

Milking parlours served by a small private supply



This interim guidance covers the actions to be taken by local authorities in relation to a milking parlour served by a small private supply.

Background

There has been a recent press release by the National Farming Union about dairy farmers and private water supplies. The press release has caused concern and this guidance note is to clarify the current situation.

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is responsible for Guidance on the Use of Water in Primary Production Premises. The FSA has been confirmed to the Inspectorate that it expects to be producing its updated guidance on food legislation in the near future. Until the FSA has completed this work, the Inspectorate is unable to update Private Water Supplies Guidance; Legislative Background to Private Water Supplies Regulations 2009 Section 9 (England and Wales) which covers the application of the new regulations to premises with milking parlours. However, whilst waiting for resolution of these matters, the Inspectorate has been advising local authorities on a case by case basis on how to ensure their approach to implementation of the private water supply regulations is proportionate in relation to small supplies serving milking parlours. The Inspectorate's advice takes into account the fact that local authorities have five years (to 2014) in which to implement the regulations in relation to small supplies.

Interim Guidance for local authorities on implementation of the new regulations in relation to private water supplies where the water is used in a milking parlour

1. Milking parlours are subject to food law in relation to milk quality and safety and through Food Safety Management plans. Local authorities should continue to have regard to milk quality and safety and this should remain the focus of their judgements about water used in milking parlours.
2. Where a private water supply serves only a milking parlour, and there is no other domestic dwelling, no commercial use, no other relevant food activity and no public activity or building, the Inspectorate recommends that at the present time local authorities do not need to carry out sampling or risk assessment for the purpose of demonstrating compliance with the private water supply regulations. As explained above, sampling or other actions may be necessary to assure milk quality and safety and where this is the case the local authority should make it clear to the relevant person that the action being taken is not in relation to the private water supply regulations.

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3. Where a private water supply serves only a milking parlour and a single dwelling, and there is no other commercial use, no other relevant food activity and no public activity or building, the Inspectorate recommends that the private supply can be treated as a single dwelling for the purpose of implementing the private water supply regulations. This means that monitoring is at the request of the owner/user of the private water supply. However, as explained above, actions may be necessary in relation to milk quality and milk safety and if so this should be clearly explained to the relevant person.

4. Where a private water supply serves a number of domestic dwellings and a milking parlour, and there is no commercial use, no other relevant food activity and no public activity or building, and the volume of water used is $<10 \text{ m}^3/\text{day}$, the Inspectorate recommends that the private water supply be treated as a small supply. This means that only Regulation 10 monitoring, as informed by risk assessment, is required for the purpose of demonstrating compliance with the private water supply regulations. This ensures all small domestic supplies, irrespective of the presence of a milking parlour, are treated on the same basis in relation to implementation of the new private water supplies.

Drinking Water Inspectorate
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