

Roscommon County Council

NON-DOMESTIC METERING

GUIDANCE ON DEALING WITH LEAKS

Water is a precious resource and it is in all our interest to use it as efficiently and wisely as possible. Roscommon County Council is continually working to reduce the level of leakage from our supply network. However, some of the water loss comes from customers' own pipework and as a metered customer you may be paying for water you haven't used. A water leak on your property is a waste of a valuable resource and if left running may damage your property, so it's in everyone interest to prevent and repair leaks as quickly as possible.

Responsibilities for Pipes and Pipework

Who is responsible for pipework?

Roscommon County Council is responsible for looking after the water main and the pipe that runs from the main to the boundary of the property, including the meter box. This is known as the 'communication pipe'.

If you notice a leak from the public water mains, please contact Roscommon County Council, Water Services Section, Time House, Roscommon - Tel (090) 6637165

The property owner is legally responsible for repairing all leaks that occur within the property. The detection and repair of leaks beyond the meter box and on your property are your responsibility.

As a customer you are responsible for any pipework between the meter box at the road boundary (or from the water main if it is not laid in the road) and your building. This is called the 'supply pipe'. You are also responsible for the plumbing inside your buildings. You should regularly check your supply pipe and meter to identify any leaks and repair them immediately. Failure to fix a leak on your property in a timely manner may result in a legal notice under the Water Services Act 2007.

We expect non-domestic customers to monitor their consumption as part of their business practices.

Shared Supply Pipes

Sometimes, properties share a supply pipe. This means that a supply pipe can cross a number of properties, and all (or some) of the properties are connected to it. If there is a leak in a shared supply pipe the occupier (or in some case, if different, the owner) of the property or properties served by that pipe are required to repair the leak.

How to Detect a Leak

Customers are advised to regularly check that their pipework is in good condition as this helps identify any leakage early. You can spot a leak in various ways:

- 1. Your meter is registering flow when no taps/appliances/processes are in use.**
- 2. Your water bill is much higher than you were expecting**
- 3. In the worst cases water may gush from the ground.**
- 4. Sudden loss in water pressure.**
- 5. Plumbing may make a constant noise when no-one is using water.**

Customers are recommended to make regular checks on their meter reading to help detect leaks. If your reading rises for no apparent reason, you may have a leak on your supply. If you regularly use a large volume of water you should read your meter daily.

Agricultural customers should check troughs and over ground pipework regularly especially during frosty weather and should consider shutting off the supply at the meter when land is not stocked.

Here are a couple of suggestions on how you can check for a leak:

- If you think your supply pipe may be leaking, you can check by turning off all the taps and appliances that use water in your property and making sure no water is going into cisterns or storage tanks while this check is being made. Then read all the dials on the meter, leave the water turned off and, one hour later read the meter again. If the second reading is higher than the first, you may have a leak.
- To check that the leak is on your underground pipe and not inside your buildings, you should turn off your inside stop tap and check the meter again. If the dials have moved again, or are moving when the stop tap is turned off, the leak is probably on your supply pipe.
- If you think your supply pipe is leaking, you will need to hire a plumbing contractor to find the leak and repair it. You should also contact Veolia Water to inform them of the suspected leak. Veolia Water offices are located at Castle View, Castle Street, Roscommon. Tel: Locall 1890 836 542. It is important to remember that some old supply pipes are in poor condition and it may be cheaper to replace the supply pipe to prevent expensive leaks in the future, instead of just repairing the leak.

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Leak Allowance

You may be entitled to a one off leak allowance, subject to qualifying criteria, where there has been a leak on your supply pipe. Application for a one off leak allowance should be made to Roscommon County Council on the Non-Domestic Water Leakage Allowance Claim Form.

Leakage Allowance will only be considered if repairs are carried out within one month of discovering the leak - including any high bill warning. The Claim Form for non-domestic water leakage allowance must be completed and submitted within a month of the repair.

Applications for a second leak allowance on the same connection will, in general, not be considered. We, therefore, recommend you consider the following:

- If you have insurance cover that sufficiently covers you for the cost of the leaked water you may wish to claim on your insurance which will allow you to hold onto your allowance entitlement in case of a more serious leak, which may go over your insurance cover limits
- If the cost of the leaked water goes over your insurance cover limits and you claim your maximum cover value in respect of this leak we will help you by giving you an allowance for the difference and guarantee your entitlement for a further allowance in the future (evidence of your insurance claim will be required)
- If you do not have insurance which covers you for the cost of the leaked water we recommend you seek suitable cover to protect yourself in the future. Before claiming an allowance on this occasion, you may want to consider the option of settling the account in full which will allow you to hold onto your right to claim in full for any further leaked water on your supply pipe.

Qualifying Criteria

A leak allowance will only be considered if:

- This is the first claim for an allowance for leakage on your supply pipe (applications for a second allowance are only considered in exceptional circumstances and the Council reserve the right to refuse your request if you have received a previous allowance)
- The leak has been repaired by the date requested in any written/verbal communication with you, including 'High Bill Warning' and in all other cases, within one month after it was first discovered.
- The leakage allowance claim form has been fully completed and a copy of your plumber's report has been enclosed.
- The leak is on an underground supply pipe, i.e. leaks above ground, for example, leading to a trough will not be granted any allowance.

A leak allowance will not be given if:

- The leak was caused by negligence either by yourself or someone authorised to act for you.
- If the leak is from above ground pipes or infrastructure or from wastage due to faulty appliances.
- You were aware or should have been aware there was a wastage of water/leakage and did not take prompt action to repair the leak
- You have been using a lot of water and, of course, in situations where the high bill has not been due to leakage

Internal leaks

Roscommon County Council is not required to give leak allowances where leakage has occurred on pipes inside your property, other than your supply pipe. However, an allowance on water charges may be considered if:

- The leak was not visible (e.g. central heating pipes under concrete floor)
- You are not already covered for the cost of the leaked water under your property insurance

Roscommon County Council retains the absolute discretion whether to grant a leak allowance for internal leaks.