



Water Leaks: Who Is Responsible for What?

You, as a customer, are responsible for any damage from the meter to your faucet. It is your responsibility to ensure that pipes do not leak. If you find a leak, turn off the water and contact a repairman.

High water bills is one of the most frequent complaints that the Utilities Regulatory Authority receives. However, the rules are clear: customers have to pay the full amount if a damaged pipe leaks inside their property, because the utilities' responsibility ends at the meter.

If you cannot find any damage on your side of the meter, monitor your water usage and the meter regularly. Contact your utility if you think that the meter is faulty.

Legal Responsibilities

Any utility providing water services in Vanuatu has to abide by the laws set by the Government, for example the Water Supply Act No. 28 of 1955 (revised in 1988) and the Water Resources Management Act No. 9 of 2002.

Customers usually sign a contract with a utility and they should be aware of its terms. Responsibilities are sometimes described at the back of the bill.

Utilities have to provide potable water 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and notify consumers when they plan to cut services for a brief period of time.

Customers have to monitor the meter and pipes, and pay their monthly bills.

Customer Complaints

The Utilities Regulatory Authority (URA) is empowered to investigate customer complaints and can help resolve issues between customers and utilities.

When customers are not satisfied with the water services they pay for, they should contact the utility and try to come to an agreement.

If both sides cannot agree, customers should contact the URA, who will attempt to resolve the issue to the satisfaction of both parties. After its investigation, the URA will set out a decision in accordance with the legislation relative to the dispute. The decision, once approved by the URA Commissioners, is final. If

customers are not satisfied with the URA's decision, they may resolve the dispute through legal proceedings.

The Authority encourages the people of Vanuatu to read their contract and learn about their responsibilities.

If you have any question about your electricity and water services or are involved in a dispute with your utility, contact the URA by phone – (678) 23335 – or by email through the website – www.ura.gov.vu. If you are in Port Vila, visit the Utilities Regulatory Authority office in the ground floor of the VNPF building.

About the Utilities Regulatory Authority (URA)

The URA was set up under the *Utilities Regulatory Authority Act No. 11 of 2007*. It acts independently of the Government and its primary purpose is to ensure access to safe, reliable and affordable electricity and water services, and to protect the long-term interests of consumers throughout Vanuatu. In addition, the URA manages consumer disputes and advises the Government on matters related to the electricity and water sectors. It also renegotiates tariffs under the rules of the Concessions Agreements and relevant legislation.