



RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

**GUIDANCE ON THE PRIVATE WATER
SUPPLIES REGULATIONS**



Private Water Supplies

A private water supply is any water supply which is not provided by a water utility company. The source of the supply may come from:

- wells
- boreholes
- springs
- rivers or streams
- lakes or ponds
- a private distribution system (mains water which is privately distributed by a second party).

The supply may serve just one property or several properties through a network of pipes.

All private water supplies must be registered with the Council, who maintain a Public Register.

Private Water Supplies Regulations 2009

The Private Water Supplies Regulations came into force January 2010 and seek to further safeguard public health by ensuring that private water supplies are wholesome, safe to use for food production and to drink. The new regulations aim to protect health and they require quality standards similar to those of mains water supply. They require each supply to undergo a risk assessment.

Risk assessment is a proactive approach identifying potential hazards to human health. The information analysed in the assessment will be recorded in a report specific to your private water supply. It allows action to be taken to manage risks through a multi-barrier approach, involving source protection, treatment of the source water and management of the distribution network to prevent contaminants entering the supply system. The regulations cover all private supplies, although those serving a single dwelling will only be risk assessed and sampled upon request of the owner or occupier.

The council will charge for this work, please refer to the charges table on the back page.

Risk Assessments

The regulations require each supply (excluding single private domestic dwellings) to undergo a risk assessment every five years, to determine how regularly the supply needs to be tested and for which parameters (i.e. which types of bacteria, chemicals etc). This involves surveying the supply, from the source through to point-of-use, to identify factors that could lead to contamination of the supply. Factors influencing sampling requirements include the type of source (borehole, well etc), how well it is protected, the treatment methods in place, the number of people served by the supply and the intended use of the water.

Risk assessments will normally be carried out by prior appointment. Where possible details of what needs to be inspected/considered will be provided prior to the site visit. This is to ensure that the owner or occupier has the opportunity to arrange access to the various parts of the water system, arrange for someone with detailed knowledge of the

system to attend, and generally reduce the amount of time we are required to be on site, thereby also reducing the cost.

Sampling

Samples from private water supplies will normally be taken from a consumer's kitchen tap and then sent for analysis at an accredited and approved laboratory. The sampling frequency and the extent of analysis needed will depend on the results of the risk assessment.

Larger supplies (using more than 10 m³ water per day and serving 50 or more persons) and those serving commercial premises are now required to undergo regular 'check monitoring', as well as more extensive 'audit monitoring' on a less frequent basis.

Small supplies (using less than 10 m³ water per day and serving less than 50 persons) are monitored at least once every five years and more frequently if shown to be necessary by the risk assessment.

Supplies serving only an individual domestic dwelling will only be risk assessed and tested at the request of the owner or occupier.

Investigations

Any sample that fails to meet the prescribed concentrations laid out in the Private Water Supplies Regulations must have an investigation to determine the reason for the failure and to identify what action is needed to improve the supply. This may mean further sampling being conducted at the source, holding tanks and/or other parts of the infrastructure to assist the investigation.

If a wholesome supply cannot be achieved through implementing physical changes to the supply network, the water will require treatment before use. A wide range of treatment options are available.

Notices

In the event of failure, where a supply is found to be 'unwholesome' or a 'risk to human health', a notice will be served either prohibiting or restricting the supply, as appropriate. The notice will be specific for each supply and can be appealed against in a Magistrate's Court and/or by appeal to the Secretary of State, but the notice will remain in force until either it has been complied with or it is suspended by the courts/Secretary of State.

Authorisations

In certain circumstances where a supply fails the water quality standard, but the failure is of a parameter which does not cause a risk to health, the Council may grant an 'authorisation' to exceed the statutory limit. This authorisation would be for a temporary period, while measures are put in place to correct the problem.

Charges

The Council will charge the costs of carrying out their duties under these regulations to those responsible for the supply. Where part of a shared supply is used by some commercial activity, e.g. bed and breakfast, pub, camp site, the charges may be divided

between the commercial and non-commercial properties proportionally. A breakdown of the council's charges in respect of private water supplies is shown below.

Activity	Charge	Comments
Risk Assessment	At cost to a maximum of £500 (includes travel and administration)	We will undertake a risk assessment of all private water supplies (excluding single private domestic dwellings) by 31 December 2014. This will determine the parameters analysed during audit monitoring. Risk assessments will be carried out every five years.
Check Sample	£77.20	Check monitoring is carried out to ensure that water complies with the required standard. Where possible it is carried out at the same time as any requirement for audit monitoring, to keep costs down.
Audit Sample	Approximately £100	Actual cost difficult to quantify as the parameters tested are determined by the Risk Assessment
Small supply sample	Approximately £60	Small domestic supplies are monitored at least once every five years
Follow-up bacteriological sample	£38.90	
Investigation	At cost to a maximum of £100	Carried out in the event of a test failure
Granting of authorisation	£100 per authorisation	Application by the owner of a supply for permission to breach a standard temporarily whilst remedial work is carried out.

Contact us

Email: matthew.riding@ribblevalley.gov.uk

Tel: 01200 414470

Ribble Valley Borough Council, Church Walk, Clitheroe, Lancashire, BB7 2RA

For further information visit: www.ribblevalley.gov.uk or dwi.defra.gov.uk/consumers/advice-leaflets/PWS-newregs