



## DRINKING WATER INSPECTORATE

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5 January 2016

Information Letter 01/2016

### **To: Board Level and Day to Day contacts of Water and Sewerage Companies and Water Companies in England and Wales**

Dear Sir/Madam

### **CODE OF PRACTICE ON TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF FLUORIDATION OF WATER SUPPLIES 2016**

#### **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 published in 2005.
3. The review process has taken place throughout 2015 and has been led by the Inspectorate. It has involved close cooperation with stakeholders from Public Health England and representative of companies that are currently fluoridating water supplies; the Inspectorate has produced a revised Code of Practice that reflects the current technological and legal position of drinking water fluoridation. In addition, the role, responsibilities and Industry requirements of PHE are incorporated.

#### **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 2016, which supersedes the 2005 document. The Code of Practice is being circulated with this letter and is also available on the Inspectorate's website ([www.dwi.gov.uk](http://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 2005 Code should be reviewed as they may require improvements to meet the requirements of the revised Code of Practice.
7. 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 Public Health England in accordance with the specific fluoridation agreement.
8. The Code of Practice will be reviewed and revised in the light of new information. It is anticipated that this review will take place no sooner than five year intervals, unless a significant change in circumstances necessitates earlier revision.

Copies of this letter are being sent to Michael Roberts, Chief Executive, Water UK; Catherine Harrold, Water Resources Management, Efficiency, Innovation, Drainage & Sewers, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs; Carol Skilling, Water Resources Management, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs; Olwen Spiller, Water Management Team, Welsh Government; Sue Petch, Drinking Water Quality Regulator for Scotland; David O'Neill, Drinking Water Inspectorate for Northern Ireland; Tony Smith and Chairs of the Regional Consumer Council for Water; Nicci Russell, Ofwat; Paul Hickey, Environment Agency; Liz Stretton, Food Standards Agency; and Frances Pollitt at Public Health England.

This letter is being sent electronically to Board Level and day to day contacts. Please acknowledge receipt by email to [dwi.enquiries@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:dwi.enquiries@defra.gsi.gov.uk). Hard copies are not being sent but the letter may be freely copied. Any enquiries about the letter should be addressed directly to Martin Bird.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marcus Rink', written in a cursive style.

Marcus Rink  
Chief Inspector of Drinking Water