

## Other ways to contact us:

Telephone

**0345 1 24 24 24**

Our contact centre is open for billing enquiries Monday to Friday 8am-8pm and Saturday 9am-5pm. For water and sewerage enquiries we're open Monday to Saturday 6.30am-10pm and Sunday 7.30am-10pm. We're open 24 hours a day for emergency calls.

24 Hour automated services

**0345 1 247 247**

(meter readings and payments)

Write to us

**PO Box 52, Bradford, BD3 7YD**

## Codes of Practice available:

- Our Customer Charter
- What if you need some extra help?
- What do we charge and why?
- Tell us what you think
- What if paying your bill is a problem?
- How do we manage your water supply?
- What happens if you've got a leak?
- Whose pipe is it?
- Where does your water go?
- Would a water meter be right for you?

Our Customer Charter details our service commitments, including the payments you're entitled to if we don't meet our promises.

**Visit [yorkshirewater.com/policies](http://yorkshirewater.com/policies) for details**