

## Working on a public road

Although we have a legal right to lay your new pipe under a public road, we still need to tell your local highways authority that we plan to dig in that area. Sometimes, getting official approval takes time and this can affect how soon we can carry out your work. If you live on a busy main road, there will be a longer delay. We will keep you up to date throughout this process.

## Installing a supply in rented property

If you are a tenant or are filling in this application for a relative, we will need proof that you have the landlord's or householder's permission and authority to act on their behalf.

## Digging your own trench

Digging your own trench, or getting a builder to dig it for you, can help keep costs down.

You can only do this in land that you own, and you must dig the whole trench that falls within the boundaries of your property.

This is not a straightforward option as there are strict guidelines you need to follow, as shown in the next section.

Please read these guidelines carefully as we cannot lay pipe in a trench that has not been dug properly.

**If you decide to dig your own trench, work out how long it will be and write this on the application form. Don't include the part of the trench in the public road. We will work this out for you.**

## Guidelines for digging a trench

- 1 Before you begin digging a trench, you must keep to safe digging practices. The health and safety document HS(G)47 'Avoiding Danger from Underground Services' contains everything you need to know. You can get this document from any HMSO (Her Majesty's Stationery Office) outlet or online from [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk).
- 2 You must dig the full route of the trench within the boundaries of your property. If you don't, we will charge you the appropriate rate for bringing the work up to the standard we need. You are responsible for safely guarding the trench and making sure anyone who has access to your property is not at risk.
- 3 The route your service pipe takes should be the shortest convenient route from the public road to where your meter is fitted, and should be in a straight line. It cannot pass underneath any buildings or structures, including a porch.
- 4 If you are installing a duct so that the service pipe can be laid at a later date, please contact us to confirm the specification and other special requirements relating to the duct.
- 5 The trench must be deep enough for the pipe to be between 15 and 18 inches (375 millimetres to 450 millimetres) underground, and roughly 8 inches to 12 inches (250 millimetres to 300 millimetres) wide. The bottom of the trench must be level and free from sharp stones which may damage the pipe. If the ground is poor quality and contains sharp stones, you will need to dig down another 75 millimetres and fill this with fine material so we can lay the pipe on top of it.
- 6 Once we have laid the pipe, it is up to you to surround it with at least 3 inches (75 millimetres) of fine material you have supplied. This material must be completely free from sharp material to avoid damaging the pipe.
- 7 You are responsible for filling in the trench and levelling the surface. You must also remove any material you have not used.