

Committee: Community and Housing

Agenda Item

Date: 10 June 2010

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Title: PRIVATE WATER SUPPLIES

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Item for decision

Summary

1. This report draws Members' attention to a new regime for monitoring and assessing private water supplies and recommends the adoption of a charging system to cover the reasonable costs of carrying out these new duties.

Recommendations

2. That the charging scheme be adopted

Background Papers

3. Private Water Supplies Regulations 2009
Private Water Supplies; Technical Manual, DWI

Impact

- 4.

Communication/Consultation	None
Community Safety	Public Health Measure
Equalities	None
Finance	Costs can be Recovered
Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	None
Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	District wide
Workforce/Workplace	None

Situation

5. Regulations introducing a new regime for the assessment, monitoring, investigation and enforcement of water quality standards in private water

supplies came into force earlier this year. They replace an earlier system which was broadly similar in approach but include for the first time 'private distribution systems' which refers to arrangements whereby mains water is supplied in bulk and then redistributed to other premises outside the control of the mains supplier, for example at airports, caravans sites, MOD premises and private estates.

6. The Regulations categorise 'traditional' private supplies into three groups, **large supplies** serving more than 50 people or supplying more than 10m³ per day or being used for commercial purposes such as food production or supplying members of the public, this includes Bed and Breakfast establishments. **Small supplies** supplying more than one property but less than 10m³ per day and **single supplies** serving a single household and which are outside the requirements of this regime but can choose to opt into the requirements of the regime.
7. For the first time each supply has to be risk assessed to determine the potential risks to the wholesomeness of the water and a reasonable charge, subject to a maximum of £500, can be charged for carrying out this function.
8. All large supplies have to have samples analysed for a comprehensive suite of parameters, referred to as audit monitoring, at pre-set intervals dependant on the volume of water supplied, and samples taken for a limited number of parameters, referred to as check monitoring, again at pre-set intervals. There are maximum fees of £500 and £100 respectively for these samples to be analysed and a maximum fee of £100 to cover the cost of visiting and taking the samples.
9. Small supplies, and single supplies which choose to opt into the system, are required to have a sample taken at least once every 5 years and the maximum charge is £25.
10. Private distribution systems need to be risk assessed in the same way but sampling intervals and parameters are dependant on the outcome of the initial risk assessment and the same maximum fees apply.
11. The DWI guidance on setting fees emphasises that they must be reasonable and are discretionary and that the maximum fee should only be charged in exceptionally complicated cases. Guidance from the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health is that fees should have a sound basis that can easily be justified and suggests that an hourly rate be charged for risk assessments and visits. The cost of chemical and bacteriological analysis should at the cost charged by the accredited laboratory.
12. Our current records indicate the following approximate numbers of private water supplies in each category.

Single Household Supplies	Small Supplies	Large supplies	Private Distribution Systems
25	15	5	10

13. It is suggested that fees be based on a composite of the corporate hourly rate for the of the officers carrying out the risk assessment, sampling visit or investigation, and this equates, when rounded, to £45.00 per hour, and that the cost of the analysis of water supply be as charged by the laboratory, all subject to the maximum fees permitted by the Regulations.

Risk Analysis

14.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
That this statutory duty is not carried out and our reasonable costs not recovered	1	2 Some additional skills will be required by staff	Suitable training arrangements have been made

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.