

DWQR Newsletter to Local Authorities

Private Water Supplies

Happy new year! Here is another of our newsletters on private water supplies. As always, this newsletter will not replace Information Letters and data return emails (these will still continue!). Instead this is our opportunity to let you know of new developments in the world of private water supplies and where we are going with regard to changes in legislation.

LEGISLATION

The Water Intended for Human Consumption (Private Supplies) (Scotland) Regulations 2017

These are now in force!

You can find the legislation here: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2017/282/contents/made>

And the guidance is here:

<http://dwqr.scot/media/36397/pws-regulations-guidance-consolidated-december-2017.pdf>

We shall be updating it fairly regularly as we receive requests for clarification.

Private Water Supply zones web map <https://goo.gl/3QCbv>

This is an online mapping resource that will let you explore the PWS zones that cover your Local Authority area. If you have any comments, send them in to Dave G.

New Risk Assessment We are developing an online Scottish PWS risk assessment tool that will enable local authorities to comply with the new regulations. This should be available later in the year, with appropriate training. Please continue to use your existing risk assessment for the time being.

Please note that the 2006 Regs still apply to the old 'Type B' (what we are now calling *exempt*) supplies. We are hoping to produce a draft for new legislation later this year –we'll send you a link to the consultation when it's ready.



Local Authority PWS Workshops

Since there is so much change in PWS at the moment, we are intending to hold a workshop in 2018, probably after the summer.

If there is a topic you would like to see addressed, or you have an interesting case study to share, please get in touch.

On-going and Recently Completed Research

Community Engagement

CREW (Scotland's Centre of Expertise for Waters) have conducted research in how we (and you) can engage better with rural communities. As part of the research we visited some interesting parts of Scotland with very different needs in relation to their pws. <http://www.crew.ac.uk/publication/engaging-communities-private-water-supplies>

PWS Information for Owners and Users

Citizens Advice Scotland (CAS) have completed research into the quality and availability of pws information available to owners and users. They concluded that the DWQR website www.dwqr.scot was pretty good, so we'd encourage you to signpost links to it from your own website (until the Information Hub is available).

https://www.cas.org.uk/system/files/publications/cfu_insight_report_testing_the_waters_-_assessing_information_on_private_water_supplies_and_sewerage_facilities.pdf

PWS Operating Costs

We have commissioned CREW to examine PWS operating costs and the impact of pws on the rural economy. This is due to report later this year.

Support for PWS Owners and Users

We are carrying out a joint project with CAS looking at the support that pws owners and users may need. The research involved in depth interviews and focus groups of users of both regulated and exempt supplies, and is due to be published in the next couple of months.

Pollution in Catchments

We're contributing to a number of projects looking at biological and chemical pollution in water catchments and how this can affect private supplies. They are just in the early days so the results (and hopefully modelling tools) won't be available for a while yet. In the meantime you can look at farm-level modelling for *E. coli*:

PWS INFORMATION HUB

Our graduate researcher Maria is setting up an information hub as a resource for pws owners and users to give them information they want (and need!) to maintain their supplies.

This should be up and running in the next few months, when the information currently kept on www.dwqr.scot will transfer to the new site.

If you have any questions you are regularly asked by owners and users, please contact her so she can make it as helpful as possible.

Maria.Pabolaza-Lacambra@gov.scot

ANNUAL RETURN

Remember your PWS return is due soon!
The 2016 Annual Report can be found on our website:

<http://dwqr.scot/media/34963/dwqr-annual-report-2016-private-water-supplies.pdf>



Bloomin' Algae

The Centre for Hydrology and Ecology have developed a 'Bloomin'Algae' app for recording cyanobacterial blooms. Download the app before the water warms up..

<http://www.brc.ac.uk/app/bloomin-algae-app>

Private Water Supplies and the Repairing Standard

Scottish Borders Council have provided this interesting case study:

The private water supply described below is a Type A (commercial) supply serving eight properties on an estate, the majority of which are tenanted, but a self-catering property and a castle occasionally used for functions are also served.

The supply was visited in October 2016, when a full risk assessment was carried out and routine sampling was undertaken from the self-catering property. Lead and microbiological samples were also requested and taken from all of the other properties served by the supply.

Multiple microbiological failures were reported and lead also appeared to be pretty much widespread across the estate, and so a "Do Not Use Your Water for Drinking or Cooking" notice was issued by Scottish Borders Council (SBC). Nickel and zinc failures were also reported for the self-catering property sample, but no additional public health precautions were required.

In light of the failures, the estate factor (acting on behalf of the relevant person for the supply) wrote to all residents informing them of the necessary public health precautions and supplied them with unlimited bottled water without charge.

Numerous investigatory water samples followed, in order to try to gain a better understanding of the lead issues across the estate, and various remedial options were explored by the estate owners.

The long term intention is that the estate will be connected to mains water, at which point the lead pipework will be bypassed. However, the connection to mains water has been delayed due to ongoing legal proceedings between the current and previous estate owners.

As a short term/temporary solution, the estate factor sought advice from a water treatment specialist on the treatment options available for the failures, until a connection to mains water could be achieved. As a result, carbon filters and ultraviolet (UV) treatment systems were installed on the rising main in three of the properties served by the supply and further samples were taken.

Although the microbiological quality of the water at the three properties was now found to be satisfactory, the lead remained an issue. The lead sampling indicated that the carbon filters reduced the lead that was coming into the properties from pipework leading up to the filters, but that some lead was being introduced into the water post-filters. This was believed to be most likely associated with the brass fittings on the pipework between the filters and the taps and/or the taps themselves. Subsequently and because SBC could not guarantee that replacement of the taps and/or fittings with alternative/WRAS approved products would secure better products in relation to their lead content, appropriate flushing advice was issued.

One of the tenants served by the supply was not satisfied to accept the use of bottled water as an interim measure until improvements/connection to mains water was achieved, and so the issue was reported to the Housing and Property Chamber First Tier Tribunal for Scotland.

The First Tier Tribunal determined that the landlords had failed to comply with the duty imposed by Section 14(1)(b) of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 and "... concluded that the water supply is not in a reasonable state of repair and required the landlords to repair or replace the system to ensure a water system that provides a fit wholesome water supply."

Following this decision, the estate owners/landlords replaced a section of lead pipe leading up to the tenant's property and replaced the kitchen tap and brass fittings under the sink, in the hope that these works would resolve the lead issues. They did not, and further sampling found that one of the sample results was actually almost seven times higher than when taken previously. Although not categorically demonstrated by the sampling, this increase is most likely associated with the replacement tap/brass fittings.

SBC continues to work closely with the estate and hope that the matter will be resolved in the near future.

FEEDBACK

We hope this newsletter is useful to you. If you have any suggestions as to how we could improve our communications or any other aspect of our work please let us know. regulator@dwqr.scot 0131 244 0190