



# SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

## Environment Group

Chief Environmental Health Officers  
All Scottish Local Authorities

### Drinking Water Quality Division

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Your ref:  
Our ref: PWS 5/2006

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Dear Colleague

### **The Private Water Supplies (Scotland) Regulations 2006 – Information Letter 5/2006**

#### **Regulation 35(6) – Annual Information Return on drinking water quality**

##### **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this letter is to prescribe the format of the annual return to the Scottish Ministers required by regulation 35(6) of the Private Water Supplies (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (“the 2006 Regulations”).

##### **2. Background**

The Drinking Water Directive requires the Scottish Ministers to ensure that adequate and up-to-date information on the quality of water intended for human consumption is available to consumers. As part of this commitment the Drinking Water Quality Regulator for Scotland (“the DWQR” publishes an Annual Report on drinking water quality (covering both public and private supplies) and presents this to the Minister and the public. Additionally, every three years the Scottish Ministers are required to forward a Report to the Commission on the quality of water intended for human consumption purposes including details of measures we have taken to achieve compliance with the Drinking Water Directive. The information you provide in terms of regulation 35(6) of the 2006 Regulations will inform both the Annual Report and the Report to the Commission.

In order to try to minimise the workload for local authorities the DWQR has developed a data return with the intention of providing one central source of information on private water supplies. As well as fulfilling the requirements of regulation 35(6) it is also designed to capture information from the register of private water supplies which authorities are required to maintain under regulation 34 and provide information about the Grant Scheme. We also propose that the DWQR, rather than individual authorities, will provide the information that SEPA and Health Boards require under regulation 34(5) and (6) of the 2006 Regulations from this central source of information.



### 3. Data Return

An electronic version of the DWQR data return is included on the enclosed CD-rom and includes the specification and a template for the return. The specification component of this is also appended to this letter as Annex A.

The DWQR data system has been developed to expect data in a specific format and it would be greatly appreciated if, as far as possible, you were able to provide data for your authority in the format specified.

The data is captured in two Excel tables, the **Supply Detail Table**, providing details of each supply along with relevant regulatory and grant information and the other, the **Sample Data Table**, providing analytical data about water quality collected from each supply during the preceding calendar year. The two tables are linked by the 'supply site reference' (SiteRef) for each supply, which is made up of the three letter authority code (specified by the DWQR) and a unique reference number (specified by your authority). Analytical data can only be submitted against a 'supply site reference' if that reference exists in the Private Supply Details Table. The data in the sample result field should be supplied in the units of measurement specified in Schedule 1 of the 2006 Regulations, for example, iron should be in microgrammes per litre.

### 4. Provision of data – specific requirements

#### Filenames

It would be appreciated if the two files could be named as follows:

**Supply Details Table:**

**"PrivateSiteXXXMar07"**

**Sample Data Table:**

**"PrivateSampleXXXMar07"**

Where 'XXX' is the three letter local authority code (e.g. BRD for Scottish Borders). This will enable files to be automatically recognised and loaded by the DWQR data system.

#### Formatting

The ideal format for providing supply and sample data on private supplies in your area is in **comma separated variable (or CSV) format** as this is one of the simplest methods of storing the required data.

An Excel file can be saved as a CSV file by selecting "save as" and choosing CSV (Comma Delimited) from the drop-down file type box. However, there are a number of points to watch for when saving to CSV from Excel. These include the following:

- Dates are in the correct format (DD:MM:YY or DD:MM:YYYY). If the day or month are a single digit, care is needed to ensure that these are preceded by a zero. Certain date formats in Excel may not do this.
- Empty fields must be included in the data return with the correct number of commas to represent the separators of the empty fields. Please do not use spaces to represent nil fields; just leave them empty. When converting to CSV format, Excel makes assumptions about the number of columns of text based on the first 16 rows of data. This can result in insufficient commas trailing the last piece of data if empty fields are present. This can be avoided by introducing a "dummy"

character in the last field of each row whilst working in Excel which can then be deleted from the CSV file directly using an application such as Notepad.

- Do not use comma separators for 000's. Please use 1000000 rather than 1,000,000.
- To view the CSV data directly it is best to use an application such as Notepad as this allows you to view the data exactly as it will appear to the DWQR data system. Excel can make formatting changes to the data which can result in data not being in the correct format.

### Other points to consider

It would be helpful if the following points could be considered when collating information for the DWQR data return:

- please ensure that data is only provided for supplies which exist in the Private Supply Detail Table; and
- please ensure sample data is only provided against the parameter codes provided.

If it is not possible to provide the data in CSV format an Excel spreadsheet will be acceptable provided it meets the format specified in the table definitions. The two template worksheets can be used for this purpose.

### 5. Further information and enquiries

Enquiries about the DWQR data return should be addressed to Matthew Bower (Tel No. 0131-244-0743) or Email: [Matthew.Bower@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Matthew.Bower@scotland.gsi.gov.uk).

### 6. Recommendation

In order to minimise the reporting requirements of the 2006 Regulations for your authority you are invited to use the data return which has been developed by the DWQR. By providing water quality information in either of the preferred formats (CSV or Excel) will enable the DWQR to develop a central database which can then be utilised to provide SEPA and Health Boards with the information they require in terms of the 2006 Regulations. Whilst we recognise that the reporting requirements are likely to involve your authority in some preparatory work we believe that the DWQR data return has the potential to deliver long term efficiencies.

Yours sincerely

**Dr Donald Reid**  
**Drinking Water Quality Division**



The Environment Group is part of the Scottish Executive Environment and Rural Affairs Department

SE Approved  
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