

6 January 2026

The Editor
South China Morning Post

Dear Editor,

Response to a reader's article
"Step up water pipe inspections before holidays and festivals"

We refer to the article published on 5 January 2026.

The Water Supplies Department (WSD) apologises once again for the water supply disruption at Tin Ping Estate on the winter solstice, a time precious for family gatherings. Our team acted immediately to minimise the impact, arranging alternative water supplies and providing temporary water to affected residents and shops. Emergency repairs were carried out intensively, restoring supply in the early hours the next day.

We agree prevention is better than cure. Between 2000 and 2015, we replaced or rehabilitated about 3,000 km of aged water mains across the territory.

Since 2015, we have implemented a multi-pronged strategy. This includes a risk-based asset management programme to prioritise the replacement of higher-risk mains, considering factors such as age, material, and burst history. From 2015 to December 2025, about 250 km of mains have been replaced or rehabilitated under this programme.

We have also established the Water Intelligence Network (WIN), completing 2,400 District Metering Areas by March 2025, covering about 80% of our network to better detect leaks. The system helped identify around 1,000 leaks in government mains in 2025 alone, enabling early repairs. Overall, our leakage rate has reduced from about 25% in 2000 to 12.8% in 2025.

Our ongoing improvements focus on three areas:

1. Applying innovative technologies: We are enhancing WIN with real-time sensors and exploring new technologies like In-line Robots for earlier leak detection.

2. Expediting replacement of high-risk mains: We have identified approximately 584 km of mains for priority attention, including 44 km of older mains under busy roads.

3. Strengthening emergency management: We are improving response protocols, enhancing communication with stakeholders, and utilising tools like the new "eWater" mobile app to keep the public informed during incidents.

Thank you for raising this important issue. We remain committed to ensuring a reliable water supply.

Yours faithfully,

Roger WONG
Director of Water Supplies