

Case: 201102564, Scottish Water
Sector: Scottish Government and devolved administration
Subject: interruption to supply - unplanned
Outcome: upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C was left without water from Christmas Day 2010 until 14 January 2011. He said that when he telephoned Scottish Water, the message he received was that as his pipes were frozen, Scottish Water would not attend. He, therefore, arranged to have the matter dealt with himself, only to be advised that the toby (a water stopcock) was also frozen, and like the pipes was set too high. The toby was the responsibility of Scottish Water and was understood to be a contributing factor.

Scottish Water took no action on the toby until 19 September 2011. In the meantime, on 8 September 2011, Mr C submitted a claim for compensation for the time he was without water but this was rejected as Scottish Water took the view that it was out of time. Mr C complained that this was unfair as he had initially been told that the problem was for him to resolve and he had since discovered that this was not the case because of the problem with the toby.

After an investigation which confirmed the facts, it was confirmed that Scottish Water missed the opportunity to alert Mr C to the possibility of making a claim when they became aware of the problem with the toby in January 2011. We found that the decision to refuse to consider Mr C's claim was unreasonable, and we upheld the complaint.

Recommendation

We recommended that Scottish Water:

- makes the complainant a payment of a specified amount in recognition of the time he was without water.