



Water Networks

Water Supply (Water Fittings)

Regulations 1999

Enforcement Policy

Version 1.5

Version	1.5
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1. Introduction: Protecting Water Supplies

Thames Water has a duty to provide wholesome water at all times and is aware of the need for protection of water supplies.

We also have a legal responsibility to ensure that customers design, install, maintain and operate plumbing systems appropriately in order to prevent the contamination, waste, misuse or inaccurate measurement of water.

These requirements are defined within the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999 (The Regulations).

Compliance with The Regulations has the benefit of helping customers to manage costs, reducing environmental impacts and supporting compliance with Health and Safety legislation.

2. Aim

To ensure that The Regulations are enforced in an appropriate but proportionate manner to maintain the safety of public water supplies and preserve resources.

This document is designed to provide guidance as to our approach regarding the enforcement process.

3. Approach of Thames Water

Our approach is to work in partnership with customers to encourage compliance and to avoid enforcement action. This includes maintaining an expert technical team to provide advice and guidance.

We also operate and promote the Thames Water Approved Plumber Scheme (TAPS) which is aligned with the national WaterSafe Scheme. This scheme identifies plumbers who have been assessed as being suitably qualified and insured. The aim of TAPS is to give customers reassurance of the standard of workmanship undertaken.

Thames Water shall also conduct a targeted programme of inspections based on potential risk. This programme shall include non-household customers, public buildings, new connections and temporary events. Domestic properties shall also be inspected on occasion where we have reason to believe a risk exists.

4. Responsibility of designers, installers, premises owners and occupiers

All customers who occupy premises that are connected to a Thames Water supply have a legal duty to ensure that their water system meets the standards set out in The Regulations. For this reason we recommend the use of Approved Plumbers for all plumbing activities.

Customers must notify and gain consent of Thames Water under some circumstances as required under the Regulations prior to undertaking certain works.

Prior notification may not, however, be necessary if an Approved Plumber undertakes the activity. This is because following completion of the work the plumber shall submit a certificate of compliance to both the customer and Thames Water detailing the activity undertaken.

Under The Regulations Thames Water has 'Powers of Entry' to properties as long as 24 hours' notice is provided. Property owners are reminded that this requirement should be complied with.

5. Enforcement process

On occasion inspections will identify plumbing arrangements which are in breach of the Regulations and it is important that these issues are solved.

Thames Water aims to work with its customers, non-household customers and retailers to ensure that the Regulations are applied consistently, in a way that is proportionate to the risk.

Where non-compliances are identified we shall assist those responsible to understand what is required of them and in turn what they can expect from Thames Water.

Following identification of non-compliance, Thames Water shall issue a Regulatory Notice which is an inspection report, explaining what the problem is and what should be done about it and by when.

We will then offer extra advice if requested. A revisit will be arranged to make sure problems have been put right. This may not be needed if an approved plumber has done the work.

Dependent upon the significance of the infringement and speed of remedial action, however, other options available to Thames Water include.

Intervention: Under some circumstances we may enter a property and resolve non-compliances or conduct disconnections where we feel a danger to public health exists. Thames Water can recover reasonable costs from the owners of the domestic premises or the non-household retailer after completing this action.

Simple Caution: Where a significant offence is admitted, we may offer 'Simple Caution'. This is in place of prosecution but in cases where we do not feel that this would be in the Public Interest.

Prosecution: We reserve the right to prosecute those suspected of committing an offence under The Regulations. In such an event we shall consider whether there is sufficient, admissible and reliable evidence, whether there is a realistic prospect of conviction and whether a prosecution is in the public interest.

Under such circumstances we shall proceed in compliance with the 'Crown prosecution Service (CPS) Code for Crown Prosecutors' and the relevant codes of practice of the 'Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984'.

If work conducted and certified by an Approved Plumber which is then found to not be in compliance with The Regulations then this shall be taken as a defense against prosecutions.

6. Penalties

Failure to comply with the Regulations is a criminal offence. Any person or business convicted can be fined up to £1,000 per non-compliance.

7. Customer Complaints

As a responsible Regulatory body Thames Water will always respond to customer complaints or appeals.

Any dispute between Thames Water and a customer who considers that the Company has unreasonably withheld consent may be referred to an arbitrator that is agreed between both parties.

8. Training of Thames Water Personnel

Within Thames Water we shall ensure all staff and contractors involved in Water Regulations activities are trained and assessed to a high standard. This includes regular briefing regarding changes to the law and feedback from the Water Industry.

It is the responsibility of all staff involved in Water Regulations activities to adhere to this policy and the associated strategy/processes, and the Water Regulations Manager will conduct periodic audits to ensure compliance. None

9. Review

This policy shall be reviewed on an annual basis taking into account any changes in the law or learning points from the Industry.

10. Information & Contacts

Thames Water, Water Regulations Department

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Water Regulations Dept
PO Box 286
Swindon
SN38 2RN

e.mail water.regulations@thameswater.co.uk
Telephone 0800.009.3926
www.thameswater.co.uk
Website

Find a list of approved plumbers within the Thames Water area at
<https://my.thameswater.co.uk/findaplumber>

Water Regulations Advisory Scheme (WRAS)



WRAS is an advisory body funded by water companies whose role includes the provision of a free technical enquiry service and publishes guidance and maintains a directory of products that have been shown to comply with The Regulations

Water Regulations Advisory Scheme (WRAS)

Unit 13 Willow Road Pen y Fan
Industrial Estate Crumlin,
Gwent NP11 4EG

www.wras.co.uk

Telephone: 01495 248454

Email: info@wras.co.uk

To obtain a free copy of the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999 go to:

www.wras.co.uk/Get_a_copy

WaterSafe

To learn more about WaterSafe and the national approved plumber scheme visit
www.watersafe.org.uk.
