

How do we manage your water supply?

Your guide to our
water supply services.



YorkshireWater

Where does our water come from? How much do we supply each day? How do we make sure it's clean and safe?

This handy leaflet explains everything, including which regulations we have to follow, who monitors how we perform and what to do if there's a problem.

There are 3 main bodies that regulate and monitor:

- Office of Water Services (Ofwat)
- Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI)
- Environment Agency (EA)

Our water-supply services are regulated by Ofwat, the water-industry regulator, by the Environment Agency (EA) which works to protect and improve the environment and by the Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI), which ensures that drinking water is of the highest quality.

We operate under a licence granted by the Secretary of State for the Environment.

In addition, the Consumer Council for Water (CCWater), is an independent body set up to represent consumer interests.

Contact details for all of the above are at the back of this leaflet.

Regulations we must follow

We're required to enforce and comply with the following regulations in order to protect your interests:

The Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999 are national requirements for the design, materials, installation and maintenance of plumbing systems. Their purpose is to prevent waste, misuse, undue consumption and above all, prevent the contamination of water supplies.

The Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI) monitors the water we supply to ensure it's safe to drink and meets the standards set in the Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations 2016. They monitor us and advise the government on our performance on all aspects of drinking water quality. They carry out inspections to be sure that the results are reliable and give a true picture of the quality of the water supplied.

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.

Serving Yorkshire

We're a pretty large region and supply over two-million homes in the area, from Whitby in the far north east to Sheffield in the south.

Our duty is to manage our water resources properly so that everyone has sufficient water and that it is safe to drink.

We continue to invest in pipes, pumping stations and leakage control to further improve our water supplies.

Where does the water come from?

Half of the water we supply comes from reservoirs, and the rest from rivers and boreholes. We use a network of large pipes across the region to transport water to where it's needed.

How much water do we supply each day?

Around 1.3 billion litres of water per day from hundreds of water sources, treated at over 50 water treatment works to ensure high-quality drinking water. We then get it to you via 31,000 km of water mains and 342 covered service reservoirs and water towers. So as you can see, it's an extremely large operation!

How clean and safe is the water?

All water we supply for domestic purposes, such as drinking, washing, cooking, central heating and cleaning, meets the Government's high standards. To make sure, we take thousands of samples for testing. The Drinking Water Inspectorate then independently assesses the results and issues a report on its findings, visit their website for more information.

Your water quality

Does it change?

The taste, odour and appearance of your water depend on its source and may vary at different times of the year.

Tap in your postcode on our website to see where your water comes from and how hard or soft it is – particularly useful if you're buying a new dishwasher or choosing tea bags!

Some sections of our pipework include cast iron pipes which can, over time, corrode and give the water an orange-brown discolouration. This isn't harmful, but if it happens, run the tap for a few minutes to allow the supply to clear. If this doesn't help, please contact us and we'll investigate.

Where to find details of your water quality

If you'd like written details of the water quality in your area we'll get back to you within ten working days.

You can also find out about it on our website yorkshirewater.com/drinking-water, just type in your postcode.

If you wish to read the annual Drinking Water Quality Report for your area and our leaflets 'Your Water Quality' and Drinking Water Quality – A Guide for Customers', they can be found on our website.



What if my home has lead pipes?

Although none of our mains are made of lead, many older homes still have lead plumbing and pipework leading from our mains which may cause traces of lead to be found in the water. If you're worried about this, we can test a sample for you.

We'll replace any lead pipes from the water main to the stop tap at the boundary of your home free of charge (we call it the communication pipe). However, we'll need written confirmation from you that you're also prepared to replace your lead supply pipe (the pipe that runs from the boundary of the house to the point of entry into your home).

We're currently replacing hundreds of lead pipes with plastic ones to ensure we continue to meet water quality regulations.

Grants for renovation and replacement of lead pipework may be available, so check with your Local Authority before you start work.

For more information on pipework responsibility, please visit yorkshirewater.com/policies

What if there's a water quality problem?

If we do find a problem that might affect your health, we'll advise everyone in the affected area what to do. This may mean boiling water before use, or in exceptional cases, not using it until we've carried out further tests.

We'll send out a letter with this advice to each affected home. If you require an alternative method of contact then please register your needs at yorkshirewater.com/priorityservices.

Worried about your drinking water?

If you're concerned about your drinking water, please contact us so we can investigate. We may take samples for analysis and let you know the results.

If you complain of illness and think it may be related to your water, we'll contact you within 2 hours and we'll try to take a sample that same day. We'll let you know the initial results within 24 hours and the full results within 20 working days.

Water pressure and flow

Your water pressure depends on our pumping arrangements, the demand for water and the difference in height between our supply source and your home. The flow of water is the rate at which it comes out of the tap.

It's also affected by the size and condition of the pipes to your home, whether you're on a shared supply pipe, and the number of water appliances you use at the same time.

How water pressure is controlled

The pressure standard required by the Water Supply and Sewerage Services Regulations 2008 is '7 metres head' in the communication pipe serving any home. This is the pipe that connects your supply pipe to our water main.

This should be sufficient pressure for water to rise and reach a storage tank in your roofspace.

We normally supply water to reach the top storey of every building. Occasionally we can't – when there's particularly high demand and your home is too close to the level of the service reservoir. In this case, you'll need to install a storage tank capable of storing enough water to last 24 hours.

How is water flow controlled?

We try to maintain a water flow to your home of at least 22 litres per minute (4.9 gallons per minute), if the supply serves a single property.

This is measured at the boundary of the street where the main is. If the supply pipe serves more than one house, we'll maintain a greater flow, in line with water industry guidelines.

