



Water Industry Act 1991

1991 CHAPTER 56

PART VI

UNDERTAKERS' POWERS AND WORKS

CHAPTER I

UNDERTAKERS' POWERS

Pipe-laying

159 Power to lay pipes in other land.

- (1) Subject to the following provisions of this section, to section 162(9) below and to the provisions of Chapter III of this Part, every relevant undertaker shall, for the purpose of carrying out its functions, have power—
- (a) to lay a relevant pipe (whether above or below the surface) in any land which is not in, under or over a street and to keep that pipe there;
 - (b) to inspect, maintain, adjust, repair or alter any relevant pipe which is in any such land;
 - (c) to carry out any works requisite for, or incidental to, the purposes of any works falling within paragraph (a) or (b) above.
- (2) Nothing in subsection (1) above shall authorise a water undertaker to lay a service pipe in, on or over any land except where—
- (a) there is already a service pipe where that pipe is to be laid; ^{F1}...
 - (b) the undertaker is required to lay the pipe in, on or over that land by virtue of any of subsections (3) to (5) of section 46 above; [^{F2}or]
 - ^{F3}(c) the undertaker is required to lay the pipe in, on or over that land by virtue of section 66A(3) for the purpose of enabling the use of its supply system to supply premises in a retail exit area.]

Changes to legislation: Water Industry Act 1991, Section 159 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 22 April 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes

- (3) The power conferred by virtue of paragraph (b) of subsection (1) above, and the power conferred in relation to that paragraph by virtue of paragraph (c) of that subsection shall be exercisable in relation to a service pipe irrespective of the person to whom the pipe belongs; but expenses incurred in exercising those powers in relation to any pipe shall be recoverable from the person to whom the pipe belongs only if and to the extent that that person has agreed to pay them.
- (4) The powers conferred by this section shall be exercisable only after reasonable notice of the proposed exercise of the power has been given to the owner and to the occupier of the land where the power is to be exercised.
- (5) Subject to subsection (6) below, in relation to any exercise of the powers conferred by this section for the purpose of laying or altering a relevant pipe, the minimum period that is capable of constituting reasonable notice for the purposes of subsection (4) above shall be deemed—
- (a) where the power is exercised for the purpose of laying a relevant pipe otherwise than in substitution for an existing pipe of the same description, to be three months; and
 - (b) where the power is exercised for the purpose of altering an existing pipe, to be forty-two days.
- (6) Subsection (5) above shall not apply in the case of any notice given with respect to the exercise of any power in an emergency or for the purpose of—
- (a) laying or altering a service pipe; or
 - (b) complying with a duty imposed under section 41 or 98 above.
- (7) Subject to subsection (2) above, in this section “relevant pipe” has the same meaning as in section 158 above [^{F4}(reading references there to subsection (1) as references to subsection (1) of this section).]

Textual Amendments

- F1** Word in s. 159(2)(a) omitted (E.) (31.10.2021) by virtue of [The Water and Sewerage Undertakers \(Exit from Non-household Retail Market\) \(Consequential Provision\) Regulations 2021 \(S.I. 2021/1208\)](#), regs. 1(2), **2(9)(a)**
- F2** Word in s. 159(2)(b) inserted (E.) (31.10.2021) by [The Water and Sewerage Undertakers \(Exit from Non-household Retail Market\) \(Consequential Provision\) Regulations 2021 \(S.I. 2021/1208\)](#), regs. 1(2), **2(9)(b)**
- F3** S. 159(2)(c) inserted (E.) (31.10.2021) by [The Water and Sewerage Undertakers \(Exit from Non-household Retail Market\) \(Consequential Provision\) Regulations 2021 \(S.I. 2021/1208\)](#), regs. 1(2), **2(9)(c)**
- F4** Words in s. 159(7) inserted (28.5.2004) by [Water Act 2003 \(c. 37\)](#), **ss. 97(5)**, 105(3); S.I. 2004/641, **art. 4** (with Sch. 3 para. 7)

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C1** S. 159 applied (with modifications) (21.7.1994) by [1994 c. xi, s. 11\(2\)](#)
 S. 159 restricted (1.4.1996) by [1980 c. 66, s. 100\(6B\)\(b\)](#) (as inserted (1.4.1996) by [1994 c. 19, s. 22\(1\)](#), [Sch. 7 Pt. 1 para. 9](#) (with [ss. 54\(5\)\(7\)](#), [55\(5\)](#)); S.I. 1996/396, art. 3, [Sch. 1](#))
- C2** S. 159 applied (with modifications) (28.6.2013) by [The Water Industry \(Specified Infrastructure Projects\) \(English Undertakers\) Regulations 2013 \(S.I. 2013/1582\)](#), reg. 1(1)(b), [Sch. 1 para. 12\(2\)](#) (with reg. 1(1)(c))

Changes to legislation:

Water Industry Act 1991, Section 159 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 22 April 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations.

