

Don't Suffer in Silence

Signs of low water pressure



Does your shower go to **dribble** when someone else in your home flushes the toilet or turns on the tap?



Does your bath take a long time to fill?

5

A standard household bath should take approximately five minutes to fill.



If your toilet cistern takes a long time to refill, this could mean you have low water pressure too.

On average, a toilet should take **1m 40s**



If you experience multiple incidents of low pressure, you can ask your water company to visit your property to test the pressure of your water to see if there is a problem.

Possible causes of low pressure

A burst on the water main, repairs or scheduled maintenance in your area.

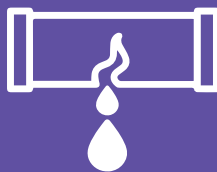


You can find out about these by checking your [Water Company's website](#).

High Demand



A leak on your private supply pipe



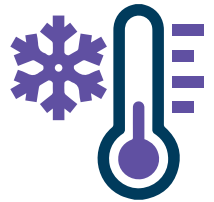
You will need to get it repaired or in some cases, your water company will do it for you free of charge.

Cold weather

During cold weather pipes may become frozen, affecting the water pressure.

Reduce the risk by insulating your external pipes. Your local DIY store can offer you help and advice about how to do this.

[Read further advice on this.](#)



If you are on a shared supply and others are using water at the same time, this can affect the pressure.



Check the time of day the low water pressure is happening. Is there a pattern of it happening in the mornings and early evenings? This could be due to high demand at certain times of the day.



You may find it helpful to fit water-saving devices in your home. Check your water company's website as many companies will provide these free.



When buying new appliances, such as washing machines or dishwashers, look into which appliance is more water efficient.



For advice around choosing energy efficient appliances, visit the [Energy Saving Trust website](#).



The company has re-zoned your supply from another source, which may have a slightly lower pressure.



A valve has been shut down slightly

This may be inside your building, so that should be checked first.

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What level of pressure should the company supply to my property?



The Water Industry Act 1991 requires that companies are required only to supply water constantly and at a pressure which will reach the upper floor of a house.

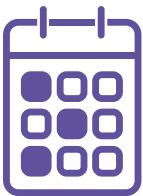
↓ **MIN 0.7 bar**

Ofwat is more specific that companies should maintain a minimum pressure in the communication pipe of seven metres static head (0.7 bar). The communication pipe comes off the water main and belongs to the company. It ends at the outside stop valve to a property. The company has no obligation to meet pressure requirements inside your external private supply pipe, whether shared or not, or inside your property.

There is no regulated upper limit though internal plumbing should be able to withstand

10 bar
↓
to meet **British standards.**

Compensation for low pressure



If you have concerns about your level of pressure, we recommend that you record the times of incidents of low (or high) pressure over a period – for example two weeks) and report these to your company. Your water company can visit your property to test the pressure of your water to see if there is a problem.

If pressure falls below 0.7 bar on two occasions, each occasion lasting more than one hour, within a 28-day period, the company must automatically make a [Guaranteed Standards Scheme \(GSS\)](#) payment. **There are exceptions to the requirement to make a GSS payments if the pressure standard is not met. Examples of the current exceptions include:**



A payment has already been made to the same customer within the same financial year;



It is impractical for the company to have identified the particular customer as being affected, and the customer has not made a claim within three months of the date of the most recent incident of low pressure.



Industrial action by the company's employees makes it impracticable to maintain the pressure standard.



The pressure falls below the minimum standard due to necessary works taking place or due to a drought.

For full details of the guaranteed standards scheme, including payment exceptions please visit the [Ofwat website](#)

The Guaranteed Standards Scheme requires your supplier to maintain a pressure of 7 metres head (0.7bar) in the pipe. This is normally measured at the outside stop valve.



Another standard set by the regulator (Ofwat) measures the number of properties at risk of experiencing water pressure below 10 metres head (1 bar) - at the outside stop valve - at a flow of 9 litres per minute. **That should be enough to fill a one gallon (4.5 litres) container in 30 seconds.**

Water pressure is not normally affected by having a water meter fitted.



Although the water pressure will normally be above the level set by the GSS, some new heating appliances and showers will not work below a certain pressure. Ask your water company to tell you what the normal pressure is in your area, and consult your installer before having the appliance fitted. **It may be possible to adjust the appliance to work on a lower pressure or you may need to have a booster pump fitted.**

↑ In 1990-91, around **380,000** properties suffered from low water pressure.

↓ By 2003, less than **15,000** were affected.

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