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Limerick City Council

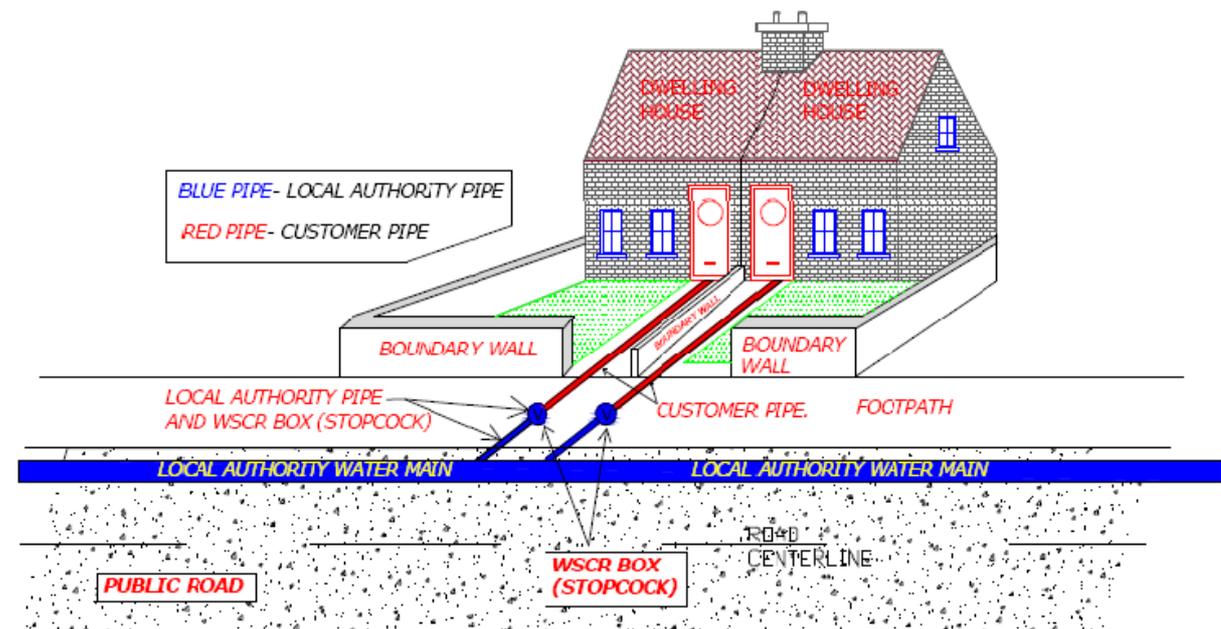
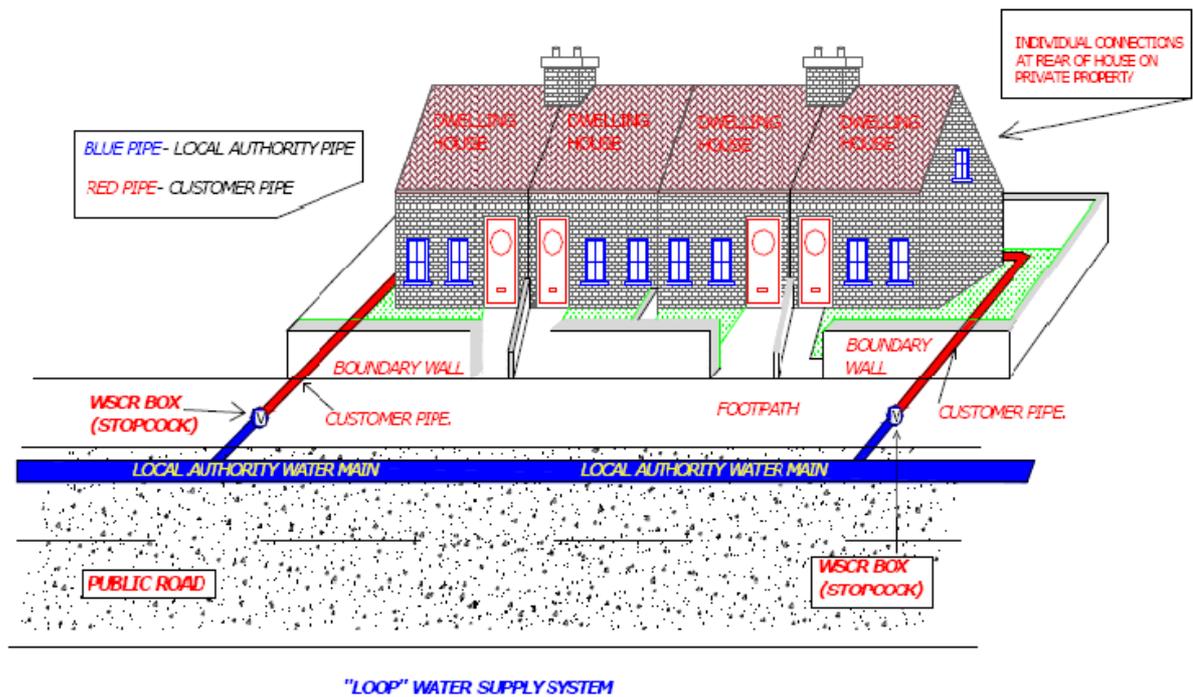
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Advise to Consumers with Frozen Pipes

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Who is Responsible for the Pipework?



How can I minimise risk of frozen pipes?