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Changes and effects yet to be applied to the whole Act associated Parts and Chapters:

Whole provisions yet to be inserted into this Act (including any effects on those provisions):

- Pt. 3 Ch. 2B inserted by [2014 c. 21 s. 12](#)
- s. 17(2)(aa) inserted by S.I. 2019/93, Sch. 1 para. 4(4)(b) (as substituted) by S.I. [2019/1245 reg. 21](#) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. The affecting statutory instrument has no legal effect. It was made under a procedure which meant that it ceased to have effect 28 days after signing unless it was debated and approved in Parliament within that time. It was not debated and approved within 28 days, so it has expired with no effect.)
- s. 17A(c) repealed by [2014 c. 21 Sch. 5 para. 4\(2\)\(c\)](#)
- s. 17A(d) repealed by [2014 c. 21 Sch. 5 para. 4\(2\)\(c\)](#)
- s. 17A(2)(ba) and word inserted by [2014 c. 21 Sch. 5 para. 4\(2\)\(b\)](#)
- s. 17R(2)(aa) inserted by S.I. 2019/93, Sch. 1 para. 4(7)(b) (as substituted) by S.I. [2019/1245 reg. 21](#) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. The affecting statutory instrument has no legal effect. It was made under a procedure which meant that it ceased to have effect 28 days after signing unless it was debated and approved in Parliament within that time. It was not debated and approved within 28 days, so it has expired with no effect.)
- s. 17AA(1)(ba)(bb) inserted by [2014 c. 21 Sch. 5 para. 5\(2\)](#)
- s. 17BA(5A) inserted by [2014 c. 21 Sch. 5 para. 7\(3\)](#)
- s. 17HA(9)(b)(ia) inserted by [2014 c. 21 Sch. 5 para. 16\(2\)](#)
- s. 23(2AA) inserted by [2014 c. 21 Sch. 7 para. 35\(4\)](#)
- s. 23(8)(9) inserted by [2014 c. 21 Sch. 7 para. 35\(10\)](#)
- s. 39E-39H inserted by [2021 c. 30 s. 78\(7\)](#)
- s. 87(7C)-(7F) inserted by [2012 c. 7 s. 35\(6\)](#)
- s. 94A-94E inserted by [2021 c. 30 s. 79](#)
- s. 95ZA(6) inserted by [2014 c. 21 Sch. 5 para. 39\(4\)](#)
- s. 96ZA(2)-(5) substituted for s. 96ZA(2) by [2014 c. 21 Sch. 5 para. 40](#)
- s. 106B(3A) inserted by [2014 c. 21 Sch. 7 para. 94](#)
- s. 117G(2)(aa) inserted by [2014 c. 21 Sch. 5 para. 41\(2\)](#)
- s. 117G(4)-(4D) substituted for s. 117(4) by [2014 c. 21 Sch. 5 para. 41\(3\)](#)
- s. 117G(6)(aa) inserted by [2014 c. 21 Sch. 5 para. 41\(4\)](#)
- s. 117K(2)(aa) inserted by [2014 c. 21 Sch. 5 para. 42\(2\)](#)
- s. 117K(5)(5A) substituted for s. 117(5) by [2014 c. 21 Sch. 5 para. 42\(3\)](#)
- s. 117L(9) inserted by [2014 c. 21 Sch. 5 para. 43\(3\)](#)
- s. 117N(4)(aa) inserted by [2014 c. 21 Sch. 5 para. 45\(2\)](#)
- s. 117N(8)(aa) inserted by [2014 c. 21 Sch. 5 para. 45\(3\)](#)
- s. 117N(11)(aa) inserted by [2014 c. 21 Sch. 5 para. 45\(4\)](#)
- s. 117O(4)(aa) inserted by [2014 c. 21 Sch. 5 para. 46\(2\)](#)
- s. 117O(8)(aa) inserted by [2014 c. 21 Sch. 5 para. 46\(3\)](#)
- s. 117S(7)-(9) inserted by [2014 c. 21 Sch. 5 para. 49](#)
- s. 119(2)(ab) inserted by [2003 c. 37 s. 89\(1\)\(a\)](#)
- s. 119(3) inserted by [2003 c. 37 s. 89\(1\)\(b\)](#)
- s. 121(1)(ba) inserted by [2003 c. 37 s. 89\(2\)\(a\)](#)
- s. 141DA inserted by [2021 c. 30 s. 81](#)
- s. 141DC inserted by [2021 c. 30 s. 83](#)
- s. 177K(7)(aa) inserted by [2014 c. 21 Sch. 5 para. 42\(4\)](#)
- s. 207D and cross-heading inserted by [2014 c. 21 s. 39](#)
- s. 207D(5) word repealed by [2014 c. 21 Sch. 5 para. 52\(a\)](#)
- s. 207D(5) words inserted by [2014 c. 21 Sch. 5 para. 52\(b\)](#)

- s. 213(1ZA) inserted by [2014 c. 21 Sch. 7 para. 119\(3\)](#)
- s. 213(1ZA) repealed by [2014 c. 21 Sch. 5 para. 53](#)