Unhappy with your water flow or pressure?

If the flow of water from the downstairs tap is less than 12 litres per minute, we'll investigate and carry out any work needed on our pipework for free. We'll also offer advice about any work needed on your supply pipe. Homeowners (or your landlord) will be responsible for repairing or replacing it.

Get in touch via any of the ways listed on the back cover and we'll arrange to visit your home to investigate.

Working on our water network

Access to your home

If we're carrying out repairs or maintenance work, we may need access to your home. Sometimes, we'll need to take tap samples to test water quality.

We have a legal right to access your home in certain circumstances, but we always explain in detail why we need access. We'll try to keep the inconvenience to a minimum.

Be wary of bogus callers saying that there's an urgent problem with your water. You can set up a free security password to confirm the identity of anyone coming round and claiming to be from Yorkshire Water. To register, please call us on **0800 1 38 78 78** and for your own safety, always ask for proof of identification.

Our employees and partners working on our behalf all carry identity cards displaying their photograph, so if you're not sure, contact us to check whether a caller is genuine.

What if it's an emergency?

In this case, we're not legally required to give you notice. If it's not an emergency, we'll give you notice.

How much notice?

This will depend on what work we need to do.

We've a separate guide about pipe laying on private land which also covers carrying out repair and maintenance works on our pipes located on private land.

For a free copy, please contact us or visit yorkshirewater.com/partner

Interrupting your water supply

Sometimes we'll need to carry out work which can affect your water supply.

If the work is planned, we'll give you at least 48 hours written notice of work which may interrupt your water supply for more than 4 hours. And at least 24 hours written notice of interruptions lasting between 30 minutes and 4 hours. We'll restore your water supply by the time given in the notice.

If the work is unplanned, we may not be able to give you advanced notice, for example, a burst water main. Of course, we'll aim to restore your water supply as soon as possible.

If the work takes place at night, we don't give you advanced notice of night leakage checks, provided they last less than four hours, as they're not likely to affect you.

If the interruption is likely to last more than 5 hours, we'll provide an alternative supply of water, usually in bottles or tankers in the street, and take reasonable steps to inform you of their location.

Visit yorkshirewater.com for the latest updates on any incidents which may be affecting your water supply.

If you need water for medical reasons or need informing of an interruption via a different method, you may benefit from our priority services. Please visit yorkshirewater.com/priorityservices for further information.

You can also refer to our Customer Charter for our promises and guarantees relating to interruptions.

Problem with your water supply?

Please get in touch via any of the ways listed on the back cover and we'll try to solve it as soon as possible.

In certain circumstances we'll pay compensation in respect of water quality problems, pressure problems and supply interruptions, as well as in times of water shortages and for general inconvenience. For more information see our Customer Charter.

Taking water from the environment

We hold licences from the Environment Agency (EA) to take water from rivers, reservoirs and boreholes.

If you have a query about this, contact the EA. Please see the back of this booklet for contact details.



Conserving water

As part of our water resources management plan, we have introduced many initiatives to encourage our customers to help save water:

- We offer a free water meter installation to customers who don't have a meter and choose to have one installed. Once installed, you have two years to trial the meter. To find out more look on our website here yorkshirewater.com/savewater
- We do all we can to reduce leaks, and you can help by calling our free Leakline on 0800 57 35 53, if you notice a water leak.
- We offer free supply pipe repairs, subject to certain terms and conditions.
- We promote the use of water-efficient appliances and practices in the home and garden.
- We encourage water recycling and minimise waste through things like low-cost water butts and free water saving packs.

Visit our website at yorkshirewater.com/savewater for more information or for a free water saving pack.



What if there's a water shortage?

We may have to ask you to reduce the amount you use.

However, if there's a serious risk of not having adequate water supplies, we may have to take further action.

This may include:

- **Imposing a Temporary Use Ban** on hosepipes or similar equipment for watering gardens and washing cars, across the region or in particular areas. You should hear about this from us, your local newspaper or other media.
- **Applying to the Environment Agency for Drought Permits or to the Secretary of State for the Environment for Drought Orders or Emergency Drought Orders.** This helps restrict water usage even further, eg certain non-domestic or commercial purposes. It also allows us to obtain extra supplies. If we make an application, we'll advertise in the local press so any member of the public can raise a query or object to the proposed order or permit. If this can't be resolved, a local inquiry may be held, and the Environment Agency or the Secretary of State for the Environment will make the final decision.
- **Cutting off supply.** If we have to interrupt or cut off your supply because of a drought, we'll automatically pay you compensation, see our customer charter at yorkshirewater.com/policies for further details.

Remember, it's an offence to ignore a Temporary Use Ban, Drought Order or Emergency Drought Order.

Useful Contact Information

Ofwat

Birmingham office:
Centre City Tower
7 Hill Street
Birmingham
B5 4UA

Telephone: 0121 644 7500
Website: ofwat.gov.uk

Drinking Water Inspectorate

Area 7e
9 Millbank
c/o Nobel House
17 Smith Square
London
SW1P 3JR

Telephone: 0300 068 6400
E-mail: dwi.enquiries@defra.gsi.gov.uk

The Environment Agency

Lateral
8 City Walk
Leeds
LS11 9AT

Telephone: 0370 850 6506
E-mail: enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk
Website: gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency

Consumer Council for Water (CCWater)

1st Floor, Victoria Square House,
Victoria Square,
Birmingham,
B2 4AJ

Telephone: 0300 034 2222
E-mail: enquiries@ccwater.org.uk
Website: www.ccwater.org.uk

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



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 for details