

Leep Networks (Water) Limited



Pipes Code of Practice

Customer Operations Team

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1. Introduction

This Code of Practice explains how Leep Water Networks Limited (Leep) carries out pipelaying, maintenance and associated works on private land, and what you can expect at each stage. It combines our statutory duties, best practice and customer service standards into a single document.

The Code applies wherever we need to lay, alter or maintain pipes or prevent contamination in our network. It sets out your rights, our responsibilities and how to raise a concern.

Copies of this Code of Practice are available free of charge on our website. We will also send a copy on request, and we can provide it in alternative formats such as large print, Braille or audio.

This document incorporates all relevant legal, technical and procedural requirements that previously appeared in separate annexes.

2. About us

Leep is a licensed water and sewerage service provider supplying treated water, connecting new customers and managing sewerage and drainage services within designated areas. We operate to the same regulatory standards as all licensed water companies in England and Wales.

3. Who this code applies to

This Code applies to:

- Landowners and occupiers where works may be needed
- Customers served by our networks
- Developers and construction companies
- Anyone affected by pipelaying or maintenance work

Some statutory requirements do not apply in the same way within a developer's construction site. Where this is the case, it is explained within relevant sections.

4. What pipelaying is and why we do it

Pipelaying includes installing, altering or maintaining water or sewer pipes and associated structures. We may need to enter private land to:

- Connect new homes and developments
- Reinforce or improve capacity in the local network
- Replace ageing or damaged pipes
- Maintain water quality and prevent contamination
- Support operational or emergency needs

These works may involve excavation, survey activities, trial pits, reinstatement and temporary access arrangements.

5. Legal and regulatory framework

Our powers and duties come from:

- Water Industry Act 1991, including sections governing survey, entry, laying, alteration and maintenance of pipes (particularly s.159 and s.182)
- Regulations relating to environmental protection, drainage, heritage, protected trees and hedgerows
- Economic, regulatory instruction from Ofwat

We must:

- Issue correct notice before entering land
- Consult landowners
- Restore land as near as possible to its original condition
- Pay compensation where appropriate
- Follow environmental, archaeological and safety requirements
- Minimise disruption and maintain access where reasonably possible

Ofwat can investigate complaints about the manner in which pipelaying work is carried out on private land.

6. Your rights when we need to work on your land

You have the right to:

- Receive proper written notice
 - Be consulted about route, access and timing
 - Have disruption minimised
 - Have land reinstated appropriately
 - Be informed of pipe location and depth
 - Claim compensation where applicable
 - Have clear contact details for the supervisor responsible for the work
 - Raise concerns or complaints at any time
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7. Planning routes and early investigations

Route selection

Before serving notice, we consider:

- Directness and engineering feasibility
- Cost and long-term maintenance needs
- Underground services and overhead equipment
- Environmental, archaeological and conservation constraints
- Impact on landowners, businesses and the public
- Access requirements for construction
- Gravity flow and hydraulic need for sewers

Where private land is required, we will work with you to minimise disruption.

Surveying and trial holes

We may need to enter land to investigate ground conditions. You will receive at least 7 days' notice unless it is an emergency. Any trial pits are secured or fenced if they cannot be back-filled immediately.

Temporary restrictions on land use may give rise to compensation.

8. Notice periods and consultation

Notice periods

Unless emergency works are required, the following apply:

- New pipelines: At least 3 months' notice (or as much as possible if responding to a legal requisition).
- Alterations to existing pipes: At least 42 days' notice.
- Routine inspections, cleansing or maintenance: Normally 7 days' notice.
- Survey and trial holes: Minimum 7 days' notice.
- Re-notification: If major changes are needed, a new notice may be issued.

Consultation

We will request information on:

- Ownership and occupancy
- Planned development and planning permissions
- Known underground services
- Wells, boreholes, springs, septic tanks, cesspits
- Land drainage systems (including deep drains)
- Flooding history
- Cropping, livestock access and farming timetables
- Protected areas, SSSIs, conservation areas, archaeological sites
- Contaminated land or notifiable plant/animal diseases

We consider your feedback when determining the route, working width, depth, siting of manholes or air valves, and timing.

