

# If you have black alkathene pipework, what can you do about it?

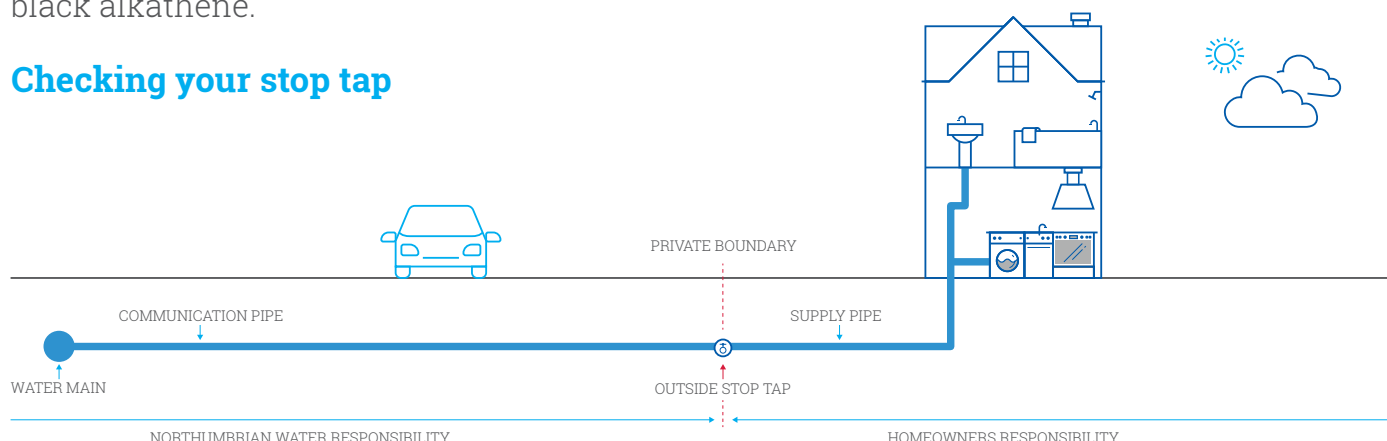
**Black Alkathene pipes are a type of plastic pipe which was developed in the 1930s and used in houses from the 1960s. It is no longer in use having been replaced by blue MDPE plastic pipe.**

This type of pipe is now reaching the age of deterioration and is becoming a common issue as it breaks down, causing discolouration and black particles. When pressed together will be an orange/ brown colour. This is particularly noticeable from bath taps or if you have multiple taps in use at once. **It often causes a woody or pencil taste.**

## How to tell if you have black alkathene pipes

If you are finding particles in the water, or have the taste mentioned above, you could have black alkathene.

## Checking your stop tap



Black Alkathene pipework was often used as the supply pipe to properties in the 1960, 70s and 80s. As you can see on the picture above, the pipe connecting properties to the water main is composed of two sections - the communication pipe and the supply pipe. The section running from the water main to the private boundary is called the communication pipe and is the responsibility of Northumbrian Water. The section running from the private boundary (usually from the external stop tap) into the property, and all of the internal pipework inside the property boundary, belongs to the homeowner and is their responsibility.



Black Alkathene pipework will usually be visible at the internal stopcock in the property, often under the kitchen sink. We recommend replacing Black Alkathene pipework as these issues might get worse as the pipe breaks down. .

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