

## Who could be affected?

You, your family and visitors to your home or business all have a right to expect clean, safe drinking water.

There are a number of groups who may be at risk from microbiological contamination in a private water supply, such as visitors and employees who normally drink mains water at home; children; elderly people and people with a weakened immune system.

If you think your water supply has made your visitors or yourself ill, please contact Cornwall Council.

## What can Cornwall Council do to help?

We will implement the regulations, carry out the testing and give you the results and advice.

The changes in the regulations also mean that Cornwall Council needs to carry out a risk assessment of your private water supply, from the source to the tap. This risk assessment looks at the source of the supply and the surrounding area to see if contamination is possible. It also involves checks of the storage tanks, any treatment systems and the pipework.

The risk assessment identifies actual and potential hazards that may affect the health of those drinking the water, so that you can take action to make sure your water supply is safe to drink. Where the water is found to be unsafe, Cornwall Council must ensure that the supply is improved by the owner.

## What should I do?

Make sure you know where your water comes from and how it reaches your tap. Knowing this can help you understand what could cause a problem.

- Clarify who is responsible for maintenance of the supply. Contact the owners of the land where the source is, and discuss your supply with them, and where the source, tank/s and pipework are.
- Clarify who is responsible for the whole supply system including water treatment equipment and that it is maintained according to manufacturer's instructions.

Register your water supply with Cornwall Council by calling **0300 1234 212** or email **communityandenvironmentalprotection@cornwall.gov.uk**

## You can access resources online at:

Cornwall Council

Drinking Water Inspectorate

Cornwall Land Air & Water

Environment Agency

DEFRA

Cornwall Council call **0300 1234 212** or email **communityandenvironmentalprotection@cornwall.gov.uk**

# Private Water Supplies Regulations \$" # (

What do they mean for owners and consumers?



[www.cornwall-land-air-water.org.uk](http://www.cornwall-land-air-water.org.uk)



A private water supply is a supply of water which does not come from a South West Water supply. Private supplies may come from a variety of sources, including wells, springs, boreholes and streams.

The Private Water Supplies Regulations were introduced early in 2010. These regulations apply to all who own or use a private water supply. The regulations have been introduced to ensure that water from private supplies is wholesome, so that people who drink water or consume food or drinks made from private supplies may do so without risk to their health.

Local authorities are responsible for regulating private water supplies used for domestic purposes in both domestic and commercial premises.

This leaflet aims to help those with a private water supply understand how the regulations affect them and their responsibilities.



If your house is the only property supplied by a water source, and only your family drink the water, we will only take a sample if you ask us to

### What does this mean for me?

Where a private water supply is used:

- for more than one house
- for commercial purposes in premises including food businesses, Bed and Breakfast, holiday accommodation, dairy farms, rentals, a workplace (where you employ other people)
- in a public building
- in a tenanted property

A professional from Cornwall Council has a responsibility to sample and risk assess all supplies and take water samples, generally from your kitchen tap. There is a charge for this service.

If the house you and your family live in is the only property supplied by a water source, and only your family drink the water, Cornwall Council will only take a sample and risk assessment if you ask us to. However you will be charged for this service. If you are a tenant on a private water supply, you can also ask Cornwall Council to investigate your supply if you think there could be a problem.

### What sort of things can affect the water quality?

Even if water looks clear, untreated water can contain micro-organisms (from animal droppings or human sewage) or chemical contamination which may not be detectable by taste or smell.

Poorly maintained water treatment equipment may also cause the water to remain unwholesome.

### What harm could the contamination cause?

Some micro-organisms, such as coliforms, indicate that contamination may be present. Others, such as Cryptosporidium, Giardia, Campylobacter and E.coli O157 can cause vomiting and diarrhoea or more severe illnesses in some cases.

The effects of chemicals depend on the type and amount of chemical present. One common concern relates to lead, which is dissolved from lead pipework, and can impair childhood development. Children with higher levels of lead in their bodies tend to have difficulties with learning and behaviour. There is further advice available from Cornwall Council on how to identify lead pipes and reduce this risk.

### Why should we worry about our water?

**“I have drunk it for years and it hasn't hurt me...”**

Some people are not affected as much as others. Studies show that children under 10 years old, whose homes have a private water supply, are nearly four times more likely to suffer from diarrhoea than other children. Drinking contaminated water while pregnant can cause damage to the unborn child and affect development.

### Services we offer

We offer a wide range of water services, in addition to sampling and risk assessments. These include:

- Event packages
- Swimming pool and hot tub testing
- Legionella testing
- Mains water sampling