

Drinking Water Quality Regulator for Scotland

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Peter Brown, Scottish Water
Licenced Water Providers Scotland

Your ref:
Our ref: A4629221
30 January 2013

Dear Sir / Madam

Information Letter 1/2013

The Handling of Contacts About Drinking Water Quality from Non-Domestic Consumers

Information letters are the means by which DWQR formally communicates regulatory requirements and other information to Scottish Water. All DWQR information letters are published on our website (www.DWQR.org.uk). This letter relates to water quality issues reported by consumers to licensed providers. In this instance it is appropriate to send this letter to all licensed providers currently operating within the Scottish water market, as well as to Scottish Water and other stakeholders. The letter should also be taken to apply to any other licensed providers that may enter the Scottish market in the future.

It is vital that consumers with a water quality concern receive correct information and advice and that such matters receive an appropriate operational response and resolution. On occasions consumers can be the first to become aware of a quality issue that later turns out to be of significance and it is not always easy, or possible, to identify the extent of any public health implications at an early stage. There have been cases where a single contact concerning an unusual taste or appearance of the water has been the first indication of a serious water quality incident. Consequently it is vital that such contacts are directed to Scottish Water without delay. It is also important that Scottish Water is able to gather data on water quality experienced by consumers to enable it to monitor how effectively it is managing the aesthetic properties of the water it supplies.

Process 18 of the Operational Code states that all contacts concerning a public health matter should be dealt with by Scottish Water. DWQR considers that all consumer contacts that express concern or dissatisfaction with the aesthetic quality of water have the potential to fall into this category and consequently should be passed without delay to Scottish Water. Alternatively, licensed providers may wish to inform their customers that they

should contact Scottish Water directly regarding water quality issues. It is requested that all licensed providers brief their contact centre agents and account managers on this matter, and that Scottish Water briefs its contact centre staff that it is acceptable for non-domestic consumers to report water quality issues directly to them.

DWQR understands that licensed providers may wish to develop expertise in water quality matters and discuss such matters with their customers, where these are non-urgent. This is to be welcomed and this letter is in no way intended to impede licensed providers' activities in this area.

Any enquiries about this letter should be addressed to Matthew Bower (0131 244 0743). This letter has been sent electronically. A copy will be sent to current licensed providers, Scottish Water, the Water Industry Commission for Scotland and Consumer Focus Scotland.
Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Bower'.

Matthew Bower
Operations Team Leader
Drinking Water Quality Regulator for Scotland

Cc: The Water Industry Commission for Scotland
Consumer Focus Scotland