



Water Solutions & Service Provider

## Surestop Stopcock - Occupational Therapy Guide

The Surestop stopcock gives reassurance and independence to clients who may struggle to reach or easily turn off a traditional brass stopcock. It is a unique mechanical device, with no electrical components enabling the safe management of water use in the home. With the simple flick of the switch, the Surestop Stopcock instantly turns off the water to the bathroom, kitchen, or whole property dependent upon the installation site. It is an easily installed and low-cost safety measure that should be considered in every bathroom and kitchen adaptation.

### Key Facts

- No electrics or batteries are involved, it works purely on natural water pressure.
- Instant protection – stops the water supply with an easy flick of a switch.
- The discreet remote switch can be located up to 6 meters away from the device installation site and so can provide easy control of water access whilst not compromising the appearance of existing bathrooms and kitchens.
- Easy to use, easy to access and limescale resistant; it will not seize up unlike traditional brass stopcocks

There are currently two core options for the stopcock installation:

1. Switch at source, replacing the traditional brass stopcock with the easy-to-use switch.
2. Remote switch option located at any height up to 6m away from the device.

### The risk of domestic flooding

According to the leading UK domestic insurer, Direct Line, the average household cost for damage caused by a burst water pipe is £7000, with the smallest of leaks quickly becoming an expensive issue to rectify. The potential water loss from a burst pipe in a typical house can equate to 400 litres (two baths of water) if the water supply is stopped quickly. However, if left unchecked for a full day, as much as 9,600 litres of water (48 baths of water) will flow into the home. Flooding has the potential to cause damage to the home, aside from the immediate loss of personal property to water damage, there is secondary damage to consider. Mould is a huge problem after a flood, toxic mould or black mould can have a long-term impact on health and has particular risks to those experiencing respiratory illness, such as COPD, Emphysema or Asthma. For all domestic properties, it is therefore important that a stopcock



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is accessible and easily turned off in an emergency. The Surestop stopcock range enables anyone to be able to easily turn off their water supply with the flick of a switch. The remote switch can be located at the correct height or accessible location for any user and offers all clients the reassurance that they can turn off the water independently if required to do so in an emergency, or if leaving the property unattended.

### Promoting independence and safety

For some of your clients, there may be an increased risk of domestic flooding. This includes those with Learning Disabilities, Parkinson's, Dementia or another condition that affects mental reasoning, where a person may not have the capacity to determine safe water use at home. When flooding does occur it also has the potential to create a hazardous environment, leading to unsafe bathing and an increased risk of falls. For these client groups, this risk is further heightened by mobility issues and disorientation, which may lead to the floodwater unintentionally causing a slip on a wet floor or bathroom fixture. The Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT) advises that 'Occupational therapists must seek opportunities to discuss an individual's risk of falls and seek opportunities to maximise the interventions available to the individual to reduce their risk and prevent harm' (RCOT Falls Guidelines 2020). The Surestop stopcock is therefore ideally suited to enable Occupational Therapist to implement these guidelines.

Reduced mental capacity may also affect a person's ability to prevent scalding while alone and older people's skin burns faster and at lower temperatures than younger people, increasing the severity of relatively minor household accidents. The same issues are present when considering a client who has just had surgery and may think a wound is healed enough for warmer water immersion when it is not. For these individuals, having the option for carers or family members to easily turn off the water supply to a specific appliance or location within the home can be an essential safety measure. With many advantages over traditional anti-scald devices that needed to be fitted to each tap or showerhead, a Surestop stop cock can be used for hot and cold-water pipes, making it ideal to also reduce the risk of scalds and burns.

### An essential addition or alternative to any bathroom/kitchen adaptation

A Surestop stopcock is an essential addition to any property, bathroom or kitchen to promote independence and offer reassurance. It should be considered for all clients with reduced mobility, or difficulty locating their existing stopcock, but especially when planning



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for people with limited capacity or cognitive impairment. This discreet device can be fitted with a remote

switch to stop water and so does not compromise the overall look of a bathroom or kitchen and enables other users to access the facilities as normal when needed. A Surestop stopcock can also be included in your recommendations for safety equipment as part of an ongoing adaptation plan, development of a new build project or added anytime to existing pipework to support ongoing safety for a client with changing needs. This low-cost device is easy to install and requires no electrical components, making it ideally suited to bathrooms, wet rooms, or damp environments.

### STOCKISTS AND SUPPORT

Surestop have worked closely with installers for nearly 20 years; helping them to understand how to fit products, provide training and installation support. Surestop have a wide network of reliable stockists, who sell products both in-branch and online. If you have a query or need support with housing design and adaptations, please contact:

Leigh Randell, Surestop's Adaptations Specialist

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### References

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NHS (2021) <https://www.nhs.uk/common-health-questions/lifestyle/can-damp-and-mould-affect-my-health/>

NICE (2018) Dementia: assessment, management and support for people living with dementia and their carers. [www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng97](http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng97)

NICE ("103) Falls in older people: assessing risk and prevention. <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg161/chapter/introduction>

RCOT (2020) Occupational therapy in the prevention and management of falls in adults: Practice Guidelines (second edition). <https://www.rcot.co.uk/practice-resources/rcot-practice-guidelines/falls>