



**Chief Environmental Health Officers
All Local Authorities**

Our ref: B5242193

8 December 2011

Dear Colleagues

**INFORMATION LETTER 2/2011 - PRIVATE WATER SUPPLIES – LABORATORY
ACCREDITATION**

The purpose of this letter is to remind local authorities that samples taken for the purposes of The Private Water Supplies (Scotland) Regulations 2006 ('the 2006 Regulations') must comply with Regulation 31(2)e, which requires laboratories to have an independent quality control system which is approved by Scottish Ministers. Scottish Ministers have approved the UKAS 'Lab 37 Accreditation Requirements for Sampling and Testing in Accordance with the Drinking Water Testing Specification (DWTS)', and local authorities should therefore ensure that all samples taken for the purposes of the 2006 Regulations are analysed by laboratories which have accreditation to this standard.

To allow compliance with this Regulation 31(2)e to be determined, please e-mail me at colette.robertson-kellie@scotland.gsi.gov.uk by the 31 January 2012, stating:

- The laboratory or laboratories that analyse the samples taken by your local authority for the purposes of the 2006 Regulations (Type A and Type B supplies).
- Whether the laboratory or laboratories have accreditation to the UKAS DWTS. If the laboratory does not have accreditation to this standard for all parameters in the 2006 Regulations, please specify which parameters are outwith the scope of the accreditation and provide details of plans that are in place for the laboratory to secure the relevant accreditation, with timescales. Alternatively, please outline plans to transfer analysis to a laboratory that is accredited to DWTS.

Regulation 31(1) of the 2006 Regulations also requires samples to be taken in a manner which ensures that the samples are representative of the quality of the supply intended for human consumption, that no contamination occurs during the sampling process or during storage or transportation, and that the samples are stored and transported in a manner which does not affect the analytical result for the sample. Although DWTS contains requirements that relate to these aspects it is not considered appropriate to require full accreditation with these elements at this stage, particularly as private water supply sampling is outwith the control of the analysing laboratory. It should, however, serve as a useful standard to which all local authorities should operate in order to ensure that water samples arriving for analysis at laboratories are representative of the private water supplies from which they are taken.

It is recommended that all local authority staff who are required to take water samples for the purposes of the 2006 Regulations receive suitable training and take account of the 2006 Regulations and any guidance produced on them. The latest guidance on sampling is available at http://www.privatewatersupplies.gov.uk/private_water/files/PWS_sampling_manual.pdf.

If you would like to discuss any aspects of this Information Letter, please email me or telephone me at 0131 244 0278.

Yours sincerely

Dr Colette Robetson-Kellie
On behalf of the Drinking Water Quality Regulator