

You have a leak

Advice on how to
find and repair a
leak in your home



Let's find out why you're using lots of water

It looks like you're using a continuous amount of water in your home. This is unusual as water usage in the home normally changes throughout the day. Don't panic! The good news is that it's relatively easy to identify the source of the problem. Read on to find out how.

Before we start, you'll need to locate your water meter so you can take a meter reading.

Where's your meter?

Your meter is located outside your home. It's likely to be under a small circular plastic cover in the footpath (see photo opposite).

You'll need a screwdriver to gently pop off the circular cover, just like you would if it

was a tin of paint! You'll then find the meter inside the chamber.

As part of this test, you'll need to take meter readings. You'll need to record all the digits – both black and white and red and white numbers.

We also have a video on our website which explains how to do this - please visit unitedutilities.com/read-meter

You can normally find your meter under a small plastic cover in the footpath



What your meter looks like

Numbered dials

Circular dial



Your meter will look like the one in the diagram above. It might be tricky to read, a top tip take a torch. First lift the opaque cover. There are two key indicators to identify if a meter is registering consumption:

- The black/white and red/white numbered dials are turning
- The black/white circular dial identified above is turning

How to check for leaks in three easy steps
– and what to do if you find one.

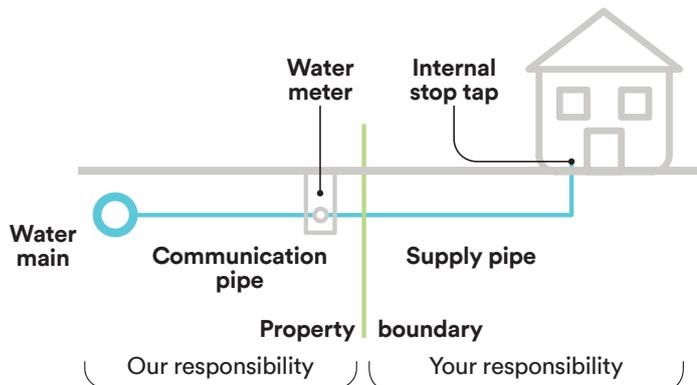
STEP 1: Is the leak outside your home?

Between your water meter and your kitchen sink, there is a pipe that delivers water into your home from our main in the street. As your water use has increased, it could indicate this pipe has a leak – and as it's underground it's difficult to spot. So let's find out if this is the issue...

- **Turn off your internal stop tap. You can normally find this under your kitchen sink, or in a downstairs loo.**
- **Go outside and take a meter reading (see page 2 to see how to do this).**
- **Wait for one hour.**
- **Take another meter reading.**

If there is no difference in the two readings then the leak is somewhere inside your home (go to Step 2).

However, if there is a difference between the two meter readings then it's likely the underground water pipe has a leak.



What help is available?

If you have a leak on your underground water supply pipe, you have a number of options:

Speak to your insurer

Check your home insurance policy to see if you're covered for leaks on your water supply pipe.



Check if you have a separate policy

Have you taken out a separate insurance policy which covers you for leak repairs on your water supply pipe? It's always worth checking if you have one of these policies and whether it covers the cost of replacing any blocked paving or pressed concrete that needs removing to repair the leak.



We can help with a non-urgent repair

If your insurance policy doesn't cover repairs to your water supply pipe, and your leak doesn't need to be repaired urgently, then please call us on **0345 672 3723**. Depending on where the leak is located, we may be able to help with the repair. Visit [unitedutilities.com/bursthorne](https://www.unitedutilities.com/bursthorne) for further details about our 'private leak repair scheme'.



Emergency repairs

If the leak is causing damage and needs repairing urgently you'll need to seek professional help. Visit [watersafe.org.uk](https://www.watersafe.org.uk) to find a plumber in your area.



IMPORTANT: If you live in a rented property it is your landlord's responsibility to find and repair the leak. Please let them know you have a leak and pass this leaflet to them.

STEP 2: Check for leaks inside your home

How to check for internal leaks

- **After completing step 1, turn your internal stop tap back on and check that your water is flowing again**

Have a quick check around your home to see if you can spot obvious signs of leaks or drips. Here's what to look out for:

- ***Toilet cisterns:***

Modern push button toilet cisterns tend to overflow into the toilet bowl rather than traditional cisterns which overflow outside. Therefore, they are not always easy to spot and can waste an incredible amount of water. They are nearly always the main cause of your water usage being so high.

- ***Dripping taps:***

It may look innocent, but a dripping tap can waste thousands of litres of water a year. Don't let your cash disappear down the plughole. If you have an outside tap, don't forget to give that a quick check over too.

- ***Poorly plumbed appliances:***

Have a look behind your dishwasher and washing machine. Any obvious signs of a leak?

- ***Overflows from a water tank or cistern in the loft:***

Have a look to see if any water has been dripping out of your overflow pipes down the brickwork of your home.



Modern push button toilets are normally the main reason why you're using a continuous amount of water as faulty cisterns can waste 400 litres a day! Order a free 'LeakLoo' strip from unitedutilities.com/leakylOO to see if your toilet is the culprit!

STEP 3: Stopping the leak

Most leaks you find in the home can be easily repaired by fitting new washers or cistern devices. If you're unable to locate or repair the leak yourself then this is a job for a qualified plumber. Unfortunately, as the leak is on your home plumbing we're not able to help with this.

If you need a plumber we recommend you visit: watersafe.org.uk.

By entering your postcode, you can search for industry-approved plumbers in your area.

As you have a water meter you're paying for all the water that is leaking in your home so it's in your best interests to get it repaired as quickly as possible as your water bills are likely to reduce.



Remember to check your household insurance policy to see if you are covered for the cost of the repair.

Other leaflets that may be of interest:

This leaflet is one in a series of publications containing useful information for our customers. Others that may be of interest to you are:

- A simple guide to pipes, drains and sewers
- Testing your household water meter
- A guide to paying your water bill
- A guide to our Priority Services
- A guide to using water wisely
- WaterSure application pack
- Our complaints procedure
- Replacing lead and common supply pipes
- Our standards of service

You can download any of our leaflets from our website: unitedutilities.com/leaflets, or write to: **United Utilities, PO Box 459, Warrington WA55 1WB.**

My Account

Register for My Account and you can go online to pay your bill, tell us you've moved, give a meter reading and go paperless.

Visit unitedutilities.com/myaccount



In case you need to contact us:



To talk to us about your bill:
0345 026 7665

Opening hours: 8am - 8pm Mon to Fri;
8am - 4pm Sat

To talk to us about your water and wastewater services:
0345 672 3723

Opening hours: for emergencies we are open 24 hours.

You can also call this number to check the identity of one of our representatives.

If you have hearing or speech difficulties, and use a textphone, please dial **18001** followed by the number you require.



You can go online:

Send a message at unitedutilities.com/email or visit our website and click on 'Live Chat' to webchat with a member of our team.



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