9. Before the work begins

Record of condition

We create a written and photographic schedule of condition for:

- Working areas
- Access routes
- Nearby buildings and structures

You will receive a copy and can request amendments if something has been missed. This protects both you and us.

Access arrangements

We will discuss how vehicles, machinery and personnel will access the site. Additional access routes will only be used if necessary and always discussed with you first.

Named supervisor

You will receive the details of the person responsible for the works and an emergency out-of-hours contact.

Location of pipes and equipment

Pipes are normally buried with at least 900mm cover. If shallower installation is unavoidable, we will inform you. Permanent marker posts may be installed to show the position of pipes or chambers.

If manholes or valve chambers must be above ground, we will agree their placement with you.

10. During the work

Supervision and working hours

All workers are supervised. Work outside 7.30am–7.30pm, or on weekends or bank holidays, will be discussed with you unless it is an emergency.

Maintaining access for you

Where possible, we maintain access for vehicles, machinery and livestock. Temporary crossings, gates or stiles will be provided if appropriate.

Security and fencing

Working areas may be fenced for safety or livestock protection. We maintain any fencing we install and ensure boundary fences remain secure.

Protection of soil

Topsoil is:

- Stripped and stored separately
- Not driven over or compressed
- Replaced to original depth with similar structure and quality

Subsoil is reinstated to match existing conditions.

Trees and hedgerows

We avoid felling or lopping trees where possible. If unavoidable, we consult you and relevant authorities for protected species or preservation orders.

Felled trees remain your property unless you request disposal.

Land drainage systems

If you provide drainage records, we use them during planning. If drains are found unexpectedly, we inform you.

We reinstate drains to their original performance and record any changes. Where a new layout is needed, we discuss this before installation.

Watercourses, wells and springs

Pipes under watercourses are installed to Environment Agency requirements and covered with concrete if needed. We prevent pollution and test water supplies if there is a risk of disturbance.

Contaminated land or diseases

We comply with DEFRA rules where land is infected under the Animal Health Act or has soil-borne pests and diseases.

Archaeological or historical finds

If fossils, artefacts or coins are found, we inform you and the appropriate body. We may require an archaeologist on site if findings are significant.

Explosives and temporary support

If explosives are needed, we will notify you of expected periods of use. We consult you if temporary support is needed for your buildings or structures.

11. After the work is completed

Reinstatement

We will:

- Restore land as near as possible to its original condition
- Remove materials, surplus soil and temporary works
- Repair or replace fences, walls or hedges
- Use accredited landscapers for garden reinstatement if necessary
- Consider compensation where reinstatement is not possible

A joint inspection takes place before handover.

Information about the final pipe position

We confirm the final route, depth and any restrictions on future activity (for example, planting deep-rooted trees or building over the pipe). This should be kept with your property deeds.

12. Compensation

You may be entitled to compensation for:

- Permanent loss in the value of land
- Temporary loss of use, access or revenue
- Disturbance directly caused by works
- Damage not restored by reinstatement
- Reasonable fees for an agent or surveyor (up to Ryde's scale limits)

You are encouraged to keep a diary of events, costs and disruptions.

We may make advance payments of up to 90% of the assessed amount once a quantified claim is submitted.

If agreement cannot be reached, the matter can be referred to the Lands Tribunal or another agreed form of independent resolution.

13. Complaints

If you have concerns during the works, please contact your named supervisor.

If unresolved, you can contact our Customer Operations team.

Our full complaints process is available on our website at www.leeputilities.co.uk

14. How to contact us

Over the phone

You can call us about any query relating to this document. Our teams are available between 8am and 6pm, Monday to Friday on 0300 373 3540.

By e-mail

You can email us if you'd prefer to contact us in writing, or if there's documents you need to send. Our email address is hello@leeputilities.co.uk

Through our online portal

If you're a Leep customer, you can also get in touch through our online portal. You can access the portal at www.leeputilities.co.uk and you'll need to have your account reference to hand.

Via post

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