

Polybutylene pipes in WA homes

Advice for owners of homes built before mid-2017 experiencing pipe bursts and other homeowners experiencing issues with plumbing pipes that are not Typlex 1050 pipes.

This fact sheet provides guidance for owners of properties that were:

- constructed before mid-2017 who are experiencing burst water pipes in their homes; and
- other homeowners experiencing issues with polybutylene plumbing pipes that are not the Pro-fit Typlex 1050 type covered by an Industry Response and the extended building disputes period.

This fact sheet is intended to provide information about why pipes may leak and what to do if you intend to make a warranty claim against the manufacturer.

A quick recap – Pro-fit Typlex 1050 pipes

A number of WA homes fitted with Pro-fit Typlex 1050 resin polybutylene plumbing pipes (Typlex pipes) have experienced failures (water leaks or bursts). The Typlex pipes were manufactured by Iplex Australia and installed in affected homes between mid-2017 and 2022.

Depending on which builder installed the pipes, owners of homes with Typlex pipes have two remedy pathways.

The WA Polybutylene Plumbing Failures [Industry Response](#) is an agreement between Iplex Australia, several builders and the State Government to provide remediation and preventative measures at no cost to homeowners.

The Industry Response only applies to Typlex pipes. It does not apply to other pipes manufactured by Iplex or polybutylene pipes manufactured by other companies.

Homeowners with Typlex pipes whose builders are not participating in the Industry Response can lodge a building complaint with the Building Commissioner to seek similar remedies through this pathway. The time period for lodging complaints about Typlex pipes has been extended to 15 years (from the usual six years).

All Typlex pipe homeowners can also apply for a free [leak detection unit](#).

These measures are only available for Typlex pipes because this product had an unusually high failure rate, which prompted the need for a targeted response.

Failures in non-Typlex pipes

If your home was built before 2017, it will not have Typlex pipes because this product was only installed between mid-2017 and 2022.

The Industry Response only applies to Typlex pipes built within this time span. It does not apply to other pipes manufactured by Iplex or polybutylene pipes manufactured by other companies.

Homes constructed within the last six years

If your home was constructed (practical completion) within the past six years, you remain eligible to lodge a building services complaint with the Building Commissioner.

Building and Energy's online guidance about [building dispute resolution](#) outlines this process, including providing a notice of proposed complaint to the builder 14 days before submitting the formal complaint.

Homes constructed more than six years ago

If your home was constructed more than six years ago and a pipe has burst, if you have home insurance, this may cover the costs. Alternatively, you may be eligible to make a claim on any warranty given to the product by the manufacturer. For example, Iplex provides a product warranty covering manufacturing defects for its full range of plumbing products for a 25-year period commencing from either the date of delivery or sale of the product, whichever is later.

Making a warranty claim

If you intend to make a claim under the manufacturer's warranty, it is important to remember that the warranty will likely only apply if the failure was caused by a manufacturing defect in the pipe.

Not all pipe failures occur because of a manufacturing issue. They can also be caused by:

- installation issues;
- water quality;
- pest damages;
- wear and tear over time;
- extreme temperatures; and
- Other causes can include surges, mechanical overload and chemical attack (i.e. when people empty waste chemicals onto the ground in the vicinity of buried pipes).

When a claim is made on the warranty, a manufacturer will want to identify the likely cause of the burst to determine if they are liable. You can assist in this process, and improve the chances of a positive outcome with your claim, if you do the following:

- Take photos of the burst pipe in situ in the wall or the roof space to show how it was installed and the conditions around it (make sure the photos are taken clearly and up close to the burst – if you have a plumber undertake repairs for you, consider asking them to take the photos for you).
- If you have a plumber undertake repairs to the burst pipe, ask them what they think caused the pipe to burst – if they think it might have been caused by a faulty pipe, ask them to write a letter or prepare a report for you (you might have to pay for this but if your warranty claim is successful you should be able to claim this cost back from the manufacturer).
- Keep the section of pipe that has burst and make it available to the manufacturer to enable them to test the pipe for defects.

Contact the manufacturer as soon as possible after the pipe has burst and ask them how you can go about making a claim under warranty and what information they need.

You may wish to seek legal advice to assist you with making a warranty claim. The Law Society of WA has a [website](#) where you can search for a practitioner near to you and with the relevant experience.

If you are not happy with the outcome

If you are not happy with a decision made by your home insurer, you can lodge a complaint with the Australian Financial Complaints Authority (AFCA). You can contact AFCA on 1800 931 678 or visit their website at www.afca.org.au for more information about how to lodge a complaint and AFCA's dispute resolution process.

If you are unhappy with a manufacturer's decision in response to a warranty claim, it is recommended that you seek legal advice on your rights and options.

For more information visit the Building and Energy [website](#).

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Disclaimer: The information contained in this fact sheet is provided as general information and a guide only. It should not be relied upon as legal advice or as an accurate statement of the relevant legislation provisions. If you are uncertain as to your legal obligations, you should obtain independent legal advice.

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