



Drinking Water Quality Regulator
for Scotland

Incident Assessment

Newcastleton WTW
Disinfection Failure
4 March 2012

DWQR Inspector:
Matt Bower

Summary of Incident

Scottish Water operational staff received an alarm in the early hours of 4 March concerning the loss of chlorination at Newcastleton, a very small supply in the Scottish Borders. On attending site it was discovered that both sodium hypochlorite pumps had failed and could not, at first, be restarted. As a precaution a chlorine release tablet was used to achieve disinfection. Following a re-set of the control system the pumps were started and normal chlorination recommenced. Undisinfected water entered supply for approximately 2 hours.

DWQR Assessment of Cause of Incident

The cause of the incident was the failure of both dosing pumps used to add hypochlorite solution to the supply.

DWQR Assessment of Actions Taken by Scottish Water

DWQR is satisfied that alarms to alert staff to the failure were effective and that operational staff responded promptly and acted appropriately to restore disinfection and safeguard consumers as quickly as possible. A sample was taken from the supply the same day to demonstrate that quality had been restored. Disinfection was lost for a relatively short time in the middle of the night when few consumers would have been consuming water, however DWQR would have expected Scottish Water to have obtained an immediate microbiological sample from the supply to establish the extent of any risk presented by the undisinfected water.

