



# Protecting drinking water quality and safeguarding public health

Policy no. POL131



## Protecting drinking water quality and safeguarding public health

At Thames Water, we're committed to providing a safe water supply that maintains customer confidence.

To protect public health while carrying out our supply activities and providing the best value for our customers, we'll:

- Aspire to be, and be recognised as, the industry leader for our approach to protecting drinking water quality and safeguarding public health
- As a minimum comply with all drinking water quality regulatory requirements and internal standards
- Maintain a risk-based approach for the effective management of our drinking water supply assets, and use this knowledge to drive effective investment strategies
- Identify and manage any public health risks, from catchment to consumer, by employing a risk-based drinking water safety plan approach, which delivers timely mitigation of risks
- Work in partnership with all stakeholders including regulators, health agencies and our customers, seeking advice from qualified external experts where required
- Ensure our customers' needs are understood and satisfied, with any complaints resolved as quickly as possible
- Embed a quality management system to assure compliance with all our public health procedures
- Ensure operational practices and responsibilities are documented and reviewed regularly in accordance with our quality management system
- Exercise effective reporting mechanisms and transparently report activities relevant to public health and regulatory compliance
- Empower all employees to act where a water supply risk exists to protect public health
- Ensure that all employees and contractors are trained to be both competent and confident to carry out assigned work; we'll monitor this through regular audit and assessment
- Managers will create an environment where our employees and contractors are motivated, supported and competent to deliver the best for our customers
- Ensure that our Executive Team, and where appropriate members of the Thames Water Board, undertake training in drinking water quality and public health protection matters
- Provide the resources needed to maintain resilient assets and reduce single points of failure and vulnerability
- Respond and manage incidents, in an appropriately timely manner and in accordance with our established incident protocols, to resolve any public health issues
- Participate in discussion and research to influence the development of industry regulations, guidelines, best practice and other standards relevant to public health
- Ensure that our approach to public health protection continuously improves by utilising internal and independent external audits, as well as practice exercises and adopting incident learning

## Who this policy applies to

This policy will be communicated to our employees and partners. All employees and contractors involved in the supply of drinking water are responsible for understanding, implementing, maintaining and continuously improving our approach to water quality and public health protection, and identifying investment needs.

This policy is endorsed by our Executive Leadership Team and our employees will be responsible for its delivery. The Asset, Digital & Transformation Director is accountable for this policy, for ensuring that it's regularly reviewed and that our performance to these commitments is reported routinely to our Executive team and the Thames Water Board.

## Responsibilities

All employees and contractors must ensure that their actions align with this policy and speak up if there is deviation from it.

Managers shall ensure all employees understand their responsibility for maintaining our approach to water quality and public health protection.

Executives must conduct all business in line with this policy and our core business values.

## Contacting us

For questions, comments or feedback relating to this policy, you can contact us through <https://www.thameswater.co.uk/contact-us>

If you have any concern about any issues relating to our protecting drinking water quality and safeguarding public health performance or management arrangements, you can contact the policy sponsor.

For concerns regarding dishonest or unethical behaviour, please contact us on any of the following:



If you are an employee of Thames Water, you can also speak with your Line Manager.

## Useful references

Key policies include:

- [Asset Management policy](#)
- [Environment policy](#)

Key legislation:

- Water Industry Act (1991)
- Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations (2016) as amended

Policy Exec Sponsor: John Beaumont, Director of Asset Management

Approval date: November 2020