

SPSO decision report

Case: 201607821, Scottish Water
Sector: water
Subject: policy/administration
Decision: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C's home was flooded and the flood was reported to Scottish Water, who subsequently carried out an investigation. The investigation concluded that the flood was caused by severe rainfall and that Scottish Water were not responsible. Mr C was unhappy with the investigation and raised a number of questions, including why his neighbour's properties were not flooded. He was unhappy that Scottish Water did not offer a clean-up service and that they refused to install non return valves (NRVs), which he believed would prevent future flooding. Scottish Water advised that they would not recommend installing NRVs as they could not be certain that they would not pass the flooding onto a neighbouring property. Mr C subsequently installed NRVs at his own cost.

Mr C complained to us that Scottish Water unreasonably failed to offer a clean-up service, unreasonably failed to thoroughly investigate the cause of the flood and unreasonably refused to compensate him for the cost of the NRVs. Scottish Water said they did offer assistance when Mr C reported the flooding and that Mr C did not request a clean-up service. We found that Scottish Water should have been more explicit when asking Mr C if there was anything they could help with and therefore we upheld this aspect of the complaint. We found that Scottish Water properly investigated the flooding in line with national guidelines and that they were not required to reimburse Mr C for the cost of installing NRVs at his property. We did not uphold these two aspects of the complaint.

Recommendations

What we said should change to put things right in future:

- All members of the Sewer Response Team should explicitly offer a clean-up service to customers when they report internal flooding.

We have asked the organisation to provide us with evidence that they have implemented the recommendations we have made on this case by the deadline we set.