

Advice – Reinstating a Water Supply that has been Disused or Experienced Reduced Demand

Industry specific guidance in relation to maintenance and operation of water systems, along with a variety of generic advice for the management of private water supplies, is available through the Drinking Water Inspectorate's (DWI) website.

The DWI state that it is the duty of those supplying water made available to the members of the public for it to be wholesome for domestic purposes, such as drinking, washing, cooking and preparing or cooking food.

During periods of reduced water use or suspension of a supply, the quality of water stored in water infrastructure such as; tanks, pipework and even your water source can become impaired. This deterioration could take place in any part of the supply network. Hazards of note include:

- Ingress of faecal bacteria and viruses – e.g. through backflow
- Stagnation – causing algal & bacterial films or unacceptable tastes & odours
- Legionella growth – posing a serious respiratory risk
- Leached plumbing metals
- Treatment chemicals and their breakdown products

Before returning a supply to use by regular consumers or the visiting public*, steps should be taken to ensure the water quality is acceptable. The following steps should be considered:

- ✓ Checks of supply infrastructure for signs of ingress, leaks, & biofouling and to determine if treatments are operating normally.
- ✓ A review of current water demand and the capacity of tanks and treatments.
- ✓ Thorough flushing of the distribution network to renew water stored in tanks and pipework. Flushing should be extended to all affected points of use.
- ✓ Purging the water source itself may be required if inactive for a significant period.
- ✓ Disinfection of the distribution system where appropriate, by a suitably trained plumber or water engineer.
- ✓ An evaluation of any communal drinking water points in relation to the risk posed by COVID-19.

For further advice or information regarding reinstatement of water supplies, please see the DWI's detailed guidance:

<http://www.dwi.gov.uk/stakeholders/information-letters/2020/Advice%20Letter%20AL02-2020.pdf>

You may wish to consult with your water engineer for further advice and to arrange any necessary servicing or maintenance of your private water supply.

***Please note** - Any resumption of business activity should be done in adherence with the latest government regulations and advice regarding COVID-19 (please visit the www.GOV.UK).