

Winter Care

► WHEN TEMPERATURES START TO DROP...

Guernsey Water is asking customers to take care of their pipework and oil tanks during the winter, to avoid problems with leakage or spills.

As temperatures begin to drop, it is important to make sure that internal and external pipework and taps are lagged in order to prevent any cold-related problems. Even wrapping a towel or rag around a garden tap will go some way to preventing the water freezing and expanding.



Customers should also turn off their internal stop-tap if they are intending to leave their properties for a few days or more – this will prevent any possibility of serious flooding, which could potentially occur if the temperature gets too low.

Guernsey Water also advises customers to leave their central heating on low if they are planning to be away from their property for a short period of time, to prevent problems.

► OIL TANK CARE...

Customers with domestic oil tanks on their property should make sure that rainwater is drained from the catchment pits on a regular basis.

Catchment pits are a legal requirement for all single skinned oil tanks, and it is vital that suitable steps are taken to ensure that the effective capacity of the pit is not reduced by the accumulation of rainwater, as this could result in oil spillages which are detrimental to the environment. Leaves and other debris should also be removed from the pit.

Rainwater should be removed from pits by either using a manually operated pump or a siphon tube. We do not allow the use of unmanned electric pumps as their use could lead to oil being pumped out of the pit and onto the ground.



Any spillage of oil should be reported immediately to Guernsey Water, as it can quickly get into the water supply. The hydrocarbons in oil are hard for us to remove through the water treatment process and they can impair the the quality of water in customer pipes.

Causing or knowingly permitting pollution of Guernsey's watercourses within the Water Catchment Area is an offence under the Prevention of Pollution (Guernsey) Law, 1989.

To report any pollution or suspected pollution, please call us immediately on 239500.

Failure to comply with any of the conditions set out by Guernsey Water in this leaflet (or in any other official document) may lead to prosecution.



Preventing Oil Pollution

► THE DANGERS OF OIL...

The loss of heating oil to the environment is one of the most common forms of water pollution.

Each year, there are approximately 10 major oil pollution incidents reported on the Island, which can contaminate our environment with up to 1,000 litres of oil.

Guernsey's water resources support a large diversity of wildlife and are essential for the provision of safe and clean drinking water. An oil spill to the ground can soak through the soil and travel into the streams which transport rainfall into our water storage reservoirs.



If a stream is polluted with oil, Guernsey Water will not be able to use this stream to collect raw (untreated) water. Therefore, a vital part of the Island's

water resources cannot be treated to become clean drinking water for the Island's population.

Oil is extremely damaging to the water environment, ruining habitats and damaging plants and wildlife. In addition, it is very difficult for our water treatment processes to remove hydrocarbon molecules (the main constituent of oil) from water.

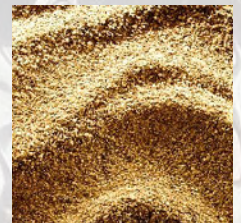
Oil is a highly visible form of pollution as it floats on the water's surface.

► HOW TO PREVENT POLLUTION...

Regularly check your oil tank and pipework for signs of damage/corrosion. Check for:

- Changes in oil consumption/usage patterns
- Rust on metal tanks or tank supports
- Sun bleaching/cracking of plastic tanks
- Rusty/buried oil filter bowls
- Rusty or corroded feed pipes, couplings or valves
- Sight gauges that have been knocked or are not properly secured to the tank
- Catchment pits full of water or rubbish
- Holes in bunds/catchment pits
- Obvious signs of leakage or unusual smells of oil

In the event of an oil leak or spill, you can collect the leaking oil by using a tray or bucket. Never wash oil into drains and never use a hosepipe or detergents to wash down the area. Prevent oil from entering drains or watercourses by using earth or sand to absorb it. Oily sand/soil should then be put into sealed bags.



For information on the disposal of these bags, contact Environmental Health on 711161.

Any spillages or leaks should be reported immediately to Guernsey Water via our telephone number - 239500.

For more information visit the Guernsey Water website at www.water.gg and go to the 'Water Quality' section.