

GUIDE TO LEGISLATION AND ENFORCEMENT FOR WATER SUPPLY QUALITY AND PLUMBING SYSTEMS USING WATER FOR DOMESTIC PURPOSES IN ENGLAND AND WALES

INTRODUCTION

For England and Wales, there are sets of regulations affecting

- the quality of drinking water supplied by public water undertakers and licensed suppliers;
- the quality of drinking water supplied from private sources;
- the design and construction of plumbing systems in buildings, and
- plumbing systems conveying water derived from public supplies.

To ensure safe and reliable installation, the Government has introduced competency schemes for installers, but they are compulsory for some types of work and voluntary for others.

To help those who may be unfamiliar with these requirements, WRAS has prepared the following comparison of these different types of regulations.

GLOSSARY

APHC	Association of Plumbing and Heating Contractors
Approved Contractors Schemes	Schemes permitted by the Water Fittings Regulations. Approved plumbers, installers who demonstrate their competence and knowledge of the Regulations, are allowed concessions on notification and give certificates of compliance for their work to customers.
BPEC	British Plumbing Employers Council – certifies training centres offering a range of plumbing skills.
CIPHE	Chartered Institute of Plumbing and Heating Engineering
CLG	Communities and Local Government.
CORGI	No longer the statutory licensor of gas installers, CORGI now operates a membership scheme for gas installers, providing technical advice, supplying equipment and handling statutory notification of installation work
DEFRA	Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs
DWI	Drinking Water Inspectorate
GasSafe Register	Body which replaced CORGI from April 2009 for the statutory licensing of installers of gas equipment.
NVQs	National Vocational Qualifications – Level 2 accepted as minimum evidence of competence in plumbing for joining

	Approved Contractors Schemes.
SNIPEF	Scottish and Northern Ireland Plumbing Employers Federation
WIAPS	Water Industry Approved Plumbers Scheme – an approved contractors scheme administered by WRAS Ltd on behalf of 20 of the UK Water Suppliers.

Notes to the following table

1 Private distribution systems: Term used in the DWI guidance to the Private Water Supplies Regulations 2009 to describe the further distribution of supplies from water undertakers or licensed water suppliers as specified in regulation 8 of the Regulations. This deals with water which is supplied to premises by a water undertaker and another person further distributes the water to other users who are not direct customers of the water undertaker. Examples are given in DWI guidance as follows:

caravan and camp sites where the water is distributed to sites offices and either is distributed to individual caravans/camps or is distributed to a number of points (such as standpipes) where consumers can collect water in containers;

•**military establishments** where the water is distributed to offices, workshops, staff accommodation (houses/flats etc) and other buildings for domestic purposes even if they are not owned by the establishments;

2 WRAC: Water Regulations Advisory Committee – disbanded 2003.

Guide to legislation & enforcement for water supply quality and plumbing systems using water for domestic purposes (England & Wales)

	DEFRA						CLG
Regulations	Private Water Supply Regulations		Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations		Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations		Building Regulations Part G Sanitation, Hot water safety and water efficiency
	England	Wales	England	Wales	England & Wales		
Scope of Regulations	Premises with private water supplies i.e. those not supplied by a public water undertaker or licensed supplier. Private distribution systems ¹		Applies to water supplies provided by public water undertakers and licensed water suppliers.		Applies to water fittings in premises which receive water supplied by a water undertaker or licensed water supplier		The provision of water for domestic purposes in the construction of all types of premises
Principal purpose	Protection of quality of drinking water in premises with private supplies and private distribution systems		Implements the EU Drinking Water Directive to maintain quality of drinking water supplied by public water undertakers and licensed water suppliers		Regulates the provision, use and maintenance of water fittings to prevent waste and contamination of premises' drinking water and public water supplies		To ensure adequate provision of water for domestic purposes, hot water safety and, in new homes, efficient use of water
Govt. Advisory Body	None		None		Water Regulations Advisory Committee (WRAC) ²		Building Regulations Advisory Committee (BRAC)
Policy department	Water Availability & Quality - Defra						Sustainable Buildings Division - CLG
Enforcement – National	DWI						None
– Local	Local authority – Environmental Health Department		None		Water Suppliers: WF Regulations departments; New Connections; Water quality scientists		Local authorities – Building Control

	DEFRA			CLG	
Regulations	Private Water Supply Regulations		Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations	Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations	Building Regulations Part G Sanitation, Hot water safety and water efficiency
	England	Wales	England	Wales	England & Wales
Liability for compliance	Private Supply Operator		Water Supplier	Installers (plumbers) & users (occupants)	Designer & installer; User (occupant)
Installers' Competency	N/a		N/a	Approved Contractors Schemes	B Regs Competent Persons Schemes -Water efficiency schemes -Unvented water heaters -Gas : GasSafe Register -Also inspection by local authority
Competency Scheme Operators	N/a		N/a	WIAPS; Anglian Water; Severn Trent Water; Thames Water; SNIPEF APHC CIPHE	E.g. Corgi, APHC.
Other non-statutory competence qualifications	N/a		N/a	City & Guilds WRAS/BPEC certificate	Commercial Training organisations