



Why should I get my water tested and what will this involve?



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

Drinking water supplied from the public mains is carefully and regularly tested to make sure that it is clean and safe.

While it is not possible for all private water supplies to be tested in the same manner, as the cost alone would be too expensive, it is sensible to know what problems may be present in your private water supply. Testing the water helps to discover these problems.

- If you are on a Type A supply then your local environmental health service will contact you to arrange when a sample can be taken. They will also be able to advise you about the costs involved.
- If you are on a Type B supply then you will have to ask for testing to be undertaken. Your environmental health service will be able to advise you about who can take samples and the costs involved.

There are two main groups of impurities that can affect drinking water quality – micro-organisms and chemicals.

If certain types of micro-organisms are present in your drinking water then these will pose an immediate risk to your health and the health of your family or visitors.

In some circumstances such organisms can cause serious long-term illness, such as kidney failure, long after the immediate effects (severe sickness and diarrhoea) have passed. In some unfortunate cases the presence of such organisms in drinking water has resulted in death.

The presence of some very rare chemicals in your drinking water may lead to an increased risk of poisoning or developing cancer if the water is consumed over a long period of time. Other chemicals may make the water look or taste unpleasant while some can cause clothes to be badly stained when they are washed.

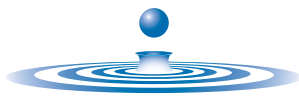
A typical sample will involve a professional from the local authority visiting your home and, after cleaning the kitchen tap, taking samples looking for harmful micro-organisms and chemicals that may be present in the water you are drinking.

Once the samples have been taken they will be sent to a certified laboratory where a series of tests will determine if the quality of your drinking water complies with the Regulations.

As soon as the results of the tests are known the environmental health service will contact you with the details.



- If any of the results suggest that the drinking water quality is not as good as it should be then the environmental health service will give you further advice on how to improve the quality of your drinking water.
- Your environmental health service can also assist you in undertaking a user/owner risk assessment. This process highlights actual and potential problems that may be affecting your private water supply. This allows you to take steps to secure the safety of your drinking water supply for you and your family.



Private Water Supplies



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