

**Guidelines for the Provision of Temporary Drinking Water Supplies
at Events in Northern Ireland**

14/06/16



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1 Acknowledgements

The information in this document has been adapted for Northern Ireland use from guidelines produced by the Water Health Partnership for Wales (“Guidelines for the provision of temporary Drinking Water Supplies at Events”). This guidance was produced by the Drinking Water and Health Liaison Group. The organisations and agencies involved in the Drinking Water and Health Liaison Group include:

- Department of Health Social Services & Public Safety (DHSSPS)
- Public Health Agency (PHA)
- Northern Ireland Water (NI Water)
- Chief Environmental Health Officer’s Group (CEHOG)
- Drinking water Inspectorate (DWI)
- Public Health Laboratory (PHL)

2 Scope of this document

This guidance is intended for use by organisers of events such as music festivals or agricultural shows where a temporary water supply may be required. It applies to all events that may require a connection to a new water supply as well as events that may require a connection to an existing supply, e.g. annual events taking place on the same showground.

This guidance applies to both licensed and unlicensed events. While the guidance is not aimed at volunteers running small events, for example local residents who come together to organise a village fête, it is important that such organisers are aware of the risks associated with temporary water supply used for drinking and food preparation.

The guidance outlines the measures that need to be taken by the organiser of an event to ensure a source of safe drinking water is available throughout the duration of the event. It also describes the roles and responsibilities of the relevant organisations involved. Insufficient water supply or tests which indicate that a water supply is contaminated pose a public health risk which could result in cases or outbreaks of infectious diseases e.g. *Cryptosporidium*, *Campylobacter* or *E. coli* O157 and could prevent an event from taking place.

Failure to properly plan for the provision of a safe source of drinking water for an event can have other significant consequences with organisers potentially facing:

- additional costs
- enforcement action
- civil action if anyone becomes ill
- loss of reputation and reluctance of the public to attend future events
- adverse media coverage

3 Steps that need to be taken by the event organiser in relation to temporary water supply

(See appendix 1)

The provision of safe drinking water as part of an event should be considered by the event organisers at the earliest opportunity (at least 3 months prior to the event). It is important to remember that any direct access to the public water supply network can pose potential risk to the continuity of water supply and water quality for other consumers.

The event organiser, if not the owner of the land or property holding the event, should in the first instance consult with the owner of the premises as to what facilities for the supply of water are currently in place and determine if these can be utilised. If there is no facility for a water supply connection in place at the site then a new connection to the public supply may be required. **Under no circumstances should a connection to a public water supply be undertaken by persons other than NI Water and for a private water supply without the prior knowledge of the owner and only by a person competent to make a connection to a drinking water supply. Competent person could be a Water Safe licensed plumber or a person familiar with the Principles of Water Hygiene.**

3.1 Is a public water supply available?

Contact NI Water and establish if there is a connection to the public water supply already at the site;

- (i) If Yes – NI Water will advise on flushing and sampling (if required) before event;
- (ii) If No – (a) Ascertain if NI Water can make a connection to a nearby main supply and proceed as per NI Water advice. (b) If no connection can be made to mains water supply an alternative source must be considered.

NI Water have Standpipe Licence Procedures in place whereby they can provide water from a public main with a standpipe licence which grants permission to obtain direct access to the water supply network. This licence will allow, subject to local operating restrictions authorised persons

to access NI Water mains and draw water from hydrants using a portable standpipe

3.2 Is a private water supply available on site?

- (i) Yes (on DWI's register) – The owner should then contact DWI to notify them of the proposed temporary change of use and to establish if the risk assessment needs reviewed;
- (ii) Yes (not on DWI's register) – contact the DWI and the District Council Environmental Health Department to discuss the proposed temporary change of use;

3.3 No public or private water supply available

Consider other alternatives such as bottled water.

3.4 Campsites

Some temporary events may provide camping facilities that will require more extensive temporary water infrastructure that may increase potential risks to supply. It is the responsibility of the event organiser to ensure that there is an adequate supply of potable water for consumption and food preparation.

Increased usage of water, by campers, from the normal supply may result in backflow. This is when the water pressure decreases to the point that water flows in the opposite direction. Backflow is a contamination risk and can suck contaminated water back into the drinking water supply. NI Water or District Council Environmental Health Department will provide advice on reducing the risk of backflow due to increased usage. They will also provide advice on the disinfection of water pipes. It is recommended that the event organiser should

have a schematic plan for the water supply and undertake an initial risk assessment before engaging with the appropriate authorities be it DWI, NI Water or EHOs.

3.5 Health and safety considerations

The event organiser is responsible for ensuring a safe event. An important part of this is the provision of safe drinking water. Some district councils have developed Safety Advisory Groups (SAGs) to provide independent advice to event organisers on how to ensure their events are safe and without risks to health. SAGs comprise of representatives from the local council (e.g. environmental health, building control and licencing officers, emergency planning), the PSNI, DRD Roads Service and emergency services.