Although damage to pipes occurs when they freeze, the burst only becomes apparent when the pipe starts to thaw. This burst can lead to flooding. The damage caused by flooding in the home or workplace can cost thousands of euro to put right, and can also cause a lot of distress. These simple tips cost little to put in place but could make all the difference:

- Wrap up pipes, water tanks and cisterns with insulation. Especially in unheated areas like attics, outbuildings and under floor spaces. Use good quality foam lagging
- Fix any dripping taps - the gentle trickle of water can freeze and completely block a pipe
- Let warm air circulate through the building, and occasionally leave the attic hatch open to allow warmth to enter the roof-space
- If you are going away, consider leaving central heating on low, or turn the water supply off at the stopcock and drain the system. Make sure you know where your stopcock is.

What should I do if my pipes or tanks become frozen?

If, despite your precautions, pipes or tanks do become frozen you should consult with a professional. However the following tips may be useful:

- Turn off the water at the mains stop cock
- Before you start to thaw the system, remove any furniture or equipment that may get damaged by melting ice and water
- Gently warm frozen pipes with a hair-dryer or hot water bottle

If a pipe or tank should actually burst, turn off the water at the main stopcock immediately and switch off all central heating and other water heating installations. Let water in the system drain out by turning on all the taps, and then call in a professional plumber to make the repairs.

How do I turn off my water supply?

Homes typically have an internal and an external stop cock. Water can be turned off by rotating the stop cock in an anti-clockwise direction.

Internal stop cocks can usually be found in the pipework under your kitchen sink or in the downstairs bathroom or cloakroom. They are sometimes located in basements.

External stop cocks are normally found in the footpath just outside your property This stopcock is the property of the City Council. In some cases there will be only one stop cock serving a number of properties (a shared supply), so it may not be right outside your property.

External stop cocks are owned By Limerick City Council and should only be operated by people who are employed by the Council, except in the case of freezing conditions and if everyone whose water supply is controlled by the stop cock has agreed to the supply being turned off. Any damage to this stop cock by private individuals, will be charged accordingly. Stop cocks usually have a plastic or metal cover marked "Water" or 'Uisce' however, they can unfortunately be covered over by contractors working in the footpath or neighbours undertaking DIY or maintenance work. If you do have difficulty locating your stop cock please contact us at the details below.

I have no water supply

If you have lost your water supply it could be for a number of reasons. The following Q&As may help you to identify the problem. If not please contact us immediately at the details below.

Do you have any water at the cold kitchen tap?

If you have water at the cold kitchen tap but no hot water or cold water from other taps, and there are no severe pressure restrictions in your area, it would suggest you have a problem with your internal pipe work and you may need to contact a plumber.

Have you checked your stop cock?

Find out how to locate your stop cock

If you have recently had work carried out in your house, it may be that your builder or plumber has turned your internal stop cock off and has not turned it back on again. If this is the case you should check with them before turning the stop cock on.

Sometimes if work is being carried out in your area, such as new housing developments, repairs in the estate or maintenance work on a house close by, your stop cock may have been turned off.

If this is the case and you cannot locate the necessary people then please contact us at the details below and we will investigate the situation for you.

Do you have a pump?

If your premises pumps water to storage check that the pump is working.

Do your neighbours have water?

If your neighbours do have water this may indicate an internal problem and you may need a plumber.

If your neighbours do not have a water supply either it may be for the following reasons:

Burst main or emergency work

If one of our water mains has burst or there is a bad water leak, this may affect supply to your property. Likewise, if we are dealing with an emergency incident we may have had to turn off your water supply at short notice. If you would like to report an emergency or a burst main please contact us at the details below.

Planned work

Sometimes it may be necessary to cut off your supply while we carry out planned maintenance and repair work. You can keep track of any updates and find out about alternative water supplies by visiting our website or tuning into the local media. If you are without water for any period of time the following Q&A may be useful:

- Can I use my central heating if the water is off?
- Water supply has been returned to my kitchen only there is no water upstairs in the bathroom?
- How do I get rid of an airlock?

Can I use my central heating if the water is off?

If your central heating system has been installed by a registered contractor it should be run from a separate expansion tank in the attic. This water should not be affected by a water main shutdown and it should be safe to run the system. However you should check with your installer to confirm.

Water supply has been returned to my kitchen only there is no water upstairs in the bathroom?

This occurs in some plumbing systems after a water shutdown. It may be an airlock in your system and you may need to engage a plumber to eliminate it. While Limerick City Council endeavour to keep shutdown of supplies to a minimum we are not responsible for maintaining internal plumbing systems.

How do I get rid of an airlock?

Following a disruption to Water Supply some households may get airlocks in their internal plumbing system. The airlock is generally in the hot water system and most likely the result of faulty internal plumbing and **it is advisable to contact a professional for advice.**

I have a leak on my property

It is the responsibility of the owner to repair any leaks that occur on private property. It is the responsibility of Limerick City Council to repair leaks that occur outside the boundary. For further information see Who is responsible for the pipework coming into my property? Leaks on private property can result in a significant loss of water and as a result may lead to poor pressure.

See Section 54 and 56 of the Water Services Act, 2007 and for further information on responsibilities and penalties.

If you notice a leak, whether on private or public property, please contact us at the details below.

Metered non-domestic customers

If you are a metered non-domestic customer you will also be charged for any water lost through leakage.

For more information
Water Services Dept.
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