



guardians of drinking water quality

DRINKING WATER INSPECTORATE
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DWI Information Letter 05/2005

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To: Board Level and Day to Day Contacts of Water and Sewerage Companies and Water Companies in England and Wales and potential Combined Licensees; Chief Executives of Strategic Health Authorities in England (Gateway ref: 4765); Head of the Public Health Protection Division, Welsh Assembly Government.

Dear Sir or Madam

CODE OF PRACTICE ON TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF FLUORIDATION OF WATER SUPPLIES 2005

Background

1. Approximately 10% (by population) of drinking water supplies in England and Wales are artificially fluoridated. Where artificial fluoridation takes place, water undertakers in England and Wales are expected to comply with the requirements of the Code of Practice on Technical Aspects of Fluoridation of Water Supplies.
2. The current Code of Practice on Technical Aspects of Fluoridation of Water Supplies was first published by the Department of Environment in 1987. Following developments in both the technical aspects of fluoridation and the legal framework surrounding fluoridation schemes since 1987, it is timely and appropriate to review the Code.
3. The review process, which has taken place throughout 2004, has been led by the Inspectorate. It has involved close cooperation with stakeholders from across the water industry, Strategic Health Authorities, Defra, and other government departments. Through a process of workshops, site reviews and consultation with Water UK, the Inspectorate has produced a revised Code of Practice that reflects the current technological and legal position of drinking water fluoridation.

Purpose

4. The purpose of this letter is to inform both the water industry and health community of the publication of the Code of Practice on Technical Aspects

of Fluoridation of Water Supplies 2005, which supersedes the 1987 document published by the Department of the Environment. The Code of Practice is being circulated with this letter and is also available on the Inspectorate's website (www.dwi.gov.uk) in Adobe® (pdf) format.

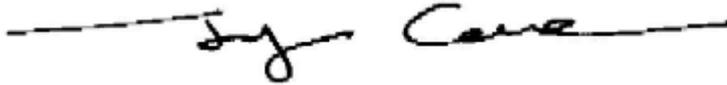
5. The Inspectorate expects water undertakers (and licensed water suppliers) to meet the minimum requirements specified in the revised Code of Practice. It is expected that water undertakers will have their own policies and procedures in place to support the implementation of the revised Code which may, where appropriate, exceed the requirements.
6. The revised Code of Practice applies to all existing fluoridation installations as well as any installations designed, constructed or operated after the date of this letter. Existing installations currently being operated and maintained to the standards required by the 1987 Code, may require improvements to meet the requirements of the revised Code of Practice. Where water undertakers already have fluoridation installations in operation, they should assess and document their compliance with the revised Code of Practice. Where installations do not meet the requirements of the revised Code of Practice, undertakers must prepare a programme of improvements to ensure compliance with these requirements as soon as is practicable. The content and timing of programmes should be prioritised using a risk based approach, taking into consideration health and safety issues, risks to public health and water quality regulatory compliance. Programmes should be developed and agreed with the Strategic Health Authority with which the Company has the fluoridation agreement.
7. The Code of Practice will be reviewed and revised in the light of new information. It is anticipated that this review will take place at approximately 5 year intervals, unless a significant change in circumstances necessitates earlier revision.

Enquiries

8. Any enquiries about this letter should be addressed to Jim Foster (email: jim.foster@defra.gsi.gov.uk) (Tel: 020 7082 8038).
9. I am copying this letter for information to Pamela Taylor, Chief Executive, Water UK; Richard Wood, Water Supply and Regulation Division, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs; June Milligan, Environment Division, National Assembly for Wales; Tim Hooton, Drinking Water Quality Regulator for Scotland; Randal Scott, Drinking Water Inspectorate for Northern Ireland; Rowena Tye, Office of Water Services; Beryl Brown, Office of Water Services; and Jerry Read, Department of Health.

10. This letter is being sent electronically to Board Level contacts and the Welsh Assembly Government. Please acknowledge receipt by email to dwi.informationletters@defra.gsi.gov.uk. Hard copies of the letter are being sent to Strategic Health Authorities in England.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeni Colbourne', written over a horizontal line.

Prof. Jeni Colbourne MBE Chief Inspector of Drinking Water

Code of Practice on Technical Aspects of Fluoridation of Water Supplies 2005