Event organisers should determine if there is a SAG or similar multi-agency arrangement in the area in which the event is to be held and contact them for advice. This will include advice regarding drinking water, which may be considered under an Event, Health, Safety and Welfare Management Plan. Some SAGs have pages containing helpful resources on their local councils website. (See appendix 2 for District Council contacts)

4 Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Northern Ireland Water

Northern Ireland Water Ltd (NI Water) is a government-owned company, with the Department for Regional Development (DRD) being its sole shareholder. The DRD is responsible under the Water and Sewerage Services (Northern

Ireland) Order 2006 to supply and distribute water, and NI Water performs the Department's water supply functions. NI Water is therefore responsible for providing all public water and sewerage services in Northern Ireland. Water supplied for domestic or food production purposes, must meet the standards contained in the "Drinking Water Regulations" NI Water aims to provide high quality drinking water, in a cost-effective manner, to meet the requirements of existing and future customers. By doing this it contributes to the health and wellbeing of the community, the needs of commerce and the protection of the environment.

NI Water has responsibility for the quality of the water into the public supply from all WTW's in operation, including those operated by Kelda Water Services. All reporting arrangements to the PHA, DWI and EHD's are the responsibility of NI Water.

4.2 Drinking Water Inspectorate

The Drinking Water Inspectorate for Northern Ireland (the "Inspectorate") is a business unit within the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA), part of the Department of the Environment (DoE). It is one of the United Kingdom regional regulatory bodies which has statutory duties in terms of drinking water.

The Chief Inspector is a statutory appointee, acting on behalf of the Department for Regional Development (DRD) in respect of public water supplies, and on behalf of the DoE in relation to private water supplies. The Order also confers enforcement powers on the DWI in matters arising with NI Water.

The Inspectorate's role is to ensure regulatory compliance and provide independent reassurance that human health is safeguarded through the provision of drinking water supplies in Northern Ireland.

The Inspectorate has a regulatory responsibility for private water supplies which are used for: drinking, cooking, food preparation or other domestic purposes; or those used in commercial food production; the manufacture, processing, preservation, or marketing of food or drink for sale for human consumption. This includes monitoring and enforcement at these supplies; however the regulations exclude such provisions at single domestic dwellings.

4.3 District Council Environmental Health Departments

District Council Environmental Health Departments in Northern Ireland are responsible for enforcing a variety of statutory provisions that have an impact on safety at events and in particular the safety of food and water. There are many different types of events which take place in NI each year. The event organiser is responsible for and has legal duty to ensure the health and safety and wellbeing of the people attending the event as well as contractors and employees working there.

4.3.1 Health and Safety Enforcement

Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) working for local district council Environmental Health departments, enforce a wide variety of health and safety at work laws (in specified workplaces). In certain circumstances such laws may extend to events (subject to the existence of and the extent of any associated employment).

Where employment exists at an event, health and safety at work laws will apply, depending on the nature and extent of the associated employment and the undertaking of the event organisers. Clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of all those involved and in particular the event organisers, is very important to the planning and delivery of a safe event. This can be done by the event organiser producing an Event, Health, Safety and Welfare Management Plan which should include proper arrangements for the provision of safe drinking water.

Under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (NI) Order 1985, Council may grant a licence for the provision of entertainments. When granting a licence, council may specify terms, conditions and restrictions under which the licence is held including requirements for safe drinking water. Further advice on licencing requirements regarding drinking water can be obtained from the Licencing Officer at your local council.

4.4 Food business operators

Food business operators must ensure that they have an adequate supply of 'potable' water (i.e. water that is safe to drink). Only potable water should be used to ensure foodstuffs are not contaminated and must be used for cleaning food, food contact surfaces, hands, for including in foods and drinks, cooking foods and any other operations where there is a risk of contaminating foodstuffs. If mains supply is not available then food businesses may use containers of water which can be filled from the mains supply, water

tanks/bowsers, or a private water supply. The food business operator must ensure water is potable.

Where containers of water are used they must be:

- Made of food grade materials and be enclosed
- Kept clean and disinfected frequently to avoid the risk of contamination
- Emptied and filled regularly so as to avoid unacceptable contamination by micro-organisms
- Of sufficient capacity to store enough water for the potable water needs

The health and safety implications, including providing safe drinking water as part of an event, should be considered at the earliest opportunity by the event organisers.

