

What is a fire service?

A fire service is a privately owned asset that provides direct access to the water supply system installed for the sole purpose of extinguishing fires. Water authorities allow properties to connect to this system for fire fighting.

Fire services have a variety of functions and can be made up of a number of types, including:

- hydrants
- sprinkler systems
- hose reels
- a combination of these types.

Generally, a Fire Service Consultant or Hydraulic Designer specifies the size and type of fire service required to protect a building and meet the relevant Australian Standard.

Fire services must be tested periodically in accordance with *Australian Standard AS1851 Maintenance of fire protection systems and equipment*. A fire protection service company should conduct this test to ensure that it is in correct working order.

Other than in the event of a fire, this is the only time water should be used through the fire service. During testing, care should be taken to conserve water where possible.

Fire service valves and fittings

A licensed plumber or the fire protection contractor installs the appropriate fire service valves, fittings and meters in accordance with the relevant Australian Standards and South East Water's conditions of connection. The fire service meter and backflow prevention device (non return valve) must be installed within 1.0m – 2.0m of the property boundary. Typical water meter and valving assembly drawings are available on our website with our Water Metering and Servicing Guidelines.

Contact us

Want more information
or advice on fire services?

Phone

General enquiries	131 694
Account enquiries	131 851
Faults and emergencies	132 812

Email

southeastwater.com.au/enquiries

Head office

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South East
Water



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Fire services and your property



Maintenance and repair of fire services – who is responsible?

Maintenance and operation

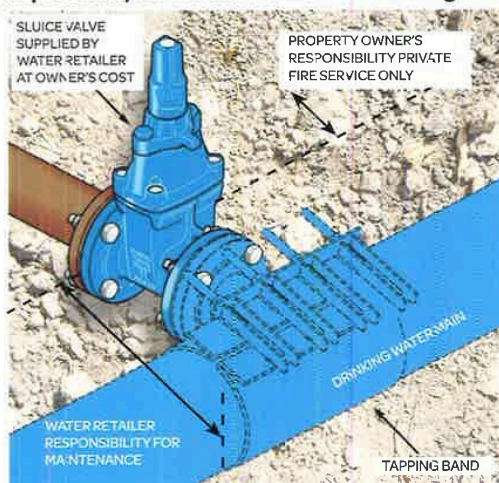
It is essential that fire services operate effectively in an emergency situation and it is the property owner's responsibility to maintain fire services.

Tenants may also be legally obligated to maintain the fire service as indicated in their insurance policy. The property owner or tenant should consult a fire protection or plumbing contractor to regularly maintain:

- the fire service piping (including gaskets, nuts and bolts) connecting to the authority stop/slucie valve located directly off the water main, which may be located in the roadway or nature strip and even on the other side of the road.
- surface fittings associated with the fire service (including hydrants, valves and fittings).

South East Water is responsible for the maintenance of the water main, the branch connection and the stop/slucie valve and associated surface fittings, as shown below.

Responsibility for fire service maintenance diagram



Note: The property owner is responsible for the connecting bolts/nuts/gasket and piping into the property from the outlet of the slucie valve

The owner is responsible for ensuring the fire service meets the performance requirements specified in the relevant Australian Standard. Regular performance testing in accordance with *Australian Standard AS1851* is recommended. If the fire service is no longer required it must be disconnected at the water main.

Where there is a noticeable change in the water supply pressure, or if supply ceases without notice, please contact us on **132 812** and report a fault with the water supply system.

Repair of fire services

The property owner or tenant is responsible for the repair of a leaking fire service including any private water supply works off the fire service, in a road reserve and within the property, and all costs associated resulting from the leak. The current plumbing regulations require a registered plumber to carry out all repair work to the fire service.

If the leak becomes dangerous, poses a health hazard or the stated period is exceeded, after due notification South East Water may shut off or restrict your water supply. The restriction may also affect your domestic supply. This action is taken to help conserve water, protect water quality and for safety reasons. A leaking fire service poses a public safety risk as it may undermine road foundations.

Should the fire service connection require upsizing or removal, a plumbing application can be submitted for approval by South East Water. An application form and further servicing information is available at southeastwater.com.au

Why a fire service can't be used as a supplementary water supply

Unless written approval has been granted, it is a breach of South East Water's conditions of connection and contrary to *Australian Standard AS2419 – 2005 Fire Hydrant Installations* to use water from fire services for purposes other than fire fighting. Failure to comply will result in a Notice of Contravention being issued. Misuse of the fire service can result in:

- contamination of the drinking water supply. There is potential for a backflow incident where toxic chemicals may enter the water supply system. South East Water will only supply water to customers on the condition that activities on individual properties do not contaminate the water supply and an appropriate backflow prevention device is fitted on each water service pipe
- significant loss of water pressure in the system needed to fight a fire
- significant loss of water pressure for surrounding properties within a supply zone. This may affect the efficiency of water products that local residents use, or even cause problems for local manufacturing companies that use water in their business processes or manufacturing
- water quality issues: the quality of water may become poor and discoloured.

Can I use my fire service if it is metered?

No. Fire services are provided for the sole purpose of fighting fires. Please refer to reasons outlined under *Why a fire service can't be used as a supplementary water supply*.

