



Drinking Water Quality Regulator
for Scotland

Incident Assessment

Applecross WTW
Microbiological failure
30 May 2014

DWQR Inspector:
Matt Bower

Event No. 6003

Event Category: Significant

Summary of Incident

A scheduled microbiological sample taken from Applecross final water sample tap on 29 May 2014 contained 28 coliforms, although chlorine residuals were normal. The resample taken the following day also failed with 5 coliforms. Samples from the service reservoir and consumers taps were clear. No issues were noted with the treatment process. On the advice of the Health Board, a boil notice was imposed on the community. The treatment works sample line was replaced with a new copper pipe and all subsequent resamples passed, enabling the boil notice to be lifted on 2 June.

DWQR Assessment of Cause of Incident

Upon investigating the failure, Scottish Water noted that the service water line, that supplies non-potable water to the treatment works, runs parallel to the final water sample line from where the sample was taken. Work had been undertaken on the service water line in April although a blockage had meant that flow in it was not resorted straightaway. Scottish Water is speculating that this may have affected the final water line also, but there is no evidence for this. An inspection of the final water line identified that it fell short of best practice, with sections of large diameter and potential dead legs. This is likely to be the cause of the failures.

DWQR Assessment of Actions Taken by Scottish Water

Upon identifying the issue with the sample line it was replaced promptly, rectifying the issue with the sample line. Liaison with the Health Board appears to have taken place correctly.

Scottish Water has identified one action to deliver enhanced training on working on pipelines.