5 Legislation

The main health and safety statutory requirements to be taken into account when consideration is being given to providing safe drinking water at events are as follows:

- Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007
- Drinking Water Directive 98/83/EC
- The Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009
- Private Water Supplies (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010
- Private Water Supplies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009
- Water and Sewerage Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006
- The Food Hygiene (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2006
- The Food Safety (Northern Ireland) Order 1991
- The Health and Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order 1978

- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000
- The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1993
- Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (NI) Order 1985
- EC/852/2004

6 Useful links

<http://www.hseni.gov.uk>

<http://www.hse.gov.uk>

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/event-safety/managing-an-event.htm>

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/>

CIEH National Guidance for Outdoor and mobile Catering-

http://www.cieh.org/policy/guidance_outdoor_mobile_catering.html

A Guide for Even Organisers-Derry City Council Area-SAG Document

<http://www.wras.co.uk/directory/>

<http://shop.bsigroup.com/ProductDetail/?pid=00000000030193122>

<http://www.water.org.uk/home/policy/publications/archive/drinking-water/principles-of-water-supply-hygiene/principles-of--water-supply-hygiene-finaldec2010.pdf>

http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/publication_9789241562638/en/

<http://www.epa.ie/pubs/advice/drinkingwater/epadrinkingwateradvicenote-advicenoteno8.html>

Appendix 1.

In summary here is a checklist and timeline for the organiser of an event requiring a temporary water supply.

If the organiser is not the owner of the land/premises where the event is take place information on the type of water supply available should be sought from the owner.	At earliest opportunity
The organiser should contact: a. NI Water if the water to be used is from a public supply – or b. DWI if the water to be used is from a private water supply or both if a tankered water supply is to be used.	Minimum 12 weeks in advance
If a public supply is used, make fixtures and fittings available for a water regulations inspection.	On request
Flush all pipework to charge it with fresh water	Maximum of 1 day in advance
As well as water there may be other health and safety implications when organising such events. Advice should be sought from local Safety Advisory Groups and/or Environmental Health departments	Should be considered at the earliest opportunity

Appendix 2.

NI Water, Drinking Water Inspectorate, Public Health Agency and local council contact details

<p>Northern Ireland Water PO Box 1026 Belfast BT1 9DJ Phone: 08457 440088 E-mail: waterline@niwater.com</p>	
<p>Drinking Water Inspectorate – Northern Ireland (DWINI) Phone: 028 9056 9282 E-mail: dwi@doeni.gov.uk Website: www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/water-home/drinking_water.html</p>	
<p>Public Health Agency 12-22 Linenhall Street Belfast BT2 8BS Phone 0300550119 E-Mail: pha.dutyroom@hscni.net Website: http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/</p>	
<p>Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council Contact details Mossley Mill Carnmoney Road North Newtownabbey BT36 5QA Phone: 028 9034 0000 Email: info@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk Website: http://www.antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk</p>	<p>Ards and North Down Borough Council Contact details Town Hall The Castle Bangor BT20 4BT Phone: 0300 013 3333 Email: enquiries@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk Website: http://www.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk/</p>

<p>Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council</p> <p>Contact details</p> <p>Craigavon Civic and Conference Centre PO Box 66 Lakeview Road Craigavon Co. Armagh BT64 1AL Phone: 0300 0300 900 Email: info@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk Website: http://www.armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk</p>	<p>Belfast City Council</p> <p>Contact details</p> <p>Belfast City Hall Belfast BT1 5GS Phone: 028 9032 0202 Text number: 028 9027 0405 (for deaf and hard of hearing users only) Email: generalenquiries@belfastcity.gov.uk Website: http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/</p>
<p>Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council</p> <p>Contact details</p> <p>Civic Headquarters Cloonavin 66 Portstewart Road Coleraine BT52 1EY Phone: 028 7034 7034 Fax: 028 7034 7026 Email: info@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk Website: http://www.causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk/</p>	<p>Derry City and Strabane District Council - Derry Office</p> <p>Contact details</p> <p>Council offices 98 Strand Road Derry BT48 7NN Phone: 028 7125 3253 Email: info@derrycityandstrabanedistrict.com Website: http://www.derrycityandstrabanedistrict.com</p>
<p>Fermanagh and Omagh District Council</p> <p>Enniskillen Office</p> <p>Contact details</p> <p>The Townhall 2 Townhall Street Enniskillen Co. Fermanagh BT74 7BA Phone: 0300 303 1777 Email: info@fermanaghomagh.com Website: http://www.fermanaghomagh.com/</p>	<p>Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council</p> <p>Contact details</p> <p>Island Civic Centre Lagan Valley Island The Island Lisburn BT27 4RL Phone: 028 9250 9250 Email: enquiries@lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk Website: http://www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk</p>

<p>Mid and East Antrim Borough Council</p> <p>Contact details</p> <p>The Braid 1-29 Bridge Street Ballymena BT43 5EJ Phone: 0300 124 5000 Email: enquiries@midandeastantrim.gov.uk Website: http://www.midandeastantrim.gov.uk</p>	<p>Mid Ulster District Council – Dungannon</p> <p>Contact details</p> <p>Dungannon Office Circular Road Dungannon BT71 6DT Phone: 0300 013 2132 Email: info@midulstercouncil.org Website: http://www.midulstercouncil.org/</p>
<p>Newry, Mourne and Down District Council</p> <p>Contact details</p> <p>District Council Offices O'Hagan House Monaghan Row Newry BT35 8DJ Phone: Council - 0300 013 2233 / Planning 0300 200 7830 Email: council@nmandd.org Website: http://www.newrymournedown.org</p>	