



South West
Water

Dial before you dig

Millions of holes are dug every day across the country, yet many people don't check before they dig. South West Water and Bournemouth Water maintains over 18,000km of underground water pipes and these are at constant risk of damage by people digging without knowing what's below them or taking adequate precautions.

On average, we experience around 100 incidents caused by third party damage every year. This can be catastrophic. Water in these pipes is under pressure and damaged pipes could cause injury to you or others around you, and harm to the surrounding area and natural environment.



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The costs of repairs, fines and fees can be significant and cause lengthy delays to your project, so please check before you dig.



We can help you trace a water main or discuss a main diversion. Call our 24-hour helpline on **0344 346 2020**.

What you need to know:

- Ground cover should not be reduced or increased.
- Routine agricultural activities, including ploughing (to a depth of 0.5m max), are permitted unless there has been a reduction in the ground cover.
- Always contact South West Water before putting in any new drainage.
- Always call South West Water before installing fencing and gate posts to a depth greater than 0.5m.
- Materials should not be stacked or store above water pipelines.
- Pipelines change direction and may not always run in straight lines between posts.



Also, mapping is a guide only and every effort must be taken to ascertain exact location prior to using machinery near water assets.



- Written approval must be gained from South West Water before you plant trees or shrubs on the easement strip above a water pipeline.
- If necessary or requested, a technician will visit the site to locate, mark out the water pipeline and advise on what works can and can't be done safely.



This is a free service.

You're not permitted to work within three metres of a public water main, and this distance may increase where necessary to protect our assets, as stated in the table below. We must have unrestricted access to repair, maintain or renew the main as required.

If you propose to construct closer to the water mains than the stated criteria you will be expected to pay for the water main to be diverted.

Diameter of water main	Easement
<=150mm (6")	6 metres (3 metres either side of the water main)
151 mm to 600 mm (6" to 24")	7 metres (3.5 metres either side of the water main)
>=601mm (>=24")	9 metres (4.5 metres either side of the water main)