



Meter Location Best Practice Guidelines

Introduction

It is recognised that different water companies have different metering policies, which are shaped by their internal drivers, the context in which they operate and the demands of their customers. However, there is also recognition that the house building market is changing with a constant drive to innovate and improve efficiency of design/operation of properties.

Against this back drop the Water UK/HBF Joint Industry Development Committee have devised the principles outline below as a set of best practice guidelines to help meet the new challenges.

The key aim of these proposed principles is not to set in stone unbending rules. Rather it is to outline a 'gold standard' towards which water companies could seek to enhance their current policies, while giving credence to their working context and customer demands.

Objective

It is the objective of the guidelines that all water companies engage, as far as is practicably possible, with the principles below and seek to review their metering policies with these principles in mind.

Best Practice Principles

In developing the following five principles the group have deliberately kept the points brief and generic in order to help improve the opportunities for them being integrated into existing water companies' policies.

The five principles are:

1. Preferably water companies should use the Water UK/HBF Amended Contaminated Land Assessment Guidance Document for new sites and connections.
2. The use of a continuous and uninterrupted length of service pipe from the water main to the dwelling.

The service pipe should be designed and constructed in such a way as to minimize the risk of leakage.

3. The Stop tap should be located above ground.
4. Water meters should be located above ground.
5. Water Companies should consider the use of technology such as 'smart' metering to enhance the accessibility of water consumption data for both homeowners and themselves.

Location of the stop tap¹

Where above ground metering is employed and the meter box, stop tap, ducting (if required) and customer supply pipe are provided by the developer, water companies are not required by law to install a stop tap outside the property boundary within the footpath. It is already the case that some companies do not require a control valve at such a location where above ground metering is installed.

Requiring a stop tap at the property boundary where above ground metering is employed increases the costs for a developer and may deter the take-up of this form of metering option.

In certain instances water companies may still require a stop tap outside the property boundary for operational reasons but if that is not the case, their policy would need to be justified under competition law.

¹ *Guidance updated July 2016 to include clarification on the location of the stop tap.*