

Water Facts

9. Internal Water Fittings



Internal Water Fittings

Why do I need to be concerned about water fittings within my property?

The Internal pipework, fixtures and fittings within your property can pose a potential risk to water quality. No matter how good the quality of water is entering your property, it can still be contaminated by your internal plumbing. It is important that all pipework, fixtures and fittings including taps, are installed correctly, maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and kept clean.

Some of the common issues associated with water fittings include:

- The installation of appliances such as washing machines and dishwashers without appropriate backflow protection. This can result in water flowing back from the hoses and appliance into your drinking water supply
- Backflow from bathrooms into the drinking water supply
- The installation of fittings that are non-compliant with the requirements of The Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations
- Cross connections of internal plumbing to high risk water systems such as rain water harvesting, boreholes and heating systems
- The illegal use of lead solder

What are The Water Supply (water Fittings) Regulations?

The Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations provide the rules on the design, installation, operation and maintenance of water fittings, including water-using appliances within premises. It is a key piece of public health legislation providing how to prevent contamination, misuse, waste, undue consumption and erroneous measurement of water.

These regulations are enforced by licensed water companies such as Leaf Water. The responsibility to comply with the regulations sits with the owner and/or plumber working in a given premises.

What is a Water Fittings Regulations Inspection?

A water fittings inspection is an inspection of either new or existing installations of fixtures and fittings to check compliance with The Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations. These inspections are carried out by water suppliers such as Leaf Water as part of their enforcement duties.

Where the water fittings inspection identifies contraventions of the regulations, Leaf Water will make recommendations to the property owner on what is required to correct these. If the property owner decides not to implement the recommendations of the inspection, Leaf Water can take legal enforcement action to ensure water quality is protected.

What are the notification of works requirements under The Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations?

The Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations require any individual to give Leaf Water as a water supplier advanced notification of the following:

- The erection of any new building or structure
- The extension or alteration of the water system in any premises except a domestic dwelling
- The material change in use of any premises

The installation of:

- o A bidet with an ascending spray or flexible hose
 - o A bath larger than 230 litres (measured to the centre of the overflow)
 - o A shower unit of a type specified by the regulator (but none is currently specified)
 - o A pump or booster drawing more than 12 litres per minute
 - o A reverse osmosis unit
 - o A water treatment unit producing a waste water discharge or requiring water for regeneration or cleaning
 - o A reduced pressure zone (RPZ) valve or other mechanical device for protection against backflow in fluid category 4 or 5
 - o A garden watering system unless designed to be a hand-operated one
 - o Any water system laid outside a building and either less than 750 mm or more than 1350 mm below ground level
- Construction of an automatically-replenished pond or swimming pool of more than 10,000 litres.

If you are planning to undertake any of the above please let us know by e-mailing in the following information:

- The name and address of the person giving notice and, if different, of the person to whom the consent should be sent
 - A description of the proposed work and any related change of use of premises
 - The location of the premises and their use or intended use
 - Except for items below, a plan of that part of the premises which relates to the proposed work and a diagram showing the pipework and fittings to be installed
- o A bath larger than 230 litres (measured to the centre of the overflow)
 - o A shower unit of a type specified by the Regulator (but none is currently specified)
 - o A garden watering system unless designed to be a hand-operated one
 - o Construction of an automatically-replenished pond or swimming pool of more than 10,000 litres

The plumbing contractor's name and address, if an approved contractor, such as a WaterSafe approved plumber is used to do the work.

Once we receive your notification we will review it. If you do not receive confirmation of consent from us within 10 working days, then permission is deemed to have been granted. However, any work must still comply with The Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations.

Why should I only use approved WaterSafe plumbers?

Much the same as when you have work done on your boiler by a Gas Safe engineer, a plumber approved under WaterSafe provides you with confidence that the individual carrying out the work is appropriately trained to do the job. WaterSafe approved contractors have specific training in Water Fittings Regulations, which helps them protect you from poor installation or use of sub-standard plumbing products which could contaminate your drinking water.

For further information on WaterSafe and WaterSafe approved plumbers please visit the Water Safe Website:

[WaterSafe | Local Approved Plumbers.](#)

Why should I only install approved fittings and fixtures?

The Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations detail the required standards for water fittings and fixtures to ensure water quality isn't adversely impacted. These standards are used by a testing and certifying organisation in this case the Water Regulations Advisory Scheme (WRAS), to approve the use of a product. WRAS then published the list of approved products in their Water Fittings and Materials Directory, which can be found at their website: [WRAS Approvals.](#)

It is worth noting that it is not illegal to sell unsuitable fittings and appliances, but to install one would be illegal, so it is recommended that you check the suitability before purchase.



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